

Strategic Intimacies: Knowledge and Colonization in Southern New Zealand

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This essay brings together two problematics that have occupied a central position in recent scholarship on modern British empire-building: colonial knowledge and the history of intimacy. Thinking about the inter-relationship between close encounters of empire and the production of colonial knowledge is not really a great leap of the imagination. In fact, it is an obvious strategy, given the polysemic qualities of the word ‘intimate’: from the sixteenth century, the word ‘intimate’ as a verb meant to communicate, to declare, to designate openly or, conversely, to communicate subtly, to hint at, to indicate, or even imply. The common adjectival use – designating a close connection or familiarity – is a slightly later development dating from the seventeenth century, and the euphemistic use of ‘intimate relations’ for sexual acts only dates from the 1880s.¹ But it is that most recent and sexualized meaning of the ‘intimate’ that has framed much recent work on the cultural history of cross-cultural encounters. This essay shifts our attention away from sexuality, focusing instead on the ‘strategic intimacies’ cultivated by colonial agents who sought to build new knowledge about colonized lands and peoples.² This knowledge was typically generated by engagements between influential colonial officials and elite colonized men – traditional rulers, knowledge experts, and community elders – and was often seen as vital in enabling colonial ‘expansion’ and governance.

Focusing on these politically useful forms of intimacy does not deny the historical importance or scholarly significance of forms of intimacy that are connected with sexuality and family formation. After all, sex and conjugality have been undoubtedly central in the constitution of what Ann Laura Stoler has termed ‘racial frontiers’: these problematics have underpinned the production and reproduction of various collectivities, affiliations, hierarchies and oppositions that have grounding in the sexual domain.³ At a global level the outcomes of these relationships were frequently troubling for colonial states seeking stable and legible categories of enumeration and rule: métissage raised spectres of degeneration and subversion, sexual relations across cultural lines called into question both the legibility and stability of difference, and to many anxious imperial officials interracial marriage posed difficult questions about legitimacy, nationality and citizenship.⁴ But as Damon Salesa has recently shown in the British case, while racial crossings of various kinds were subject to recurrent debate, there were few successful or enduring attempts to legislatively prohibit interracial sexual relationships within the empire during the nineteenth century. Moreover, Salesa shows that alongside those who worried about the degenerative consequences of relationships across racial lines, other British commentators saw interracial intimacies as powerful agents for ‘improvement’ and for naturalizing and stabilizing colonial authority.⁵

The relationship between intimacy and colonial knowledge has not been the focus of much work in New Zealand where the historiography has been organized around questions of identity and the ideological significance of race, but there have been useful exchanges over the intimacy-knowledge nexus in the South Asian context and these debates provide a good starting point for my argument here. Chris Bayly’s landmark *Empire and Information* argued that ‘affective information’ – primarily drawn through sexual, familial and religious connections between rulers and the ruled – was a crucial foundation of state authority in early modern South Asia. He

suggested that the British retreat from Indian religious institutions and traditions as well as the stricter policing of sexual relationships between East India Company officials and local women increasingly cut British administrators off from Indian private life which had previously been an important source of information about commercial developments, strategic priorities, and the dispositions of influential local magnates and moneymen.⁶ These shifts have been reconstructed more recently by Durba Ghosh who has demonstrated the ways in which relationships with high-ranking 'native' women not only opened up important sources of information for Company men, but more broadly functioned as a 'fundamental component of constructing a political persona' for East India Company officials in the second half of the eighteenth century.⁷ These relationships allowed Company men to develop sophisticated understandings of courtly dynamics and local political practice; at the same time, however, these relationships were the source of considerable tension and anxiety.⁸ It is important to recognize that these sexual relationships were one dimension of a broad process of cultural engagement, which saw Company officials using Persian as their official language and adopting local dress, foodways, and habits of sociability.⁹ Ghosh shows the pressures that were brought to bear on these mixed families as successive colonial Governors in the 1790s and early 1800s strove to make empire building respectable by policing sexual relationships that transgressed racial boundaries. Ghosh demonstrates that this attempt to confidently inscribe and maintain cultural difference was powerful, but never totally effective.

Bayly has argued that the growing gulf between ruler and ruled that resulted from this turning away from affective connections helped create the cultural space within which disaffection developed and the lack of British understanding of native sentiment was laid bare in the uprising of 1857.¹⁰ As the Company slowly extracted itself out of entanglements in Indian domestic life, the colonial state's 'information order' was also transformed more broadly and it was less strongly imprinted by South Asian knowledge traditions and learned lineages. In Bayly's wake, Norbert Peabody has also argued that in South Asia 'colonial discourses often built upon indigenous ones' and Peabody has focused on the ways that 'native actors and indigenous forms of knowledge' inflected 'the formation and unfolding of colonialism.'¹¹ For Peabody, British understandings of Rajasthan and Rajasthani society were inflected in significant ways by the established practices of state-building that predated the rise of the East India Company and the cultural authority of key informants. These readings of the colonial past see knowledge gained through close relationships with different 'native' individuals and groups as not only shaping colonial understandings of local social organization and cultural life, but also as key anchors for colonial authority.

Lynn Zastoupil has simultaneously recognized the importance of this kind of re-reading of colonial knowledge offered by Peabody, while also criticizing its 'limited nature', arguing that its focus on indigenous informants privileges 'males from elite groups'. As a result, Zastoupil argues, there is a 'need for more expansive notions of the role of local agency and symbiotic relationships in the construction of colonial knowledge'.¹² Implicit within Zastoupil's critique, however, is a residual equation of gender with women, a position which I think closes off the possibilities of offering a productive gendered reading of the function of colonial states. Ironically, one of the case studies that Zastoupil marshals in critiquing Peabody's work is James Tod, the influential British ethnographer and historian of Rajasthan. Zastoupil himself concedes that Tod, unlike some of his contemporaries, did not have a South Asian wife. Tod's *Antiquities of Rajasthan* was not enriched by the affective knowledge he might have accessed through a wife or lover, in part because the Rajasthani elites that

Tod was so closely enmeshed with policed female sexuality strictly to protect the 'pure' genealogical lineages that underwrote their political and military prowess.

Stressing the political importance of the bonds that connected certain men from colonized elites and the functionaries of colonial states does not require that we deny the importance of the kinds of female knowledge that affective relationships allowed imperial agents to access. But, I think it is worth stressing the basic gendered assumptions that shaped state practice. While women might be seen as valuable political informants who allowed the state to access rumour and gossip, colonial officials typically saw indigenous elite men as the most important repositories of indigenous knowledge. Regardless of 'native' realities, colonial functionaries typically looked to indigenous men to explain the political structures, social and economic practices, traditions of resource use and control, and indigenous understandings of history.¹³ Of course, there are exceptions to this pattern of male-to-male exchange and it is possible to identify some very influential indigenous women who worked as go-betweens and translators within developing colonial regimes as the work of Julie Wells, Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, and Alida Metcalf has indicated.¹⁴ Nevertheless, I think that we must recognize the fundamentally homosocial traditions of knowledge transmission that underwrote the production of state knowledges within the second British empire.

It is these dynamics that are at the heart of this essay. It seeks to refocus our attention away from sexuality and is framed by an interest in the older set of meanings that were connected with the intimate – meanings that were focused on the dynamics of communication. The first part of the essay reflects on the recent work on interracial intimacies in Murihiku, the region south of the Waitaki river, helping to set the broader context for the more particular reading of the connections between intimacy and knowledge gathering that follows. The second part of the essay explores the development of strategic intimacy in the 1840s, when a succession of powerful state agents travelled through southern New Zealand and engaged with the local iwi (tribe), Kāi Tahu. My particular focus here is the work of one colonial official, Edward Shortland, and the ways in which strategic intimacy underpinned his ability to tap into key seams of indigenous knowledge and the ways in which it shaped his ethnographic evaluation of Kāi Tahu's knowledge order. The third section of the essay reflects on the dynamics of strategic intimacy and examines how this particular form of knowledge gathering was displaced in the 1850s by an increasingly disembodied and depersonalized form of colonial authority. It highlights how later colonial explorers and officials, like the explorer John Turnbull Thomson, were troubled by the physical intimacies that could follow from a reliance on Māori. I use Thomson's work to explore the importance of social distance as an increasingly confident form of colonization took root in the south and this leads into the final section of the essay, which examines the broad colonial transitions of the 1850s and 1860s that both marginalized Kāi Tahu and led to the devaluing of the kind of relationships that Shortland cultivated.

I

Before examining the development of colonial knowledge in southern New Zealand, it is important to note that there is now a significant body of scholarship on interracial intimacy and its legacies in the region. The work of scholars such as Atholl Anderson, Hana O'Regan and Angela Wanhalla have demonstrated some of the key ways that interracial intimacies have made communities in the south and their scholarship has established the very particular place of interracial marriage in Kāi Tahu history.¹⁵ The

work of Kate Stevens, David Haines and Michael Stevens has begun to push this line of research in new directions.¹⁶ These historians have devoted particular attention to the ambivalences within mixed race families and the connections between interracial intimacy, histories of labour, and resource use. Of course, this Kāi Tahu-focused scholarship does not exist in a vacuum. It has been energized by an engagement with studies that focus on interracial marriage in other regions or a national basis, especially the work of Kate Riddell, Damon Salesa, and Judith Binney.¹⁷ The work of Wanhalla and Haines has also drawn ideas and inspiration from North American contact histories and the new imperial history's deep concern with gender and sexuality, while Michael Stevens draws strongly from scholarship on native epistemologies and colonial knowledge.

This recent writing on interracial intimacy in the south has reshaped our understandings of the workings of empire and the processes of colonization. While the history of Te Kereme – the Kāi Tahu claim against the Crown – certainly has absorbed a great deal of political capital and scholarly energy, it is clear that the Crown's inadequate provision of native reserves and its failure to provide the schools and hospitals to Kāi Tahu were not the only engines that drove social and economic change in the nineteenth century. Anderson and Wanhalla have demonstrated that marriage between Kāi Tahu women and incoming Euroamerican men was a fundamental feature of cross-cultural contact in the south from the 1820s, and that these relationships reshaped the economic and demographic base of the iwi forever.

But, of course, it is possible to think about histories of interracial intimacies in a variety of ways. Wanhalla's *In/visible Sight* focuses on questions related to the visualization of cultural difference and the production of community boundaries, with a particular interest in the urban experience of dual-descent Kāi Tahu families.¹⁸ The question of the cultural visibility of Kāi Tahu, not just to Pākehā but to other Māori as well, lies at the heart of Hana O'Regan's *Ko Tahu, Ko Au*. O'Regan's work is the most sustained and forceful reflection on some of the cultural dilemmas that are a consequence of the inter-laced histories of colonization and interracial marriage in the south.¹⁹ For most Kāi Tahu families, these histories of interracial marriage are accessed through a variety of different means other than scholarly work. Family genealogy (whakapapa) books and, more formally, the tribe's (iwi) whakapapa unit are key repositories of genealogical knowledge, as are knowledgeable elders (kaumatua). Family histories, family trees, photograph albums, treasured artifacts and more mundane mementoes contain seeds of history; they are prompts to recollection, narration and discussion. There is no doubt that these stories are central in the iwi's material culture and especially in the meeting houses (wharehenui). This is particularly clear at Te Rau Aroha marae at the port town of Bluff: the carvings and decorations that adorn the interior of the marae complex frame Kāi Tahu history around Murihiku's distinctive resources (such as muttonbirds (tītī) and oysters) and the significance of a cohort of women who married Europeans around the 1830s.²⁰

II

Marriage between Kāi Tahu women and European whalers in the 1830s and the long term consequences of these relationships has understandably loomed large in how interracial intimacy in the south is imagined, but this scholarship needs to be balanced with an exploration of 'strategic intimacies'.²¹ These are the intimacies cultivated by colonial states as they worked to extend their sovereignty, map colonized terrains, know their subject peoples and consolidate their authority. Where the scholarship on interracial intimacies on shore whaling stations has primarily focused on heterosexual

forms of intimacy, here I primarily explore homosocial intimacies, the connections that developed between particular Kāi Tahu men and a sequence of colonial agents and state functionaries. Exploring the sequence of these relationships that developed in the 1840s and 1850s is central in understanding the fundamental mechanisms through which colonial authority was extended, performed, and consolidated. These strategic intimacies were, I contend, pivotal in a seismic shift in power that began around 1850, the tipping point in the south which saw Kāi Tahu knowledge and cultural practice increasingly undercut and marginalized within the colonial order.

A central concern of the early agents of empire who visited the south was the nature of the terrain, the distribution of natural resources, and the region's suitability for colonization. Before the mid-1840s, European endeavour was restricted to the off-shore islands and a sequence of small coastal enclaves. While European seamen had slowly built up a fairly large archive of knowledge about the region's harbours and anchorages, they knew little about Kāi Tahu settlements, patterns of mobility and resource use, and the nature of the Murihiku's interior remained a complete mystery. From the mid-1840s colonial officials such as Edward Shortland, Walter Mantell and Frederick Tuckett were all concerned with extending British understandings of the region's geography, enumerating the size and status of the 'native' population, building up a new body of cartographic knowledge and establishing a more confident grasp of the ways in which native society was organized in the south.

Kāi Tahu were direct participants in the journeys of these men: they guided them, provided water, food and sustenance, and they shared with them a significant amount of knowledge. These dynamics are especially clear in Edward Shortland's journey through the southern regions of New Zealand during 1843 and 1844. Shortland, who had been appointed a Sub-Protector of Aborigines in 1842, was dispatched to accompany the Land Commissioner Colonel E.L. Godfrey to the South Island. Shortland was designated to act as the interpreter at courts of inquiry into the land purchases claimed by early European colonists and to collect information relevant to native land tenure in the south. Shortland was an enthusiastic collector and he gathered a vast body of information beyond his initial brief, including information about the geology, waterways, and natural resources of the south that were of considerable value to a colonial state whose reach had not yet effectively been extended beyond Akaroa, located on Banks Peninsula. While he was a keen and astute observer, Shortland gained large amounts of historical and geographical information from the influential Kāi Tahu chiefs Hone Tuhawaiki and Topi Patuki and also drew upon the expertise of Matiaha Tiramorehu. Conversation was the heart of these exchanges and it was the key vector through which Shortland built up a knowledge of the Kāi Tahu past and about those parts of the south that he had not visited.

At the end of this journey, as Shortland travelled north back towards Akaroa, he encountered Te Huruhuru, a chief (rakatira) from the settlement of Waihao, 15km northwest of the mouth of the Waitaki river. Te Huruhuru had made a short journey south to visit the Waitaki valley on an eeling trip. Shortland spent six days in conversation with Te Huruhuru as the rakatira's party completed their work and prepared to cross the flooded river. During this time, Shortland not only witnessed the nature of Kāi Tahu material culture and food resources, but he also learnt a great deal about the landscape and history. Te Huruhuru provided Shortland with valuable information about recent conflicts between Kāi Tahu and their North Island enemies, narrating the raid made into the south by the Ngāti Tama iwi in 1836. More importantly, perhaps, during the evenings Te Huruhuru explained the geography of the interior of the South Island, sketching a map showing great lakes and inland plains,

explaining the nature of the terrain, and the locations of resources that Kāi Tahu valued: wood hens (weka), eels, and especially greenstone (pounamu).²²

In a similar vein, Shortland used the time he spent with Hone Tuhawaiki – perhaps the most powerful of the Murihiku chiefs between 1835 and his death in 1844 – to solicit detailed information and maps of the region's coastlines. He found that Tuhawaiki was 'straightforward and willing' to share this knowledge and Shortland was impressed by the 'skill displayed by him in illustrating his descriptions of boundaries by tracing with a pencil the line of coast, and the positions of islands, rivers, &c.' Shortland noted, however, that the Māori apprehensions of space and distance did not map easily onto European measures.²³

The extended travels undertaken by Shortland produced a particular kind of intimacy. He spent long periods in the close company of powerful southern chiefs. These relationships were, of course, structured by Shortland's authority as an agent of the state but they were also undoubtedly inflected by Shortland's linguistic facility and his ability to operate effectively in the Māori world (te ao Māori).²⁴ The close engagement with raketira offered an opportunity for Europeans like Shortland to develop a broad assessment of the qualities and capacities of the local population, a chance to develop an understanding of a technically subject population who were in fact not yet experiencing direct colonial rule. Shortland used these relationships to build up an ethnographic assessment of Kāi Tahu, not only recording as much as possible with regard to their history but also identifying particular capacities and qualities. For example, throughout his *The Southern Districts of New Zealand: A Journal, with Passing Notices of the Customs of the Aborigines* – the 1851 narrative of his southern journey published by the influential Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans of London – Shortland consistently stressed the maritime skills of Kāi Tahu in contrast to 'his' Bay of Plenty Māori, Kereopa and Huehue, 'who had no skill in boating'.²⁵ When Shortland's party visited coal deposits on coast south of Katiki (at Matainaka) to assess their quality, the party's boat was deftly navigated through treacherous reefs and shoals: Shortland was clearly impressed by and grateful to the 'native pilot' who ensured his safety.²⁶

Shortland's account of this scare typifies a broad pattern within his writing: high-ranking Kāi Tahu chiefs and influential informants are individuated, whereas figures of lower status – pilots, local guides, and other Māori who carry out the mundane work of the voyage – frequently remained shadowy, un-individuated figures. This is most notable in the case of Huehue and Kereopa who routinely appear in Shortland's text as 'my two natives' and 'two natives from the Bay of Plenty', rather than as named individuals.²⁷ Of course, recognizing the particular identity of high-ranking informants was crucial as it invested the knowledge that Shortland collected with real authority and significance. His tendency to render men of lesser status and women generally nameless, was not simply a result of Shortland seeking out his equivalents in class and status in the Kāi Tahu world as the logic of David Cannadine's *Ornamentalism* would suggest.²⁸ Rather than simply a British desire to domesticate an exotic social order and to find some analogies of British class hierarchies in te ao Māori, Shortland's privileging of elite actors reflected a kind of colonial real politik. Low ranking North Island Māori or Kāi Tahu individuals of humble status were not the repositories of knowledge that Shortland saw as being of value to the state, nor were they individuals that the state was going to have to negotiate with: as a result, they were of marginal importance and remain shadowy figures in his published narrative.

Thus it was the high-ranking men that provided the most information about Kāi Tahu history and social life that loom large in Shortland's account. Shortland used Tuhawaiki as an exemplary figure in his assessment of Kāi Tahu oral culture and the dynamics of indigenous knowledge transmission. Shortland suggested that Tuhawaiki 'displayed that remarkable power of memory at which I have often wondered in the New Zealander'. Shortland suggested that Tuhawaiki's recollections were accurate and detailed (unlike some other chiefs) and that Tuhawaiki's memory was more reliable than the written records kept by Europeans like the maritime magnate, farmer and merchant Johnny Jones. He noted:

Sometimes Tuhawaiki's account of goods received did not correspond with Mr. J—'s [Johnny Jones's] written lists of property paid: the latter, however, was always ready to admit the error to be most probably his own. Indeed, this native had so good a character for integrity, that he frequently, as we were informed, obtained on credit slops, flour, and rum, in large quantities, which he retailed both to his own countrymen and to the whalers.²⁹

Shortland was struck by this cultural capacity for retention and recall. It was most obvious, he noted, in the ways in which Kāi Tahu experts like Tuhawaiki and Tiramorehu used whakapapa to produce and shape detailed historical narratives.

My informants did not content themselves with a bare recollection of names; but related the most remarkable actions connected with the lives of their different ancestors. The history of the migrations, and wars, and losses, and triumphs of the tribe, generation after generation, seemed to be preserved in their retentive memories, handed down from father to son nearly in the same words as originally delivered.

An old chief, when interrogated as to his belief in the traditions of his tribe, replied that he had been instructed by his grandfather, and that he now repeated to his grand-child, who sat at his feet, what he had thus learnt; so that he could speak positively as to the truthful transmission of what he had heard for five generations; and that his grandfather's grandfather could probably have done the same. Why, therefore, should he doubt of its faithful transmission from its origin?³⁰

Shortland's apprehension of the weight and power of these forms of transmission was forcefully conveyed to his European readers: 'We, who have so long trusted to the authority of books, are, I am persuaded, too suspicious of the credibility of the traditionary history of a people who have not yet weakened their memories by trusting to a written language'.³¹ He noted that the complex genealogies he recorded from Tuhawaiki and Tiramorehu were clearly produced from two distinct channels of knowledge transmission, but careful comparison revealed that 'either of them confirms the validity of the other'.³²

The connection he formed with Tuhawaiki allowed Shortland to argue that the strength and accuracy of this genealogical knowledge could be a boon to the colonial state. He suggested that the power of Māori oral culture was such that it should be possible for the colonial state to produce a codified body of whakapapa. He offered an example of the kind of genealogical charts that might guide colonial officials, producing tables that juxtaposed nine generations from the eponymous founder of Kāi Tahu, Tahupotiki to Ngakauiro with another table that began with Whatiua, the younger brother of Tahupotiki and also ran nine generations to Te Aomuraki, a wife of Kakauiro or Ngakauiro.³³ Building up a body of genealogical knowledge would allow the state to quickly clarify the rights of particular raketira and families (whānau) to resources and land. If these materials were constructed with the aid of expert

informants, the government would not have to deal with people whose rights and authority were of a 'doubtful nature'.³⁴

In New Zealand, as in other colonial locations, the state placed a premium on knowledge verified and authored by white experts that could be used to check the veracity and reliability of the claims made by colonized people. Shortland believed that the nature of cross-cultural relationships had to be carefully policed in order to make sure that colonial observers remained distant enough to assess the veracity of the information provided by Māori. Shortland was convinced that his travels through the south and the significant amount of time that he spent with Kāi Tahu allowed him to develop particular insight into the place and its people. This insight was the product of the kind of carefully modulated intimacy that his southern sojourn produced: he stayed long enough in the south, he thought, to know the 'native character', without staying so long that he became reliant on raketira for protection and patronage. He believed that those Europeans who resided amongst Kāi Tahu, such as the missionary James Watkin, were too immersed in local life and were unable to see the ways in which they were being manipulated and exploited by Kāi Tahu leaders like Taiaroa. In his published narrative, Shortland reflected that experience 'taught me to be very cautious how I received as true any statement obtained from purely native sources'.³⁵

III

Strategic intimacy was a crucial element of colonial practice. In order to build alliances, to gain intelligence and information, and to assess the quality of land, resources, and local populations colonial states had to gain access to frontier regions and lands that were not yet under their control. Building working relationships with local elites and influential cross-cultural brokers typically entailed cultivating a degree of intimacy: colonial agents would travel with these intermediaries, sharing meals and accommodation, engaging in sustained conversation, learn about local landscapes, history, social organisation, and economic practice. These relationships were designed to enable cross-cultural communication and to open up flows of knowledge that would help frame colonial practice and policy. It would be wrong to suggest that these relationships never produced genuine affective bonds. In fact, the effectiveness of these relationships depended upon the cultivation of enough trust to ensure that the colonial state could gain access to the knowledge it was seeking. But at a fundamental level, strategic intimacy was always encoded by colonial aspirations, and the value attached to 'knowing the country' by colonial officials. This instrumentality was the defining characteristic of these relationships cultivated by officials whose work ultimately was designed to aid the colonial state, to extend its reach, to maximize the resources at its disposal and improve its governance.

In the New Zealand context, strategic intimacy required at least three things: one was a fluency in the Māori language (te reo Māori) and an associated ability to understand some of the key conventions relating to the ordering and transmission of traditional knowledge. The second was sustained and close contact with Māori for a sufficient time so that key ideas and practices became legible. Shortland, for instance, spent 122 days south of the Waitakī river in 1843-1844, a journey that greatly extended the colonial state's knowledge of the Kāi Tahu population, the nature of the region's social structure, and the extent and quality of its resources. It is important to note that Shortland seemed to have been unusually adept at developing an understanding of social structure and iwi politics. Atholl Anderson has noted that Shortland developed a deft grasp of the Waikato region during a 28-day visit there in 1842.³⁶ Thirdly, 'strategic intimacy' required an engagement from local communities

too. By the early 1840s, the high-ranking Kāi Tahu rakatira that Shortland interacted with were familiar with some key aspects of European culture. Over the previous two decades Kāi Tahu leaders had travelled to New South Wales, engaged with sealers, whalers, traders, and missionaries, and exhibited a strong interest in things that were new: whaleboats and iron tools, potatoes and pigs, books and Christianity, and muskets. They were outward-looking and sought opportunities to fortify their power and enhance their ability to discharge the responsibilities of chieftainship. But they were living in a rapidly changing and fraught world: during the previous two decades the tribe had been repeatedly attacked by invasion parties of Ngāti Toa and Ngāti Tama from the lower North Island, had been plagued by internal conflicts and epidemics, and had begun to grapple with the meaning and implications of Christianity. The declaration of British sovereignty over New Zealand in 1840 and debates over land rights and sales encouraged Kāi Tahu leaders to engage with important officials like Shortland. Ultimately, this openness enabled Shortland to greatly expand British understandings of the resources of the far south and the history and organization of the region's 'native communities'.

Like other colonial functionaries, Shortland worked and lived in very close proximity with 'native' men during this journey. This kind of sustained close contact – which frequently entailed sharing food, sleeping spaces, and resources – could be extremely unsettling. These intimate details of travel are not foregrounded in Shortland's rather composed published narrative; but they are a constant in the diary of Frederick Tuckett. In 1844 Tuckett, a rather dyspeptic Quaker, was appointed as the principal surveyor and agent for the projected New Edinburgh settlement, which would become the Otago colony. Tuckett spent April to December 1844 mapping the southern part of the South Island and surveying the Otago Block, which the New Zealand Company purchased in July 1844. Tuckett's travels in the south were full of problems and his diary records both the physical difficulties of the journey as well as his ongoing conflicts with his Māori companions and hosts. On 2 May, for example, his Māori guides complained about having to climb the hills between the Taieri plains and the coast: Tuckett's diary noted 'Maori followers lagging behind, and sulky'. Once they had traversed the hills and arrived at the coast near nightfall, the one Kāi Tahu individual occupying Moturata island at the mouth of the Taieri river refused to provide a boat or any assistance until the next morning and the Māori woman living in a hut on the riverbank 'would not or could not launch [her] canoe'. Tuckett's entry ends: 'Grumbling all night on the beach'.³⁷ The next day Tuckett's Kāi Tahu guides refused to carry on with him to the Matau river and then abandoned him when he refused to pay them for their work.

Eventually, with the assistance of Te Raki, the influential Taieri chief, Tuckett proceeded south at great speed. On that first evening travelling with Te Raki and several Kāi Tahu men, the party sat down to share a meal. Tuckett's brief account of that meal encapsulates the unease that could be occasioned by the forms of intimacy that were part and parcel of travel:

Made an excellent supper of roast ducks, which the Maoris basted carefully, catching the dripping fat on feathers, and dressing the birds constantly, but licking off the surplus after each stroke by drawing the feather between their lips; this part of the process was not gratifying.³⁸

This type of discomfort produced by the enforced physical closeness of travel and exploration does reappear in the archive of diplomacy and exploration in the south. John Turnbull Thomson's book *Rambles With A Philosopher* (1867) reflected

on one of his southern journeys as chief surveyor of Otago in 1857. At Tuturau he stayed with Reko, who had guided him across the swollen Mataura river. Thomson's account of this sojourn at Tuturau dwells on the physicality of cross-cultural contact: Thomson likened the entrance to Reko's house (whare) to a 'dog-kennel', he described the 'unsavoury stench, disgusting to the olfactory nerves' coming from a basket (kete) of decaying potatoes, and the dustiness of whare's interior with its floor of packed earth.³⁹ While a meal of potatoes, eels and muttonbirds was prepared, Thomson became preoccupied with Reko's slave (kuki) who did the cooking. Thomson described her in the following way:

Probably an individual could not be lower in the scale of humanity. Her dark brown skin was blackened with smoke, and her eyes were red with the fumes of the manuka and the black pine. Her matted locks hung over her brow and face, so much so, as only occasionally to permit her features to be disclosed. Her only garment was a flax mat of scanty proportions, and this hung loosely over her shoulders. She did her menial duties with a dull sense of necessity, as the ox draws the plough, or the ass carries the pannier. ... Her gait was not the gait of a human being, for she crouched about so bent as to be almost on all fours. Yet she was not a quadrumana. Her back at that tender age was not bent quite double with humility, oppression, and degradation.⁴⁰

While the end of this passage begins to humanize both Thomson and the slave girl, the total effect of Thomson's animalistic metaphors and his emphasis on the fundamental otherness of this girl seems primarily designed to elicit revulsion.

The tone of this passage and Thomson's obvious discomfort at sharing such intimate spaces with Māori is extremely significant given his reading of New Zealand's racial history and his vision of colonial development. Thomson believed that Māori were ancient members of a negroid Barata race who migrated from southern India into Southeast Asia, east Africa and the Pacific.⁴¹ Working within popular oppositions drawn between the sophisticated light-skinned Aryans and tribal peoples in South Asia, Thomson believed that the Barata race was primitive and relatively unsophisticated when it dispersed from India. This culture decayed further when it was no longer in contact with the elevating influence of the intellectual and economic traditions of Aryan peoples. As the most distant and isolated members of this racial family, Māori were paying the particular price for their location, as Thomson argued that cross-cultural contact and social change were necessary for cultural advancement:

In the animal creation, the brown man withers before the white intruder ... That change is the necessity of life who can deny? May we not expect a new fauna and a new flora in rising, young New Zealand with the increase of her white population? May we not anticipate that the brown tussock will succumb to the white clover, and the flax to the gorse and the broom, -- that the tui will give place to the sparrow, the kakapo to the partridge? And why should we sigh at these changes, since they are the unavoidable condition of life and progress?

Māori were destined to extermination because the 'energetic, industrious people' settling the land would engulf their 'static' culture. Thomson asked: 'Will the face of nature be less blythsome with the presence of the fair haired lassie tending her goats on the *braes*, the red cheeked, freckled ploughboy whistling o'er the lea, instead of

the rough, shaggy Maori stealthily moving through the fern thicket in search of roots?’⁴² The extinction of the Māori was the necessary penultimate act in a racial drama that would culminate with New Zealand’s total Europeanization, or more specifically, the birth of a transplanted version of Thomson’s beloved borderlands.⁴³

IV

Thomson’s argument that the demise of Kāi Tahu as an inevitable precondition to the civilization of New Zealand would have been inconceivable in early 1844, when the south was firmly under Kāi Tahu sovereignty and Kāi Tahu chiefs exercised a large degree of control over cross-cultural engagements. But by the time his *Rambles With a Philosopher* was published in 1867, colonial social formations in the south were radically different from 1844, even 1857, and shifts in interracial intimacies were fundamental to those alterations.

Three developments transformed patterns of cross-cultural relations in southern New Zealand during the 1850s. First, the onset of systematic colonization with the establishment of the Otago colony in 1848 signalled a momentous demographic shift in the balance between Kāi Tahu and the newcomers. Since the 1820s the Kāi Tahu population had declined steeply: disease and both inter- and intra-tribal conflict had reduced the population from around 5000 to less than 1400 in 1848 (with maybe 60% of that figure living south of the Waitaki).⁴⁴ This decline contrasted sharply with the flow of Europeans into the region in the 1850s. New colonial communities sprang up, loosening the bonds that some old whalers had to their Māori kin and encouraging others to effectively abandon their Kāi Tahu families altogether.⁴⁵ These demographic shifts meant that Kāi Tahu were slowly swamped by Europeans. In 1860, John Paratene imagined colonization as a ‘rising tide’ that was submerging Māori land, an image later echoed by Wi Naihera, who later described migration and colonization as ‘when the waves rolled in upon us from England’.⁴⁶ This swamping meant that bonds between the colonists and Kāi Tahu became much less important to the colonial order of things.

Second, the colonists placed great value on knowledge, education and communication. Knowledge production and routine forms of bureaucratic governance underwrote the extension of colonial power. The Otago Association and, after 1853, the Provincial government believed that the creation of knowledge about the region would not only draw migrants to the colony, but was essential to effective governance. The provincial government established bureaucratic structures that continuously produced, collated and ordered knowledge, processes that were less and less dependent on Kāi Tahu and Māori ways of knowing. The distillation of Kāi Tahu knowledge into printed travel narratives, maps and charts, and government documents rendered actual Kāi Tahu people marginal: the printed word disembodied Māori knowledge, allowing it to circulate quickly and cheaply beyond the context of its initial transmission. Where men like Shortland and Tuckett were profoundly dependent on Kāi Tahu raketira, guides and pilots, later explorers like Thomson were much less reliant on Māori knowledge of the land. The explorers and surveyors of the 1850s and 1860s not only had the freedom to roam freely over a colonized landscape but they also were guided by an archive of knowledge that had steadily been collated for over a decade. Because it had already generated a rich archive of knowledge about the region’s geography, peoples and resources, strategic intimacy no longer underwrote state action. It was a new world structured around the routines of bureaucratic practice, statistical collation, and a boundless enthusiasm for the power of the printed word. Here, I think it is important to recognize the different cultural

logics of colonialism in the mid-1840s and the mid-1850s. In the 1840s, established patterns of cross-cultural engagement and the needs of an incipient settler colony required agents of colonial companies and the colonial state to become involved in indigenous communities and establish strong bonds with indigenous elites. This engagement was driven by a thirst for knowledge as the state wanted to facilitate the opening up of resources and the purchase of land. But once the land had been purchased through a sequence of large sales from 1844 through to the mid-1850s, these dynamics changed. Effectively mature colonialism required the state to be more distant and power shifted from individual officials to newly established offices and more elaborate routines of governance. In this increasingly depersonalized order, colonial authority needed clear channels of communication with the colonized, but it also depended on a clear social distance: ultimately power lay in the ability of colonizing power to articulate the grounds of difference upon which colonialism rested.⁴⁷

Third, in the mid-1850s there was a remarkable shift in the cultural orientation of the colonists. Whereas sealers, whalers, missionaries, and the earliest colonists were oriented towards the coast and lived lives defined by the ocean, the new colonists turned their backs on the ocean and looked inland. This was in part the outcome of public interest in the progress of exploration and surveying, which made the largely mysterious interior known to the colonists. More importantly, however, successful experiments with grazing sheep in the south, especially in coastal Southland and North Otago, demonstrated the economic value of pastoralism, encouraging the extension of economic activity and then settlement into parts of West and Central Otago and northern Southland.⁴⁸ Sheep drew the colonists into the interior and in these regions there were few Kāi Tahu and many colonists felt free to imagine the landscape as empty and history-less, a *tabula rasa* awaiting colonial improvement. Flows of sheep and people into the inland portions of Murihiku not only drew the colonists away from both the ocean and Kāi Tahu, but also effectively worked to permanently cement colonial authority, consolidating the province as an economic, cultural, and political space.

Taken together these three factors – migration, the production of colonial knowledge, and the turn to the interior – marginalized Kāi Tahu communities that were already struggling with the consequences of land loss. The new order that emerged out of these shifts displaced the forms of interracial intimacy that were central to the extractive economies of sealing and whaling and the strategic intimacies fostered by early colonial agents. The balance of power between native and newcomer had shifted markedly by 1860. Then the discovery of gold in the winter of 1861 irrevocably transformed the economic outlook of the colony and its demographic base. Dunedin's population literally doubled overnight and the interior of the province was seen as an el dorado promising unimaginable riches: Kāi Tahu had little place in the colonial imagination in Otago in the early 1860s.

Conclusion

This essay has made two key arguments. First, that while sexuality has loomed large in the pioneering work on interracial intimacies on colonial frontiers, we must not equate or reduce intimacy to sex. Sexuality certainly was a key concern of missionaries, administrators and social reformers, but it never embodied the full range of intimate relationships within a society. That is certainly true in Murihiku, where a range of cross-cultural intimacies developed, which not only connected sexual partners and husbands and wives, but which also linked white whalers with Kāi Tahu

workers and crewmen, explorers and surveyors with Kāi Tahu guides and workers, missionaries with native teachers, and agents of the state with Kāi Tahu raketira. Each of these types of cross-cultural relationships was shaped by quite different forms of affective, physical, and economic connection; they had different short-term consequences and divergent long-term impacts. Second, historians of colonialism need to read intimacy in its multiple forms within the wider emotive and cultural terrains of colonialism; in particular, we need to explore the co-existence of cross-cultural intimacy and distance, the place of both love and hatred across the boundaries of race, and histories of connection *and* distance. If we are to further enrich our understandings of the place of intimacy in making colonialism, we need to be committed to tracing its multiple forms and the transformation of its social meaning as well its origins and regulation by the state. Most importantly, we must be sensitive to its absence, its erosion, and its repudiation. Our histories of colonialism must grapple with disinterest, fear, anxiety and hatred as well as empathy, love and lust. Broadly understood, the practices and politics of both intimacy and social distance are fundamental to reconstructing the everyday engagements and struggles that were the very stuff of empires.

¹ 'Intimate, adj. and n.', *Oxford English Dictionary*:

<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/98506>. It is important to note that 'intimacy' was used with a sexual connotation before this, but again this sexualized meaning became more common at the end of the nineteenth century: 'Intimacy, n.', *Oxford English Dictionary*: <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/98503>.

² This phrase comes from Damon Salesa, 'Samoa's Half-Castes and Some Frontiers of Comparison', in Ann Laura Stoler, ed., *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*, Durham, 2006, p.72. Through 'strategic intimacy', Salesa is gesturing towards the importance of governing intimacy in colonial spaces and the subsequent imperial strategic importance of these matters. As this essay makes clear, my use of the term has a different inflection as it stresses the strategic significance of forms of elite cross-cultural homosocial engagement in opening up colonial spaces.

³ Ann Laura Stoler, 'Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast Asia', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 34, 3 (1992), p.514.

⁴ *ibid.*, pp.514-6; for the French case, see Emmanuelle Saada, *Empire's Children: Race, Filiation, and Citizenship in the French Colonies*, Chicago, 2012; and for the United States, Ann Laura Stoler ed., *Haunted by Empire*.

⁵ Damon I. Salesa, *Racial Crossings: Race, Intermarriage, and the Victorian British Empire*, Oxford, 2011. Salesa (p.15) suggests that the seeds for this argument were sown in the work of Alan Ward, especially *A Show of Justice: Racial 'Amalgamation' in Nineteenth Century New Zealand*, Auckland, 1973. For another approach to the tensions around intermarriage see Katherine Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart: Marriages of White Women and Indigenous Men in the United States and Australia, 1887-1937*, Lincoln, 2006.

⁶ C. A. Bayly, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870*, Cambridge, 1996, pp.165-7, 340, 373.

⁷ Durba Ghosh, *Sex and the Family in Colonial India*, Cambridge, 2006, p.69.

⁸ *ibid.*, chs1, 2.

- ⁹ Michael H. Fisher, *Indirect Rule in India: Residents and the Residency System, 1764-1858*, Delhi, 1991.
- ¹⁰ Bayly, *Empire and Information*.
- ¹¹ Norbert Peabody, 'Cents, Sense, Census: Human Inventories in Late Precolonial and Early Colonial India', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 43, 4 (2001), pp.819-50 and 'Tod's Rajast'han and the Boundaries of Imperial Rule in Nineteenth-Century India', *Modern Asian Studies*, 30, 1 (1996), pp.185-220.
- ¹² Lynn Zastoupil, 'Intimacy and Colonial Knowledge', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, 3, 2 (2002), para.3.
- ¹³ Lata Mani's landmark study of sati is an excellent demonstration of this gendered dynamic where the colonial state sought out the opinion of learned male experts: *Contentious Traditions: the Debate on Sati in Colonial India*, Berkeley, 1998.
- ¹⁴ Julia C. Wells, 'Eva's Men: Gender and Power in the Establishment of the Cape of Good Hope, 1652-74', *Journal of African History*, 39, 3 (1998), pp.417-38; Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, 'Public Mothers: Native American and Métis Women as Creole Mediators in the Nineteenth-Century Midwest', *Journal of Women's History*, 14, 4 (2003), pp.142-66; A. C. Metcalf, 'Women as Go-Betweens?: Patterns in 16th-century Brazil', in Nora E. Jaffary, ed., *Gender, Race and Religion in the Colonization of the Americas*, Aldershot, 2007, pp.15-28.
- ¹⁵ Atholl Anderson, *The Welcome of Strangers: an Ethnohistory of Southern Maori, A.D. 1650-1850*, Dunedin, 1996, and *Race Against Time: the Early Maori-Pakeha families and the Development of the Mixed-Race Population in Southern New Zealand*, Dunedin, 1991; Hana O'Regan, *Ko Tahu, Ko Au: Kai Tahu Tribal Identity*, Christchurch, 2001; Angela C. Wanhalla, 'Transgressing Boundaries: A History of the Mixed Descent Families of Maitapapa, Taieri, 1830-1940', PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, 2004.
- ¹⁶ Kate Stevens, "'Gathering Places": the Mixed Descent Families of Foveaux Strait and Rakiura/Stewart Island, 1824-1864', BA (Hons) research essay, University of Otago, 2008; David Haines, 'In Search of the "Whaheen": Ngai Tahu Women, Shore Whalers, and the Meaning of Sex in Early New Zealand', in Antoinette Burton and Tony Ballantyne, eds, *Moving Subjects: Gender, Mobility, and Intimacy in an Age of Global Empire*, Urbana, 2009, pp.49-66; Michael J. Stevens, 'Muttonbirds and Modernity in Murihiku: Continuity and Change in Kai Tahu Knowledge', PhD thesis, University of Otago, 2009.
- ¹⁷ Kate Riddell, "'Improving" the Maori: Counting the Ideology of Intermarriage', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 34, 1 (2000), pp.80-97; Salesa, *Racial Crossings*; Judith Binney, "'In-Between" Lives: Studies from Within a Colonial Society', in Tony Ballantyne and Brian Moloughney, eds, *Disputed Histories: Imagining New Zealand's Pasts*, Dunedin, 2006, pp.93-117.
- ¹⁸ Angela Wanhalla, *In/visible Sight: the Mixed-Descent Families of Southern New Zealand*, Wellington, 2009.
- ¹⁹ O'Regan, *Ko Tahu, Ko Au*.
- ²⁰ Tony Ballantyne, 'Paper, Pen, and Print: The Transformation of the Kai Tahu Knowledge Order', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 53, 2 (2011), pp.232-60.
- ²¹ Salesa, 'Samoa's Half-Castes and Some Frontiers of Comparison', p.72.
- ²² Edward Shortland, *Southern Districts of New Zealand: a Journal, with Passing Notices of the Customs of the Aborigines*, London, 1851, pp.206-7.
- ²³ *ibid.*, pp.81-82.

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- ²⁴ These are qualities that Atholl Anderson stresses in his short biography of Shortland. Atholl Anderson, 'Shortland, Edward', in *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* (DNZB), Vol. One, 1769-1869, Wellington, 1990, pp. 394-97.
- ²⁵ Shortland, *Southern Districts*, p.124. For another reading of Shortland's journey see Giselle Byrnes, "'The Imperfect Authority of the Eye": Shortland's Southern Journey and the Calligraphy of Colonisation', *History and Anthropology*, 8 (1994), pp.207-35.
- ²⁶ Shortland, *Southern Districts*, pp.124-5.
- ²⁷ *ibid.*, pp.2, 119.
- ²⁸ David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire*, London, 2001.
- ²⁹ Shortland, *Southern Districts*, pp.80-1.
- ³⁰ *ibid.*, pp.94-95.
- ³¹ 'It is worthy of mention also, that the more important families of a tribe are in the habit of devoting one or more of their members to the study of this traditionary knowledge, as well as to that of their "tikanga" or laws, and the rites connected with their religion. Persons so educated are their books of reference, and their lawyers.' *ibid.*
- ³² *ibid.*, pp.93-94.
- ³³ *ibid.*, see the tables inserted between pp.94-95.
- ³⁴ *ibid.*, p.104.
- ³⁵ *ibid.*, p.25-26.
- ³⁶ Anderson, 'Shortland, Edward'.
- ³⁷ Tuckett Diary, 2 May 1844, in Appendix A of Thomas M. Hocken, *Contributions to the Early History of New Zealand (Settlement of Otago)*, London, 1898, p.215.
- ³⁸ Tuckett, 5 May 1844, *ibid.*, p.216.
- ³⁹ J.T. Thomson, *Rambles with a Philosopher or, Views at the Antipodes by an Otagoian*, Dunedin, 1867, pp.63-64.
- ⁴⁰ *ibid.*, pp.65-66.
- ⁴¹ J.T. Thomson, 'On Barata Numerals', *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*, 5 (1872), pp.131-8.
- ⁴² Thomson, *Rambles*, pp.86-87.
- ⁴³ He pursued this project by overlaying Māori place names with a new layer of names drawn from the borderlands. See W.H.S. Roberts, *Place Names and the Early History of Otago and Southland*, Invercargill, 1913.
- ⁴⁴ Anderson, *Welcome of Strangers*, pp.187, 195-8.
- ⁴⁵ See Patahi's narrative: R. Wilson, *Patahi and the Whaler*, Dunedin, 1992, p.6; William Martin, 'A Pioneer's Reminiscences', MS-0205, Hocken Collections (HC), Dunedin; Angela Wanhalla, "'One White Man I Like Very Much": Intermarriage and the Cultural Encounter in Southern New Zealand, 1829-1850', *Journal of Women's History*, 20, 2 (2008), pp.34-56.
- ⁴⁶ W. A. Taylor Papers, vol. 5, p.26 and vol. 10, pp.114-5, Canterbury Museum (CM), Christchurch.
- ⁴⁷ For a reflection of how this shift restructured the operation of colonial power and how Kāi Tahu responded see Ballantyne, 'Paper, Pen, and Print'.
- ⁴⁸ This push into the interior inverted an earlier important demographic shift which took Kāi Tahu to the coast in the early nineteenth century, as they were drawn by the economic opportunities offered by sealers and whalers and they established substantial coastal communities based around the cultivation of potatoes.