

the Maori people from their culture meant that the Maori was becoming landless and cultureless in his own country.

This was the time which therefore saw Ngā Tamatoa petitioning Parliament for the establishment of courses in Maori language and culture in all schools 'as a gift to the pakeha from the Maori'. It was the time of sit-ins in Parliament grounds and annual protests at Waitangi Day celebrations to draw attention to Maori grievances regarding land, culture, sporting contacts, educational and economic under-achievement, necessity for a bicultural bureaucracy and, particularly, the innate rights of Maoris to be able to have control over their destiny in Aotearoa.

Despite the intensity of the debate that surrounded Maori-pakeha relationships then, my own view is that ultimately we were all prepared to listen and prepared to redesign this *waka*, this national canoe of ours, to ensure that it took both Maori and pakeha aspirations, directions, into account. Maori writing of the time at the very least established what was offering from the Maori side—a basic emotional superstructure, a feeling of affinity which we felt was needed if we were to make balanced decisions about plotting our course—which stars to navigate by, which reefs to avoid. So, for all my criticism about the mismatch of Maori fiction with the political reality, it did have a major importance in establishing a basic values system, the trim to the *waka*. Hone Tuwhare, Patricia Grace, and Rowley Habib's earlier work all belong here.

Am I wrong, now, in believing that New Zealand today is not so prepared to listen, prepared to even negotiate a new future for us all? Is it so responsive to Maori needs?

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I made reference earlier to my having stopped writing in 1975. The basic purpose for writing had been to establish and describe the emotional landscape of the Maori people. The landscapes of the heart. I used to think that even if all the land were taken away, our *maraes* razed, our children turned into brown pakehas, that nothing could take away the heart, the way we feel. In many respects, the heart is really all that I've ever had. My knowledge of the language is minimal. My understanding of the culture has mainly been learnt at school and at university. It embarrassed me to be berated by my own people for not knowing Maori. Once I responded to Ngoi Pewhairangi that 'You're not Maori with your mouth. You're Maori here, in your heart. Anybody can learn how to speak Maori, but that won't make you one.'

But increasingly the emotional reality became less and less important to describe and the political reality assumed a higher