Reconciliation, Representation and Indigeneity: 'Biculturalism' in Aotearoa New Zealand
(Volume 4 of Intercultural Studies)
Edited by Peter Adds, Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich, Richard S Hill, Graeme Whimp
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Reviewed by Aroha Harris

Reconciliation, Representation, and Indigeneity begins with the claim that it 'offers an up-to-date analysis of the reconciliation process between Māori and the Crown' (7). The editors do not stop at up-to-date analysis. They push the edited collection of thirteen essays that were once conference papers into more complicated territory, inviting a range of ontologies, nestled in the links between 'contemporary politics, the notion of activist research and historical and anthropological analysis' (7). This introduction seemed a lot for me to take in, though I fully appreciated the intellectual care the editors took as they combed through the argument, organisation, themes, and academic approaches and positions of the book.

Overall, the introduction worked well, and I found it useful to return to as I read the essays. However, some things seem to have been taken for granted. Little guidance is offered on how the editors define 'reconciliation process'. Instead, it is left to the chapter authors to make it apparent that the collection is concerned primarily with those reconciliation processes tied specifically to Treaty of Waitangi claims, negotiations, and settlements, while mindful of broader political moves that cultivate and model bicultural Māori-state relations. Nor are the editors clear on what they mean by activist scholarship or activist research. They give the impression that it is the Māori scholars who open the book – Peter Adds, Rawinia Higgins, Carwyn Jones, and Marama Muru-Lanning, in the first section entitled 'Engaged Scholarship and the Treaty' – who are the activist scholars, and that their activist scholarship is indivisible and derived from their iwi and hapū sensibilities (8,10). That may well be the case, but it is one argued by the editors rather than articulated in the essays. Further, if activist scholarship includes commitments to social justice and addressing inequalities of all kinds, then the introduction itself takes an activist position (as do later essays), effectively challenging the academy to question its engagement in 'yet another wave of colonisation' and commit to biculturalism on a 'meaningful level' (9-10).

The chapters are presented as offering a way into a bicultural world where, for example, reconciliation processes are often orated and performed in Māori contexts, so much so that the reader can 'venture into places where western scholarship seldom goes'. 'Listen while you read', the editors urge, 'listen and you will sense the audience around you responding to what is said' (10). That was not my experience of reading the book, although because I know or have heard many of the authors, I could imagine their voices, particularly if their chapter remained close to its spoken form. I could not imagine the audience – its size; its attentiveness; its gestures, laughter, or applause. I remain unconvinced that by reading typescript from the page I can be transported to its spoken first telling, particularly when that typescript is an academic publication. However, it is clear that performance has played a key role in reconciliation in Aotearoa, both historically – as Alex Frame and Paul Meredith expound in relation to performance in customary law here and in Tahiti – and contemporarily – as Andrea Blätter and Tanja Schubert-McArthur demonstrate in their chapter exploring the ceremony associated with the repatriation of human remains through Te Papa Tongarewa. Though no doubt a difficult component to capture with the written word, the editors and contributors do step up to the challenge of incorporating performance and shedding light on its meaning in Māori contexts. Thus, performance is a persistent theme, from Higgins' inaugural professorial lecture on

normalising te reo Māori (25-37), to the pūrakau through which Jones reveals Māori legal traditions (39-48), to the various public proceedings, presentations, and celebrations associated with Waitangi Tribunal inquiries and the negotiation of deeds of settlement with the Crown (for example: Richard Hill, 72-3; Therese Crocker, 81; Barry Rigby, 131; and Frame and Meredith, 148).

The bicultural world in which these performances occur brings into focus the subject of the book's subtitle ('"Biculturalism" in Aotearoa New Zealand'). Examples of how biculturalism has been implemented within institutions, such as the Waitangi Tribunal (Rigby) and Te Papa (Blätter and Schubert-McArthur), sit alongside studies of the problems with privatisation of natural resources and the co-governance or co-management arrangements for those resources that arise in the process of reconciliation (Muru-Lanning, and Rother). Even when contributors turn their attention to explaining the mechanics of negotiating and settling claims – for example, through the second section of the book 'Reflecting on Negotiations' – they show an overall push towards Māori-Crown relationships in which biculturalism is a given, expected of a Crown that it is truly committed to its Treaty obligations. As Hill points out, for iwi, settling historical claims has largely been about 'reassessing their relationships with the Crown seeking not only historical justice but new relationships with it' (69). Those new relationships have required ministers and officials of the Crown to understand the Māori world and world-view including, for example, the way Māori understand that the past acts on the present, and the present on the past. This is one among many paradigm-shifting, or at least paradigm-challenging, approaches that Māori take into the reconciliation process, one that allows for contemplation of the inescapability of the past while engaged in a process that seeks to end or resolve it. Indeed, throughout the book, the past is never far from view. The contributors demonstrate their awareness of the histories that act on the contemporary issues they address – whether the 'deep history' of 21st-century demography (Robert Didham and Paul Callister) or the colonial histories that are at the root of the Ngāi Tahu and Tainui settlements of the 1990s (Martin Fisher). However, these are the works of academics and practitioners knowledgeable in the history of the Treaty of Waitangi, and the current reconciliation processes. Those contributors who have practiced in the field give the book a certain experience-based authority, and readers new to the subject may well take on the importance of history. But, as Adds (19-24) points out, so much more needs to be done to address the poor state of general knowledge about the Treaty of Waitangi and Treaty settlements among New Zealanders. Not only does the nation need to get to grips with our reconciliation processes and their attendant histories, it also needs to prepare for the tougher constitutional conversations about rangatiratanga and sovereignty, which settlements have so far been unable to silence, despite the weight of official refusal to engage in those debates.

Adds brings home one of the volume's overarching features – a reflective review of New Zealand's reconciliation processes of recent decades that is critical but not unreasonable, congratulatory but not naively so. The authors understand the complexities of reconciliation, most as a result of first-hand involvement. They appreciate the advances made since the process first began have been and remain problematic, and know there is more problematic work to do. Though critical and challenging, *Reconciliation, Representation and Indigeneity* is also visionary and productive. Its authors imagine a space beyond grievance, beyond negotiation, and beyond settlement. Their goals extend far beyond the reconciliation horizon, to positive and durable futures in which Māori are respected in ways and to the extent that te reo Māori, Māori legal frameworks, and Māori approaches to government all flourish. Nor are these imaginings for Māori alone. Biculturalism offers an educative and embracing route to a social and political maturity within which the more difficult conversations – between Māori and

Pākehā, Māori and the Crown – that tend to become prey to mostly negative media might be given a calmer hearing. In such a future, Māori-Crown relationships can be played out in their full magnificence, not only in the moments of ceremony and special occasion, but also in the daily lives of Aotearoa New Zealand. This future is not problem-free, but it is – in this publication – possible.