bined efforts to date, we must go on being actively involved in working to increase the awareness of all people to information resources, so that New Zealand as a whole benefits from the results of more informed decision making. This requires identifying the potential customer and his/her needs, and preparing information specifically for him/her: information that is not just about what is in the library, but about how s/he can get at, and use, the awesome resource. 4

We must tailor our services to the needs of specific target markets, remembering that libraries are only one of the many information providers available. Our challenge is to investigate, understand and accept the information seeking patterns of our clients, and adapt ourselves, our services and our collections to meet their needs.

In other words, good marketing begins with good research.

References


3. Line, Maurice B. op.cit.


REVIEW ARTICLES

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This slight but elegant treatise could be reviewed with an economy equal to that of the writer's, but I think it merits something more expansive. Firstly because, like all good writing, it prompts thought and a response, and secondly because its economy, which is in one sense impressive, is in another a problem. And it is a problem which I would like to address because it concerns Maori and Pakeha relations, which to me are at the heart of the piece.

Jim Traue's text is produced as a stylish pamphlet with every aspect of its production finely and thoughtfully presented. The cover colours are warm and strong; the ochre brown is reminiscent of the chiefly red of Maori tradition and the navy of a conservative blue. The illustration of fern fronds and the attractive fonts offer fitting images of, on the one hand, a tradition of oral and pictorial expression and, on the other, a tradition of writing and print. The fern frond segments recall the heke, the rafters (or ribs) which lead out from the ridgepole (or backbone of the ancestor) in a meeting house, and also the Maori custom of recitation of genealogical descent lines (heke). The typefaces of the script signify a long-practised and highly-developed use of writing and print. Two different cultural traditions complement each other here.

The bringing together of elements of Maori and Pakeha cultures is also apparent in the choice of words for the title and sub-title. In New Zealand, the word 'ancestors' is more common to Maori than Pakeha usage, although these ancestors, as the full title declares, are of the intellect and not the family. The selection of the word whakapapa to stand for genealogy has been made advisedly. The bicultural character of the cover predicts the content, in which Maori and Pakeha traditions are juxtaposed, and in which comparisons are drawn between them based on the differing practices of an oral culture and a culture of the written record.

The text is an amended version of a talk given at the Rotary Club of Wellington in June 1989, but it arose out of the writer's introduction of himself at a weekend seminar held on a Ngati Raukawa marae at Otaki 'to talk about the relationships between our institution [the National and Alexander Turnbull Libraries] and the Maori people and their culture' (p. 3). Feeling that neither the manner of his colleagues' introduction of themselves (usually by name, birthplace, and occupation), nor that of the Maori participants (some of whom named ancestors over 50 generations and referred to features on their tribal landscape) fitted him, Jim Traue chose to describe himself as 'the product of my wider culture' (p. 3). This culture 'of the written record and of the individual', he contrasts with the Maori people's 'oral culture of the closely-knit tribal group with a base in a particular locality' (p. 3).

Moving quickly over his family heritage, Traue went on to list other ancestors who 'have shaped my ideas, my beliefs, my values' (p. 4). He cited the teachers, colleagues and mentors of his own acquaintance and those outside his personal acquaintance of whom you might say he was 'mindful', for example, the scholars of Ancient Greece, the scribes and prophets of the Bible and the writers and thinkers of Europe and the colonized countries — the ancestors of 'the culture of the Western European peoples' (p. 5). Their kinship to each other and himself he claimed by virtue of the fact that they 'come from all languages and civilizations that have left written records' (p. 7); their legacy, the western intellectual tradition, is preserved in the books in our libraries.

Like other texts I have heard or read of Jim Traue's, this one is erudite, fluent and spare. Its sparseness, its tightness, speaks of sureness, of conviction — perhaps, of truth. To
use his point of comparison: it is articulate in the way of the best traditional knowledge, that is, it has the same depth of reference to a heritage of human ancestry and knowledge; it has the same respect, even reverence, for the past. It is similar too in the careful and apt choice of words. It is, moreover, comparable in the sophisticated use of whakapapa, that is, in using the genealogical method to illustrate relationships other than those of family, for example, to explain the evolution of the universe (as in the ancient and cryptic genealogies) or of knowledge. It is attractive, persuasive, and reassuring—and it would have suited the oratory of the marae. He said 'it created quite a stir' (p. 3). What sort of stir the reader does not know, which is a pity. Of the many things that stirred me about it, I have chosen two to comment on.

The first comment is complimentary. I think it is a good Pakeha whakapapa of the ancestors of the mind, and I think it is useful. Although it is his whakapapa, Traue also claims it for us: 'My ancestors of the mind, may our ancestors of the mind' (p. 5). How do I feel about having my whakapapa constructed for me? I like it, because these relations are familiar to me (although I don't have a close knowledge of each of their contributions to my heritage), and because I have never written out this family tree. I appreciate having someone do it for me. Other people, of course, may claim other ancestors of the mind, but I think that none of us can deny the inheritance from, for example, Ancient Greece, the Bible, the great European writers. That inheritance is implicit in our way of life, our daily life, in New Zealand, and so Maori people may claim it too—was the writer's 'our' more inclusive than he realized?

It is rare to find descriptions of Pakeha culture, and for that reason I think this piece is useful. Most of us have heard it said (sometimes apologetically by Pakeha, sometimes derisively by Maori) that the Pakeha don't have a culture. It is not a statement I agree with; if we exist we have a culture. But what I think is true is that many of us are unable, either at all or easily, to make statements about what our culture is. It is not that we lack a culture, but that we lack the experience of analysing and illustrating the extent and nature of it, and as a result we have no ready description of it. Perhaps this is a luxury; it is not a culture at risk. (Maori people have to ensure a constant and active expression of what their culture is in order to avoid being subsumed under the majority Pakeha culture.) Jim Traue has given us an explicit synopsis of what one part of our culture is, and it is a part which is largely implicit, that is, accepted but seldom spoken of, forgotten by some, accessible to and articulated by others (avid readers and scholars, for example). Its implicitness is supported by a practice of keeping it in books. The ancestors and traditions of Pakeha culture are not regularly recalled publicly as, for example, those of the Maori are in the re-statement of them during the ceremonies on the marae and at meetings. As Traue confirms 'we can wear it [our written culture] lightly because we no longer need to depend on memory' (p. 7).

It is therefore a comfortable read for Pakeha—-it assures them that this part of their culture is safe in the library. But at the heart of the piece, as I see it, is the matter of two cultures and the comparisons between them, and this is the focus of my second comment. Going back to my reference to the economy of the text, I want to discuss problems which stem from that economy: the lack of elaboration on key points, and the lack of a statement of intention.

The lack of elaboration of some key points in the text makes them appear simpler, easier than I believe they are. To take two examples: Firstly, the drawing of Maori and Pakeha cultures as respectively oral and written is a generalization, valid to some extent. In many circumstances Maori people show a preference for orality and they have a 'literature' which is oral in its origin and nature. But they do not only have an oral culture, for they also have traditions of record keeping in carvings, in patterns of weaving, in writing, and in print. As a result, a Pakeha whakapapa of the ancestors of the mind could have Maori lines—from Te Rangihaeke or Apirana Ngata or the many others who have left written and printed records. This would be unusual only because as Pakeha we are not accustomed to including these writers in our literary heritage. If we talk of Maori culture as an oral one, we are in danger of ignoring or underestimating a significant part of their culture. Alexander Turnbull understood this when he 'built a great library to comprehend the European, Polynesian and Maori inheritances of this country' (p. 5)

The other key point which I think ought to be elaborated on is Traue's use of whakapapa as a theoretical model for his text. This developed and descriptive method of genealogical recitation was customary of some traditional, indeed ancient, Maori texts; its contemporary use is, as far as I know, not very common. It seems to me, therefore, that the model needs some explanation, because for most Maori people today whakapapa refers to their immediate family and tribe, to 'living' ancestors, to the warmth and closeness of family relationships. This Pakeha whakapapa by comparison appears detached, objective and cold; the connection between the two may therefore seem tenuous, less credible and so less effective—recognizable perhaps to learned elders but not as accessible to the majority as we might expect of writing from 'the most democratic of cultures' (p. 8).

But are these minor quibbles? There is no doubt that Traue's comparisons are pertinent and informed. They are correct in a general way, although they are imprecise and sometimes unclear in their intention. But precision and clarity count enormously in the promotion of easy understanding between people. To me the problems in understanding between Maori and Pakeha are not at the level of generality (although I think that is a starting point for understanding). It is not the fact that we both have and can use genealogies that creates misunderstanding but the fact that we can't get used to the idea that we each use them and feel about them in different circumstances and with different degrees of emphasis and concern. To address these matters productively, in a way which will generate better understanding between Maori and Pakeha, requires that more rather than less be said.

The other, and deeper problem with the economy of the text that I want to discuss, has to do with the lack of a statement of intention. The writer fails to tell us why he composed and then published this piece. We know how the first version came about through the circumstances of the hui, but we don't know why he chose that kind of introduction of himself as part of a wider culture. My point here is that what is not said can lead the reader to make wrong assumptions about the writer's purpose. In the spoken forum there is the chance to check those assumptions immediately, checking them with the writer is more difficult and seldom done; clarity of intention is therefore more important in the published text.
Reading the text I could suppose that Jim Traue wrote it to explain the origin and purpose of the library and to foster a better relationship between his profession and the Maori people by highlighting the similarities and differences between their two cultures. There is no statement to this effect but there is some evidence of it. For example, in his drawing of a comparison between our cultures by explaining how we each acquire, preserve and publish our knowledge; in choosing English words and phrases which echo Maori language and custom, such as ‘whakapapa’ in the title, ‘the man whose cloak has been passed down to me’ (p. 5), ‘the “tribes” of the Western tradition’ (p. 6), and ‘I am proud of my ancestors . . . as proud as any Maori is of his ancestors . . .’ (p. 8). Alternatively, I could suppose that he composed this to teach Maori people, to put them right, and to counter accusations that Pakeha have no culture, no traditions, and no home in New Zealand, and that he did this by paralleling the speechmaking of the elders and the practice of genealogical recitation in his definition of Pakeha culture. Consider also that he wrote the account ‘to cover what I really wanted to say to that group, especially the Maori members [my emphasis], about the cultural heritage of people like me.’ (p. 4), and that in describing his family heritage he wrote ‘I am a New Zealander. I have no other home.’ (p. 4). My feeling is that he wanted to promote understanding of the library’s role and goodwill between Maori and Pakeha, to show an appreciation of Maori cultural traditions, and at the same time put paid to some of the myths about Pakeha culture. But without a statement to this effect, I can’t be sure, and if I’m not sure, then as a reader I can misinterpret his intentions.

There would be less room for misinterpretation if he had begun with a statement of intent at the start of the text such as: ‘I wrote this in the hope that it would explain the nature of my Pakeha heritage and the role of libraries, and at the same time show how aspects of our cultures are similar and how they differ. I also hoped that I would learn whether others felt that my views were correct, and that by discussing them we could come to a better understanding of each other’.

I suppose it could be said that the writing has a certain piquancy because it leaves the questions about intent unanswered, that it creates suspense, but it can also create uneasiness, even suspicion. I would like to know, for example, what kind of stir was caused by his speech at the hui. Were people impressed or annoyed? Did Maori feel that it was presumptuous to take over their custom of genealogical recitation? Did they think there was a suggestion of superiority in the emphasis on the traditions of literacy and libraries? Or did they warm to the similarities in thinking and behaving, and did it bring Maori and Pakeha there closer together? If it produced acclamation, knowing that when reading the piece would add to its richness and success. If it created bad feeling, repeating it at a Rotary meeting and in print may have been to test out others’ opinions of it, or it may have been to confirm in safer forums (that is, largely Pakeha) that the author was right and the stirrers had got it wrong. (Which raises the question for me of how a Maori would review the text.) In the complex business of communication and the promotion of understanding between Maori and Pakeha (and Maori and libraries) we don’t want to leave room for wrong assumptions; a more generous text would not have left the reader in any doubt.

Explicitness is important in all communication, but especially in the emotional and highly-charged dialogue between Maori and Pakeha. If Traue had stated what his intentions were and that his comparisons between Maori and Pakeha were open to question, it would have given both peoples a chance to confirm or re-evaluate their views of each other. Openness and a willingness to be questioned promote the best conditions for mutual understanding. The clipped and sure tone of Jim Traue’s writing suggests a conviction that doesn’t allow, or at least doesn’t seek, questioning: ‘It is what I shall say next time I am on a marae and am invited to introduce myself to the group’ (p. 4). How do we know, how does he know that it is a good thing to say at the next hui? (That may be unfair, for any publication puts itself up to question.)

The economy of the text, the glossing over of some complex issues and the failure to give full expression to the writer’s intentions, leaves me less confident of its potential usefulness for Maori and library/Pakeha relations. But on the other hand, if it is read in a positive light, thinking of all that the text reveals about how similar we are as people, and yet how different in, for example, our emphases on things — how we both have whakapapa but use them at different times and in different ways, yet how we both have strong feelings about them and treat them with pride and respect — then I think we come close to a reading which can be supportive of good relations. I hope it is read in that light and discussed widely.

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Ross Harvey apologizes on page 4 for any occasions on which he may fall into using “evangelical language”, because “those who become informed about the preservation problem [...] are generally keen to undertake the task of enlightening the masses and tend to adopt a preaching mode of delivery.” In view of the fact that there is such pressing need to save from perdition the world’s heritage of culture and knowledge, the author’s language seems moderate indeed in its canvassing of issues eschatological, though not to the point of being pedestrian.

Harvey’s study represents an admirable synthesis of the increasingly large world literature of preservation. He expresses diffidence about adding to that literature, but need not: firstly, where possible he has incorporated examples and references relating to Australia, New Zealand and