

Do We Need Kiwi Lessons in Biculturalism? Considering the Usefulness of Aotearoa/New Zealand's Pākehā Identity in Re-Articulating Indigenous Settler Relations in Canada

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Narratives of “métissage” (Saul, 2008), “settler” (Regan, 2010; Barker and Lowman, 2014) “treaty people” (Epp, 2008; Erasmus, 2011) and now a focus on completing the “unfinished business of Confederation” (Roman, 2015) reinforce the view that the government is embarking on a new political project of Indigenous recognition, inclusion and partnership. Yet reconciliation is a contested concept, especially since we are only now dealing with the inter-generational and traumatic legacies of the Indian residential schools, missing and murdered Indigenous women and a long history of (at least) cultural genocide. Further, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, with its focus on Indigenous self-determination, has yet to be implemented in Canadian law. Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) presented over 94 recommendations and sub-recommendations to consider, outlining a long-term process of creating positive relationships and helping to restore the lands, languages,

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political power, sovereignty and dignity of Indigenous peoples in what is now Canada.

One model of change is afforded by the development of biculturalism in Aotearoa/New Zealand (NZ). NZ was founded on Indigenous-settler power sharing principles in 1840 after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, but for most of its history it has been a European settler-dominated English-speaking nation state. This dynamic began to shift in the 1970s and 1980s, due to concerted Indigenous Māori political mobilization, which invigorated a process of biculturalism. Te Reo Māori became an official language, government departments sought to become bicultural, and forms of political and economic power sharing evolved, including local co-management of some resources. This was accompanied by Crown settlements to Māori *iwi* (tribes) wronged by breaches of the treaty. Given that NZ is sometimes seen as a prototype of Indigenous-settler¹ relations in the Western world (Phung, 2013; Coates and Poelzer, 2015; Fleras and Maaka, 2000; Veracini, 2015), this article explores what Canada might learn from the Kiwi experience in terms of both opportunities and challenges.

Within this larger research area, this article maintains a more selective focus. A key identity marker missing from the Canadian lexicon is an internalized and contingent settler identity, using Indigenous vocabulary and reliant on a relationship with Indigenous peoples. Since the early nineteenth century, European traders/explorers/colonists have been known as *Pākehā* by Māori, and Māori began to identify as Māori (and not just members of a tribe or community) after developing a relational identity with *Pākehā*. *Pākehā* has recently been used by progressives to denote those who uphold treaty rights and principles of Indigenous self-determination. A key goal of this article is to interrogate the history and characteristics of *Pākehā*, to gauge its utility in promoting Indigenous-settler biculturalism, and then to see if such a term is viable in Canada as we undergo a tentative (and contested) process of reconciliation.

Terms like *Pākehā* and “settler” may at one level seem denotative, that is, possessing a literal first order meaning: people who are non-Indigenous. These terms, following Barthes (1977), also have connotative dimensions, in that they go well beyond description, distinguishing non-Indigenous peoples from Indigenous peoples, while problematizing the Eurocentric and colonizing aspects of the settler state. These terms also connote an awareness of an unequal power relationship with Indigenous peoples iterated through ongoing colonial practices. They potentially signal a desire to change this imbalanced relationship in favour of Indigenous peoples.

This article begins with an overview of NZ’s history, framed within the interactions with and evolving identities of Māori and *Pākehā*. Self-identification as *Pākehā* has been growing since the Māori renaissance of the 1970s and 80s. Ward and Liu observe, “Perhaps as many as a quarter of

Abstract. Canada is beginning to slowly embrace an ethic of Indigenous-settler biculturalism. One model of change is afforded by the development of biculturalism in Aotearoa/New Zealand, where recent Indigenous Māori mobilization has created a unique model in the Western settler world. This article explores what Canada might learn from the Kiwi experience, focusing on the key identity marker Pākehā, an internalized and contingent settler identity, using Indigenous vocabulary and reliant on a relationship with Indigenous peoples. This article gauges Pākehā's utility in promoting biculturalism, noting both its progressive qualities and problems in its deployment, including continued inequality, political alienation, and structural discrimination. While Canada has no Pākehā analogue, terms such as “settler” are being operationalized to develop a larger agenda for reconciliation along the lines recommended by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. However, such terms function best when channelled towards achieving positive concrete goals, rather than acting as rhetorical screens for continued inaction.

Résumé. Le Canada commence lentement à adopter une éthique de biculturalisme autochtone-colon. Un modèle de changement est offert par l'évolution du biculturalisme en Aotearoa Nouvelle-Zélande où la récente mobilisation de la population autochtone maori a créé un précédent unique dans le monde de la colonisation occidentale. Cet article explore les enseignements que le Canada pourrait tirer de l'expérience « kiwi » en se concentrant sur le principal marqueur identitaire Pakeha désignant une identité intériorisée et contingente qui emploie le vocabulaire autochtone et dénote une relation avec les populations autochtones. Cet article mesure l'utilité de la notion Pakeha dans la promotion du biculturalisme en soulignant autant les qualités progressives que les problèmes inhérents à son déploiement, y compris une inégalité continue, l'aliénation politique et la discrimination structurelle.

Même si le Canada n'a pas de notion analogue, des termes comme celui de colon sont utilisés pour établir un programme plus étendu en faveur de la réconciliation allant dans le sens des recommandations formulées par la Commission de vérité et réconciliation. Toutefois, de tels termes s'avèrent plus efficaces lorsqu'ils sont orientés vers l'atteinte d'objectifs concrets et positifs, plutôt que de servir d'écrans rhétoriques perpétuant l'inaction.

New Zealanders of European descent self-identify as Pākehā, which is a self-designation that acknowledges a relationship with Māori as a part of one's own group identity” (2012: 21). A 2013 study based on data from over 6500 respondents revealed that settlers who self-identify as Pākehā “are likely expressing a desire to recognize a positive relationship with Māori,” and “were generally supportive of symbolic aspects of biculturalism” (Auckland University, 2013).

However, Pākehā identity is problematic in several respects. First, it has been deployed by some progressives to cast white settlers as a second Indigenous people. Second, while it aids recognition of Māori as the original peoples of the land, it elides engaging with ongoing colonial institutions, practices, structural racism and settler privilege. It can also mask rampant economic and social inequalities borne of neoliberal reform. Third, Pākehā excludes non-European settlers such as Asian and South Asian peoples. As such, other terms such as *Tauīwi* (outsider/foreigner) or *Tangata Tiriti* (people of the treaty) are attractive, at least in academic circles, as more inclusive categories.

Why Canada has no Pākehā analogue is the focus of the second part of this article. Space constraints inhibit a detailed historical overview of Indigenous-settler relations in Canada, and there are many recent works engaging this theme (for example, King, 2012), as well as the detailed and impeccably researched overview of the relationship in the first of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's two historical volumes (TRC, 2015).

I suggest that terms such as “settler” are being usefully operationalized in the existing academic literature on reconciliation and Indigenous decolonization. The use of settler may accomplish a role similar to the use of Pākehā. This, coupled with the idea of everyone being a “treaty person” (Coates and Poelzer, 2015; Epp, 2008; Erasmus, 2011) and *Kiciwamanawak* or cousins (Johnson, 2007) may help to develop a larger agenda for promoting forms of reconciliation along the lines recommended by the TRC. However, as with Pākehā, terms such as these function best when channelled towards achieving positive concrete goals, rather than acting as rhetorical screens for continued inaction.

Relational Identities in Aotearoa/New Zealand

It's important in any consideration of Kiwi lessons, such as they are, to be clear about the obvious differences in the two cases. First, NZ was colonized much later than Canada, and by only one colonizing power, with one treaty and one fairly culturally and linguistically cohesive Indigenous population, concentrated within a geographic area the size of the British Isles (Salmond, 1997). Conversely, Indigenous peoples in Canada have a wide range of geographical, legal, social, cultural and linguistic differences, with 633 Indian bands, some 3,500 reserves, and 11 language families divided into 53 languages (Voyageur and Cailliou, 2000/2001: 109–24).

While Christian conversion was widespread alongside the development of syncretic religious forms such as the Rātana Church, Māori were not forced to attend Indigenous residential schools, although integrated day schooling was designed to assimilate and indoctrinate, to create “Brown Britons” (Simon and Tuhiwai Smith, 2001: xi). Ranginui Walker notes his people's “success in maintaining cultural continuity in the face of tremendous assimilative pressures” (1989: 96). However, Maori and Indigenous peoples in Canada share similar experiences of colonization, with long records of broken agreements, structural discrimination, high levels of incarceration and problematic socio-economic and health indicators. Neither country has successfully decolonized nor have there been any serious efforts to undertake this process.

The first Māori settlements date back to 500 AD, and by 1200 AD there were over twenty tribes in the North Island and some three or four

in the South Island, each possessing its own territory, government, and self-sustaining economy (Alves, 1999: 3–5; Consedine and Consedine, 2001: 79). Initial contact between European explorers and Māori took place in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, followed soon after by slow British colonization, which rapidly increased in the nineteenth century.

The term “Māori” was used as far back as 1801, possibly earlier, to mean “local, inland or normal people” but could also denote natural features, such that *wai Māori* refers to fresh water, while *wai tai* is used for sea water. *Tangata Māori* denoted ordinary, established institutions, people, food, treasures, family and larger groups (Salmond, 1997: 21–22). A sense of coherent Māori identity was the product of contact with foreign explorers and traders, which marked a change from the primary forms of identity, based on *whanau* (family), *hapu* (community) and *iwi* (tribe or extended community). Of these, the primary unit for identification, with the right to self-determination traditionally, is the *hapu* (Maaka and Fleras, 2005; Mutu and Jackson, 2016). As such Māori identify most prominently as members of a *hapu*, and the secondarily according to their membership in an *iwi*, such as Ngāi Tahu, Ngāpuhi, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Porou, and Waikato-Tainui, to name just some of the larger contemporary ones.

Māori generally define their *iwi* and *hapu* affiliations through *whakapapa* or genealogy. There are five primary types of *whakapapa*, the most common being *tararere*, which narrates “a single line of descent from an ancestor” (Taonui, 2016). Identity is contingent on the discretion of the community, with little government involvement as to who is a member of a *whanau*, *hapu* or *iwi*. There is no blood quantum or status as in the United States and Canada, and no equivalent to the *Indian Act* which regulates who is or is not Māori in a general sense, or more specifically a member of a particular *hapu* and *iwi* (Mutu and Jackson, 2016: 8, 27, 30–35; O’Sullivan, 2007: 35, 80–81, 96–7).

From the beginning of the nineteenth century, Pākehā was used to refer to non-Māori, a term said to have come from the term *pakepākehā* after an ancient light-skinned people who travelled from the sea, outside of Māori lands. Historian Anne Salmond notes a range of terminology from this period: “‘*maitai*’ in the north, ‘*tupua*’ in Hauraki, ‘Pākehā’ on the East Coast and ‘*tangata pora*’ in the south,” most of which disappeared from common usage by the end of the century (1997: 279). Both *Māori* and Pākehā embodied dynamic, evolving, and relational identities, to which must be added the intermarriage between Pākehā and Māori, which produced further levels of hybridity (Wanhalla, 2013).

Pākehā identity as relational and contingent was evident by the signing in 1840 of the Treaty of Waitangi, which is considered NZ’s founding document and the basis of an enduring myth of biculturalism between Māori and Pākehā (Orange, 1987: 2). The treaty has only one reference to Pākehā, referring to those who lived under the governance traditions and protocols of

Māori *iwi* (*Tikanga Māori*), and often intermarried, making them what Goldsmith has called a “naturalized native” (2005: 78).

Not unlike the Canadian situation, nineteenth century NZ was marked by settler duplicity over the implications of treaty (Walker, 1989: 263–72). By 1900, 95 per cent of Māori land had been taken away, which resulted in the destruction of traditional culture and modes of living (Jackson, 1993: 70–71, 77; Walker, 1990: 322). War, disease, cultural destruction and a declining birth rate also took their toll. From an estimated Māori population of 300,000 in 1840, by the turn of the century, numbers had declined to 30,000 (Balzar, 1999: 342–43). Yet, Māori have a long history of resistance to colonization, which includes a Declaration of Independence in 1835 to create a nation-state, the *Kingitanga* or Māori King movement from 1858 and resistance to British expansion during a series of colonizer-instigated land wars from 1845 to 1872 (Bargh, 2010: 43–44; Consedine and Consedine, 2001: 83–85; Orange, 1987: 226–27; Walker, 1990: 321–22, 338).

Māori also gained political representation before other Indigenous peoples in the British imperial system. In 1867, Māori males of voting age had the right to elect four representatives to the colonial assembly (Bargh, 2010: 38–41). Further, Māori were never considered wards of the state. The downside was that Māori were grossly underrepresented, with four seats for 56,000 Māori, versus seventy-two seats for 171,000 Europeans. This imbalance was not properly rectified until 1981 (Bargh, 2010: 49, 89–90).

By the 1940s, assimilative schooling and the internalization of colonial narratives of British superiority resulted in many Māori turning their backs on traditional religion, cultural practices and language, resulting in a Māori “non-culture which existed in a sort of limbo” (MacDonald, 1989: 57–58). At the same time, government officials touted New Zealand as a “paragon of racial harmony” (Maaka and Fleras, 2000: 98), a tapestry “in which light and dark threads were interwoven” (Sharp, 1990: 6) with Māori and Pākehā “glorifying alike in the one title of ‘New Zealander’” (Sinclair, 1986: 204). Until the 1970s, claims of biculturalism were primarily rhetorical, used to disguise British mono-cultural hegemony (Maaka and Fleras, 2000: 98; Spoonley, 2005).

The myth of Māori acquiescence to British hegemony was shattered in the 1960s and 1970s, epitomized by such highpoints as Whina Cooper’s land march (1975), and the rise of a range of groups struggling against the state for their Indigenous treaty-guaranteed rights (Poata-Smith, 1996: 105; Walker, 1990: 331). De facto forms of biculturalism grew out of Māori protest, and the idea of a Māori-Pākehā partnership developed through such signposts as the 1975 Waitangi tribunal. David Lange’s Labour government from 1984 signally promoted a bicultural turn. Te Reo Māori became an official language in 1987, Māori educational systems were promoted, there was widespread introduction of Māori names for institutions and a reinvigoration of Māori culture. Overall, the

relationship was reframed during this period as one between *tangata whenua* (people of the land) and the *tangata tiriti* (settlers represented by the treaty) (King, 1985; Orange, 1987; Walker, 1989, 1990).

The state introduced a range of bicultural policies, beginning at the shallowest level with recognition of the cultural traditions of Māori (but little else). Further along the scale, the state worked to distribute some resources back to Māori, while a third bicultural focus was the transformation of all monocultural institutions, with a sharing of decision making and resources (Durie, 1998: 101). Durie has divided biculturalism another way, into “bicultural reformism (adapting Pākehā institutions to meet Māori requirements) and bicultural distributivism (developing different and specifically Māori institutions to share the authority defined by the treaty).” The term is still contested and there remains considerable debate about whether biculturalism has gone far enough, or too far, or has achieved some rough form of balance (Durie, 1998: 98–102).

This puts Māori-Pākehā partnership at the centre of the way the state is imagined and governed. It does so at two levels, first through the biculturalization of centralized state institutions. This can also have a sort of trickle-down effect by being mirrored in regional and municipal institutions and in universities, schools, churches and other local institutions. Second, it is expressed through the treaty settlement process (not perfect by any means), which confers a level of financial compensation, territorial settlement, and political authority to selected *iwi*.

Biculturalism and Pākehā Identity

A sense of two-pronged relational Pākehā identity flowed from settler support for Māori activism of the 1970s and 80s, asserting solidarity with the political and social goals of Māori but also expressing a form of settler distinctiveness (Bell, 1996). Paul Spoonley, for example, sees Pākehā as “a product of New Zealand, not of Europe.” Spoonley has used the term since the 1970s to identify himself, as a “political statement as much as one that describes my cultural associations and origins,” as well as “obligations and a commitment” (1991: 146).

Being Pākehā has both progressive and overtly self-serving and colonizing dimensions. For the prominent historian Michael King, Pākehā embodied two meanings. In a descriptive sense, the word “applied to non-Polynesian people and things in New Zealand that derive originally from outside New Zealand—most often from Europe.” Second, there was a discursive meaning: “*things that are no longer simply European ... people and things that derive from abroad but that, through the transformations of history and geography, through their new characteristics and combinations, are now unlike their sources and antecedents*” (King, 1991: 16, italics added).

King's desire for rapprochement with Māori implied bringing both groups together, stressing the settler aspects of being Indigenous, alongside the putatively Indigenous elements of being a settler. For King, Māori were also settlers, just settlers who had come earlier (1985: 160). As he put it, "In the beginning we were all immigrants to these islands, our ancestors boat people who arrived by *waka*, ship or aeroplane. The ingredients of our indigenous cultures, too, were imported: the Polynesian language that became Māori, and English" (1991: 9). Since Māori were merely the *first settlers*, King had problems with what he saw as the radicalization of Māori politics during the 1980s. Ideally, Pākehā figured as one-half of a partnership, which implied that Māori demands for self-determination could not be tolerated if they impinged on the privileges of Pākehā. Radicals, King felt, were racist, with their views "the matching precepts of Hitler's Germany, Enoch Powell's Britain and Idi Amin's Uganda" (1991: 9).

At the same time, settlers were provided with a more rooted settler identity, since Pākehā were, King averred, "a second indigenous New Zealand culture" (1991: 19). This conclusion was supposed to reassure settlers that they too belonged in NZ, that their "symbiotic relationship to *Māoritanga*" relied on shared territory, shared history, and respect for the individual histories of the two peoples. His arguments simultaneously contested Māori status as *tangata whenua* and sought to unilaterally impose boundaries in terms of what was acceptable for an Indigenous people demanding self-determination, and what was not (19–20).

This framework of supporting Māori rights while also seeking to rein in their purported radicalism is to some extent echoed in the work of some prominent sociologists. David Pearson, for example, presents Pākehā self-identification as "an explicitly nationalist endeavour to create a postcolonial identity that fully acknowledges the bicultural, possibly binational, foundations of the settler state." Such a vision would include "constructing a treaty-based vision of shared origins and destinies." The ideal behind this is a relationship founded on partnership between two founding peoples, and as such "is supportive of recent moves towards greater Māori autonomy and recognition" (2009: 49).

Given this partnership ethos, both King (1991) and Pearson raised concerns about Māori "radicalism" or "more radical claims for Māori self-determination" which, Pearson argues, may "be seen as undermining a socially cohesive partnership" (2009: 49). Pākehā are thus committed to a partnership framed by the treaty but one defined by Pākehā that imposes limits on the ability of Māori to push for Indigenous rights. There is clearly a boundary; if demands are deemed too radical, they must be suppressed to enable a harmonious partnership.

Avril Bell identifies the deeply problematic implications of allowing Pākehā to determine the acceptable boundaries of Māori behaviour, especially given the continued privilege settlers hold. Bell defines Pākehā

through the lens of racial domination, as “the white, ‘political descendants’ of the group who colonized Aotearoa [and who] inherit the political (and material and symbolic) privileges ‘secured’ by the practices of colonization.” Being Pākehā is then to acknowledge the inherited “colonial relationality to Māori” (2004: 17). For Bell, self-identifying as Pākehā should be a disruptive exercise, “displac[ing] white New Zealanders from their position of discursive exnomination as *the* (normal, ordinary) New Zealanders.” Explicitly identifying different types of New Zealanders and highlighting racial hierarchies enables Bell to discursively undermine “white hegemony” while promoting “progressive or ‘postcolonial’ politics” (Bell, 1996: 280–81, 153–54).

She puts it appositely that while Pākehā may be “broadly sympathetic to Māori and critical of the way in which colonization has worked in Aotearoa/New Zealand,” this doesn’t change the reality that “Pākehā are the beneficiaries of those colonizing processes” (155). Self-identified Pākehā are not necessarily aware of these benefits, Claire Gray adds. Through a series of interviews, she demonstrates that whiteness was largely invisible to her respondents and that Pākehā self-reflection as progressive rarely translated into concrete political action. Indeed, “Questions of power were ... overwhelmed in the interviews by the implication that a mutually beneficial relationship exists and that primarily the adoption of the label Pākehā is in Māori interests.” The core issue for interviewees was being “tolerant,” bicultural” and “in touch with Māoridom” versus the “cultural prejudice” of less enlightened white New Zealanders. Racism for respondents was then about “interpersonal interactions” and not about unequal access political power (2012: 60).

This lack of reflexivity means that Pākehā may have clear limits to what they will tolerate in a bicultural situation. Surveys and focus groups by Ward and Liu note a strong rhetorical commitment to Māori rights among Pākehā for “the symbolic representation of biculturalism and acknowledg[ment of] treaty grievances.” They are however “largely unprepared to support initiatives that are perceived to provide categorical privileges for Māori in terms of material resources in order to address past injustices or achieve social equality” (2012: 63). Another way of expressing it is that Pākehā have been supportive of “symbolic biculturalism,” which involves changing how the state and society is perceived, but they are more reluctant to endorse “resource biculturalism,” in the form of financial disbursements and other perceived privileges to Māori (Callister, 2011: 1).

Overall, Pākehā remains a term invoked primarily by academics and activists. As an ethnic descriptor it appeared only once on the NZ census, in 1996 as the category “NZ European/Pākehā.” It resulted, as Statistics NZ reports, in “a significant adverse reaction from some respondents,” and was subsequently changed in the 2001 census to “New Zealand European” a term first introduced in 1991 to refer to “people of European

ancestry who had strong generational attachments to New Zealand” (2009: 14). A 2013 study of over 4,000 white respondents demonstrated that the primary mode of self-identification is as “New Zealander” at 52 per cent, followed by much lower levels of support for “New Zealand European” and “Kiwī,” with Pākehā a distant fourth (Auckland University, 2013).

NZ’s biculturalism is hardly perfect. On the positive side, Māori have achieved parliamentary representation higher than their percentage of the overall population, alongside prominent Māori in cabinet and in other positions of leadership. Recent studies demonstrate that Māori and Pākehā are equally committed to common NZ symbols and national culture, a unique situation relative to other Western settler societies (Sibley and Liu, 2007). Changes since the 1980s have resulted in a rise of symbolic biculturalism and a Māori resurgence. This has also been accompanied by numerous settlements for *iwi* (roughly 1 to 2 per cent of the value of what was taken), which have helped generate a growing “Māori economy” worth \$40 billion annually (Te Amo, 2015).

The treaty settlements process has been uneven, and some rightly signal the low economic status of most Māori relative to Pākehā, in part a result of successive neoliberal policies from the 1980s onwards. Māori unemployment as well as the percentage of Māori living below the poverty line has risen significantly. Similarly, access to housing has plummeted (Poata-Smith, 2013: 150–55; Rashbrooke, 2013: 27). The percentage of prisoners who are Māori has also increased since the 1980s; currently 52 per cent of male prisoners are Māori and 63 per cent of women. This marks a starkly negative trend compared with earlier figures from the 1980s (Statistics NZ, 2012).

Added to this skewed rise of symbolic biculturalism coupled with increasing Māori poverty is the marginalization of non-Māori and non-Pākehā groups, including established South Asian and Chinese communities. The idea that biculturalism is about Māori and Pākehā to the exclusion of other ethnic groups who are tolerated but not officially recognized reflects a long history of discriminatory legislation (Pearson, 2009: 49). While political leaders pay lip service to NZ as an evolving multicultural society within a bicultural framework, there is little support for culture or language retention by communities of colour. Other terms such as *Tauīwi* and *Tangata Tiriti* have been deployed in recent years to create a more inclusive political atmosphere; neither is widely used, although the government has been keen to promote *Tangata Tiriti* as a catch-all term for non-Indigenous New Zealanders (Mila, 2013: 92). This term was used by the government during their 2013 constitutional reform process to denote all those who are non-Māori, and was also used by the 2016 independent Māori constitutional review process organized through the Iwi Chairs Forum (Burrows and O’Regan, 2013; Mutu and Jackson, 2016).

Finally, a concomitant to the rise of biculturalism has been a white nationalist backlash, organized through groups such as the One New Zealand Foundation and the rightwing publisher Tross. The arguments are facile and rather predictable, and include presenting biculturalism as a conspiracy between a cabal of Māori elite and weak governments seeking to destroy the country at the expense of white NZers and the majority of Māori (Baker, 1998: 4; 17; see also Robinson, 2011: 8).

Equally prevalent is the argument that Māori leaders relinquished sovereignty to the crown in 1840 and agreed to live under British law in return for protection and status as imperial subjects (Baker, 1992: 11). To suggest Māori deserve more than other New Zealanders is inflammatory and creates an “Apartheid Aotearoa with different rights for different races” (Robinson et al., 2013: 8). Any recognition is seemingly illegitimate because Māori are not really Indigenous, having come to what is now NZ only “a short time before the Europeans” (Baker, 1992: 19). To this can be added the claim that since many Māori are of mixed origins, they are not Indigenous enough, rendering them at best “pale, part-Māoris” (Robinson et al., 2013: 14).

If these arguments prove insufficient, Māori governance traditions and cultures are denounced in one publication as “not just dysfunctional but mad, criminally insane” societies (Robinson, 2011: 20). A recent Tross publication asserts, “With endemic warfare, bloody conquest, cannibalism, infanticide (especially of female children) and slavery, Māori society had become pathological” (Moon et al., 2013: 28). Such overt racism suffuses the right of the political spectrum; it arguably existed well before the onset of biculturalism, and has impeded a fuller development of its conceptual vocabulary and practice.

Where are Canada’s Pākehā? Métis and Settlers

In Canada we have no shorthand term to denote a settler of European origin in a discursive relationship with Indigenous peoples, except perhaps “settler ally.” One might use *shognosh*, an Anishinaabe term to refer to settler Canadians, which Spielmann uses throughout his book *Anishinaabe World* (2009), but this normally denotes settler ignorance (Spielmann pokes fun at his own lack of knowledge), not any sort of constructive relationship. From his own settler experiences, Fitzmaurice writes that for the Anishinaabe, the term implies “someone who does not understand the Aboriginal perspective of the world and fully believes him/herself to be superior to, and to know what is best for, Aboriginal people” (2010: 55).

The term “settler” has attained little mainstream acceptance in either Canada or the United States, although it is certainly used in an academic and activist context, as evidenced by former TRC Research Director

Paulette Regan's *Unsettling the Settler Within*, Adam Barker and Emma Battell Lowman's *Settler: Identity and Colonialism in 21st Century Canada* and Barker's forthcoming book *Settling: Invasion, Space-Making, and the Northern Bloc of Settler Colonialism*. In the United States, some recent works include Mark Rifkin's *Settler Common Sense* and Fujikane and Okamura's edited *Asian Settler Colonialism*. Indigenous academics and activists are equally adopting the tropes of settlement and unsemitment, such as Arthur Manuel's *Unsettling Canada: Rebuilding Indigenous Nations*.

Those adopting "settler" do so in a manner similar to NZ progressives. Regan aims in her work to "unsettle" the settler through a process of transformation to uncover "the colonizer who lurks within." This process of engaging with one's inner colonizer allows the settler to "confront the history of colonization, violence, racism, and injustice that remains part of the IRS [Indian Residential Schools] legacy today" (2010: 11). An unsettled settler would act in a manner similar to a progressive Pākehā and would as Regan posits, "risk interacting differently with Indigenous people—with vulnerability, humility, and a willingness to stay in the decolonizing struggle of our own discomfort" (15). In so doing we can then transform our settler identity "from that of colonizer to ally." The role of the TRC is largely to bring the facts to light, and to encourage settlers to question their comfortable settler narratives, through "a public truth telling in which settlers link critical reflection, enlightened vision and positive action to confront the settler problem head on" (16).

Similarly, Barker and Lowman assert that Canadians need to accept the term settler and engage with its negative colonizing implications if they desire to bring about constructive relationships with Indigenous peoples. Being a settler is to embrace an identity "shared by many but claimed by few," and this embrace involves recognizing unequal power relations, how settler comfort has been "forged through violence and displacement of Indigenous communities and nations" (2015: 2). The adoption of settler, like Pākehā, encourages a sense of agency, responsibility and accountability for what the settler state has done to Indigenous peoples, to understand in what ways settler people have benefited from "the dispossession and destruction of Indigenous peoples" while simultaneously denying that reality (13–14, 16).

Yet, as with Bell, Gray, and Regan, self-identification is insufficient; settlers need to actually bring about change for the term to have any meaning. As such, being a self-aware and self-conscious settler implies working "actively against" colonial power, while "pursuing decolonizing relationship building can be a form of 'direct action' against settler colonialism" (Barker and Lowman, 2015: 117). Morgensen similarly sees the potential in settler to highlight positionalities and bring about decolonizing change. It can be, he argues, "a trenchant tool to expose power relations, cultural logics and subjects formed by white-supremacist settler

colonialism” (2014). South of the border, Rifkin has aimed to unravel what he calls “settler common sense” often epitomized by settler comfort and ignorance of the coloniality embodied in settler-Indigenous relationships (2014: xvi–xvii).

This relational, contingent presentation of settler as a self-conscious and activist identity differs from its more commonplace academic use as a descriptor for those seeking to establish colonies to control Indigenous peoples and Indigenous lands (Veracini, 2010, 2015). Docker uses “settler colony” to refer to a “colonial society where the indigenous population was reduced to a small or tiny proportion of the overall population, whose majority population becomes composed of colonizers/migrants” (2004: 2), a definition little different from Pearson’s “settler societies” (2001: 5–6). Regan, Barker and Lowell, Rifkin and others deploy settler in a way similar to that of Pākehā: it can be a basic descriptor for a non-Indigenous person, or it might also express a commitment to a changing relationship with Indigenous peoples.

Tangata Tiriti: We Are All Treaty People

Paralleling settler, a cognate of *tangata tiriti* has developed over the past decade. The concept of “Treaty people” is in part based on the work of Sakej Henderson (2002), and is promoted by the Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC) in Saskatchewan through publications and teaching resource kits. Their 2008 volume describes a “‘brother-to-brother’ relationship between the First Nations peoples and the newcomers.” While the legal text is important, the OTC is clear that the treaty relationship will last forever and constitutes “a living relationship that can change to reflect the current realities of both Canadian and First Nations peoples.” It was further seen as being of mutual benefit, generating wealth, rights, and security, while promoting peaceful co-existence between partners. Including in this understanding is that both parties should be involved in joint decision making through regular consultation (OTC, 2008: 15–17).

Roger Epp similarly uses “treaty people” in his essay collection of the same name. Epp, who served as a TRC honorary witness, saw the inherent problem in reconciliation as fundamentally a “settler problem.” Returning to a treaty relationship which had been “ruptured” by settlers offered the hope of a new legacy between both communities (2008: 137–38). Former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Georges Erasmus has similarly made clear the importance of this treaty-based relationship, seeing treaties creating a “unique historical relationship,” which confers benefits as well as commitments (2011: vii).

This focus on shared responsibilities, benefits, and a renewed relationship was recently explored in Coates and Poelzer’s *From Treaty Peoples to*

Treaty Nation. Like the OTC, the authors emphasize the spirit of the original agreements and promote the treaty system as “first and foremost a pact between cultures and peoples and only secondarily a set of legal documents” (2015: xv). The focus is on the broad sweep of historical interaction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, the “hundreds of agreements [that] have been signed since the eighteenth century: constitutional agreements, self-government agreements and agreements to devolve federal and provincial responsibilities to Aboriginal government” (xviii). The authors are broadly hopeful, given what they see as the minimal level of overt violence and confrontations between the two groups. Notably, this tells the reader little about the larger climate of cultural genocide, which has been a central focus of the TRC, nor do the authors appear to be in favour of self-determination as such.

Echoing King and Pearson in the Māori case, Coates and Poelzer are wary of what they see as potential radicalism and criticize so-called “traditionalists” like Kiera Ladner, Taiaiake Alfred, Joyce Green, Glen Coulthard and Patricia Monture-Angus. The not-so-tacit conclusion here is that such claims are too unreasonable for the average settler Canadian to accept. For the authors Indigenous peoples are clearly “Canadians” and thus “treaty people” alongside settlers. Their “status and honour” and political “empowerment” are to be provided within the existing Canadian state, with potentially new forms of representation such as a “commonwealth of Aboriginal Peoples” serving potentially as a third order of government (2015: xx).

A prima facie objection to this concerns the nature of the treaties. While this concept might hypothetically work in areas where there are coherent treaties, it works less well in areas like much of British Columbia where no lands were ceded by Indigenous peoples, or where the treaties were created in a situation of coercion by the colonizing state (Barker and Lowman, 2015: 66–67). Daschuk, in *Clearing the Plains*, has cogently outlined the use of starvation under John A. Macdonald to induce Indigenous leaders to agree to treaties, on terms which were hardly equitable (2013: 134–35). Further, highlighting relations between early settlers and Indigenous peoples does not necessarily include people of colour and reflects broader concerns within settler colonial studies that whiteness can become normalized, as white settlers assume to speak for everyone who is not Indigenous (Fitzmaurice, 2010; Morgensen, 2014).

Canada’s Taiwi?

Critical race theorists (Lawrence and Dua, 2005; Mathur, 2013; Phung, 2013; Thobani, 2007) raise general concerns about the nature and cohesiveness of non-Indigenous Canadian category when discussions of

reconciliation and settler responsibility arise. How do people of colour (and I include myself here) fit into the emerging narrative about bicultural relations between Indigenous peoples and settlers? Are non-white people settlers, or can and do they fit into another category?

For settler colonial theorists like Veracini, settlers are a distinct category, and may not include people of colour. In his work, the settler state comprises three distinct groups: Indigenous peoples, European settlers and later migrants, who are often people of colour. As he puts it, “Settlers are *founders* of political orders and carry their sovereignty with them (on the contrary, migrants can be seen as *appellants* facing a political order that is already constituted)” (2010: 3, italics in original). As such, settlers create new political and social systems over the pre-existing systems of Indigenous peoples, while more recent immigrants do not necessarily have input in the creation of these systems into which they are obliged to integrate (Veracini, 2015: 41). Settlers then have a particular role; they are the ones who assume Bell’s “inherited coloniality” (2004: 17). Their ancestors were presumably the ones, acting in their names, who suppressed what Veracini calls “indigenous and exogenous subalternities,” while similarly casting the European settler as normal (2010: 18), as generative of the “common sense” Rifkin identifies.

The role of non-Europeans as settlers in Canada is contested, and there is no one size fits all model. Many people of colour have been marginalized, and for much of the history of Canada have been barred entry on the basis of racially discriminatory immigration legislation (Backhouse, 2010). This feeling of not fully belonging is all the more salient for black Canadians, who continue to be the target of carding, and other egregious racist policies (Cole, 2015). Black Lives Matter has been working in solidarity with Idle No More, notably in the recent occupation of the Indigenous Affairs office in downtown Toronto. Should black Canadians be considered settlers too, given a context of demonstrably widespread anti-black racism?

Barker and Lowman, for example, are somewhat vague on this question. Certainly, they argue, slaves and indentured labourers are not settlers. However, “their descendants might be” (2015: 18). Presumably, then, the key issue is not whether the person in question is positioned at the top of a social or racial hierarchy but to what extent he or she as an actor is responsible for and complicit in an exploitative relationship with Indigenous peoples (Corntassel et al., 2014). It is beyond the scope of this article to fully engage with this topic. However, among people of colour there are divergent voices over the extent to which the term “settler” works or does not, including trenchant critiques of those who would argue that people of colour can be complicit in settler colonialism (Sharma and Wright, 2009).

Arguably, people of colour can and do express solidarities with Indigenous peoples, and can share some experiences of settler racism,

and yet they may echo settler stereotypes of Indigenous peoples as part of their journey to integrate into what they understand as mainstream Canada. Phung notes, “Assimilated people of colour can produce similar settler colonial narratives in order to emplace their settler belonging on Indigenous lands” (2013: 294). To this, Mathur describes how newcomers are first confronted with the symbols of settler colonial power and “all too often remain blithely unaware of histories inscribed into the land that far predate Confederation and both British and French incursions onto this terrain.” Newcomers can in an effort to fit into the settler colonial hierarchies allow their understanding of Indigenous peoples to be mediated through a “colonial gaze” (2013: 3).

Multiculturalism is sometimes critiqued on the basis that it has been deployed by the settler state to integrate Indigenous peoples, by marginalizing them as another cultural group seeking recognition for their diversity. For Lawrence and Dua, those of us who are people of colour must recognize that we too are settlers and while we may experience instances of structural racism, we nevertheless maintain “colonial relationships with Aboriginal peoples” (2005: 134). This is not to position people of colour and white settlers as equals, but it is to recognize that people of colour nevertheless “live on land that is appropriated and contested, where Aboriginal peoples are denied nationhood and access to their own lands” (134).

Thobani has highlighted similar dynamics, noting how in the complicated game of settler colonialism, people of colour can become part of the structural processes of colonization, becoming complicit in “supporting the nation’s erasure of its originary violence and its fantasies of progress and prosperity” (2007: 16). This is of course not always the case, and many of the most trenchant critics of the settler state and its treatment of Indigenous peoples are from racialized peoples. Nevertheless, this progressive work suggests that everyone, whatever their skin colour or positionality, has a stake in working towards a better future.

Conclusion

Are descriptive and connotative terms for non-Indigenous peoples living on Indigenous lands useful for engaging with the changing dynamics of Western settler states? I have argued there that they have some utility but are not ideal in practice. Heidegger’s concept of “*sous rature*” or erasure, later adopted by Derrida, may be useful here. Current terminology, such as “settler,” may be, as Derrida would describe it, “inadequate yet necessary” to understand the role identities of non-Indigenous peoples within a settler state who support restoring Indigenous self-determination, power, agency, governance and traditional lands within a constructive relationship

with Indigenous peoples. Erasure refers to the process of striking out a word within a text, yet allowing it to still be legible; it signals that while the term is not ideal, it is the best that can be used under current circumstances (Saldivar, 2015: 527).

In time, as the reconciliation process advances, we may see Indigenous terminology deployed to better explicate Indigenous-settler relationships. Beyond settler and treaty person, the nehiyaw term *kiciwamanawak* (or “cousin”) may present a better way forward. As Johnson explains in *Two Families*, “this is what my Elders used to call you.” He continues: “When your family came here and asked to live with us on this territory, we agreed. We adopted you in a ceremony that your family and mine call treaty” (2007: 13). *Kiciwamanawak* implies a close reciprocal series of responsibilities and privileges that come with being part of a family and also implies the need for space to develop separately. Indeed, maintaining harmonious and familial relationships means respecting boundaries.

This cousin relationship may be a closer analogue to Pākehā than “settler” because it makes treaties and the subsequent relationship, both positive and negative, comprehensible within a non-European cosmology. Pākehā started out as the other but by the time of the treaty in 1840 were clearly cousins of Māori in the sense of living under Māori law and sharing in the benefits of living together. This may be a form of alliance building on Indigenous terms; cousins are adopted at the discretion of the *nehiyaw*, not the settler, which privileges the Indigenous side of the relationship in terms of identifying, describing and assigning role identities and responsibilities. This bears some similarity to the reciprocal relationality of guest and host (*manuhiri* and *tangata whenua*) outlined by Ani Mikaere in her overview of Māori *tikanga* or protocols (2011: 111–12).

Pākehā, like settler, began as a descriptive term, but both came to be “owned” by progressives seeking a different relationship with Indigenous peoples based on a decolonizing aesthetic. For terms like Pākehā, settler, and treaty person to have significance, those adopting the terms could prescriptively use them to enable action, and to connect with a wider project of achieving reconciliation on Indigenous terms, that is, working towards Indigenous self-determination and an honouring of the spirit of the treaties, while supporting the Indigenous resurgence that has been developing for some time. I share Corntassel, Dharmoon, and Snelgrove’s conclusion that any form of settler identity “should be discomfiting and provide an impetus for decolonial transformation” (2014: 2). If not, such terms may well lead to more obfuscation and a proactive rhetoric unmatched by any concrete political changes.

It will also be worthwhile to remember that the hard work of self-identified Pākehā and settlers may well function alongside the resurgent struggles of many Indigenous peoples who, as Corntassel notes, are seeking reconnection with “their traditional land-based and water-based cultural

practices” (2012: 89). For Cornassel and other proponents of Indigenous resurgence, achieving self-determination implies not only a rhetorical commitment to self-identifying as Indigenous, but also finding ways to reinvigorate traditional ways, “embracing a daily existence conditioned by place-based cultural practices.” He puts it that “whether they know it or not (or even want it), every Indigenous person is in a daily struggle for resurgence” (89).

For proactive settlers, seeking to support Indigenous resurgence, the task may consist of working to roll back the power and influence of the fully formed and intrusive societies of which we are a part. Our settler institutions, our judicial, governmental, educational and industrial systems are all thriving, thriving at the expense of those our state has sought to eliminate. For Indigenous peoples trying to regain what we as settlers have taken from them in terms of lands, languages, spiritual practices, cultures and other forms of traditional knowledge, their road is considerably harder. We would do well to reflect on this: rollback when compared to resurgence may be the easier part of reconciliation.

Endnote

- 1 The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues identifies Indigenous Peoples through several criteria which include: self-identification “at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member. Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies. Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources. Distinct social, economic or political systems. Distinct language, culture and beliefs. Form non-dominant groups of society. Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities.” (UNPFII, 2016). Lightfoot highlights three key elements for the UN: “(1) a pre-colonial presence in a particular territory; (2) a continuous cultural, linguistic, and/or social distinctiveness from the surrounding population; and (3) a self-identification as ‘Indigenous’ and/or a recognition by other Indigenous groups as ‘Indigenous.’” To this can be added experiences of marginalization, discrimination, poor access to healthcare and territorial displacement due to colonization (Lightfoot 2016, 11–12).

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