

A ‘white New Zealand’: Anti-Chinese Racist Political Discourse from 1880 to 1920

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Abstract: This paper reviews anti-Chinese public statements by New Zealand politicians in and around 1880-1920. Applying critical race theory as an underpinning theoretical framework in conjunction with Barthesian criticism as a mode of analysis, statements from newspaper archives and New Zealand Parliamentary Debates were located and reviewed. It is believed that the statements have not been published as a collective in an academic journal; many of the statements reviewed in this paper have never been published. This paper will highlight New Zealand’s history of racism particularly in relation to anti-Chinese discursive practices. This paper includes statements by William Ferguson Massey, former Prime Minister of New Zealand, who made several anti-Chinese racist statements in the public domain and enacted legislation to restrict Chinese immigration to New Zealand.

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The purpose of this paper is to review public statements by New Zealand politicians from in and around 1880 to 1920, which undeniably articulate an ideology of white supremacy; hitherto, it is believed that the statements have not been published as a collective in an academic journal. This is important given the nature of discoveries in this paper, which were inadvertently located during doctoral research about Māori representation in public information advertisements. Archival research was undertaken using newspaper archives of the National Library of New Zealand and New Zealand Parliamentary Debates, and it is those sources that have provided the impetus for this paper which will contribute to the scholarship of racism in New Zealand. By using the lens of critical race theory, supported by Barthesian criticism, this paper will further expose the ‘white New Zealand’ policy, and shine light on New Zealand’s history of racism particularly in relation to anti-Chinese discursive practices. This paper includes statements by William Ferguson Massey, former Prime Minister of New Zealand, white supremacist and follower of a religious cult that holds the irrational belief that the British are a lost tribe of Israel.

Critical Race Theory and Barthesian Criticism

Critical race theory is a theoretical framework (Garcia, 1995; Hylton, 2009; McGlade, 2012;

Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002) concerned with “studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 2). The theory was formalized in 1989 (Harris, 2014), primarily by critical legal scholars, but can be traced back to the literature of critical scholars such as W.E.B. Du Bois (Flores, 2009) and Frantz Fanon (Rabaka, 2010), among others. It is a multidisciplinary perspective and has recently started to appear as a communication theory in textbooks for communication studies (Croucher, 2016; Flores, 2009; Simpson, 2010), as well as its sub-disciplines such as public relations (Vardeman-Winter, 2013). In terms of critical race theory application within the communication scholarship, some examples include: the understanding of racism in news media (Campbell, LeDuff, Jenkins, & Brown, 2012), comparing legitimation strategies between journalists and members of the public concerning racial disparities (Robinson, 2015), describing media projects (Aleman & Aleman, 2016), and discussing the development of media literacy of both students and citizens (King, 2017).

In radical terms, the role of the critical race theorist is to unsettle, disrupt and displace the ideology of white supremacy – wherever it is located. While many definitions of white supremacy exist, it is defined here as the inherent supercilious belief that Whites¹ are superior to everyone else. The use of ‘everyone else’ rather than

¹ ‘Whites’ is the term used to represent people who are considered ‘European’, ‘Caucasian’, ‘Anglo-Saxon’ etc. ‘Pākehā’ is not used in this paper because discussion is not limited to New Zealand. There is debate among scholars as to whether the ‘w’ in White should be capitalized. I have adhered to APA 6th guidelines which says “use *Black* and *White* instead of *black* and *white*”

(American Psychological Association, 2010, p. 75). Capitalization has been removed in direct quotes where the original author did not use uppercase, and where white is used without directly referring to a group of people e.g. white supremacy.

'non-Whites' is preferred because the latter privileges Whites as the norm from which all other groups are defined. A fundamental principle of critical race theory is that it not only tries to understand the social condition, but it also attempts to change it, which aligns with the assertion by Delgado and Stefancic (2001) that critical race theory "sets out not only to ascertain how society organizes itself along racial lines and hierarchies, but to transform it for the better" (p. 3). In other words, critical race theory is theory applied in practice (Hylton, 2012).

Barthesian criticism (Barthes, 1991) is also located within communication scholarship, and is used to make sense of the research discoveries in this paper – a mode of analysis. As argued by Feenstra (2011), the Barthesian approach to understand text "places great importance on context... context is of crucial significance" (p. 56), which is demonstrated by Barthes' well-known analysis of the *Paris Match* magazine cover showing a Black soldier saluting the flag of France (Barthes, 1991). The *Paris Match* analysis has been cited by numerous scholars who study race and ethnicity. Central to Barthesian criticism is "the role of signs in generating meaning and framing the way texts are read" (Barker, 2004, p. 12). The concept of 'myth' is a fundamental principle of Barthesian criticism, and is used as a synonym for 'ideology' (Seriot, 2016). Barthesian criticism is consistent with communication theory, which focuses on meaning and involves examining "ideology and hegemony" (McLuskie, 2009, p. 785), and is similar to the ethos of critical race theory which is "concerned with refuting hegemonic ideologies" (Slatton & Feagin, 2012, p. 291). Indeed, critical race theorists have a duty to attack the ideology of white supremacy, and one way to do this is to educate Whites about historical racism (Simpson, 2003). According to Feagin (2014), recent psychology studies have found that the ability of some Whites to understand contemporary racism is related to their knowledge of historical racism. However, historical racism can often be concealed (Loewen, 2005), or using Edward Hall's (1959) iceberg analogy relating to culture – hidden beneath the surface. Within the New Zealand context, an example of racist obscurantism is the 'white New Zealand' policy.

The 'white New Zealand' Policy

Bennett (2001) argued that some White New Zealanders are selective when it comes to history and they will "overlook the substance of the 'white New Zealand' policy while also playing up an image of racial equality and even model race relations – a fiction" (p. 34). O'Connor (1968) wrote of his dismay about the lack of scholarship concerning the 'white New Zealand' policy, while Ferguson (2003) claimed that not one book or thesis has been written about it. The purpose of the 'white New Zealand' policy was to stop Chinese, and other immigrants who are not White, from entering New

Zealand (O'Connor, 1968) as the country was considered a "white haven" (Ip & Pang, 2005, p. 177). While other colonial dominions, such as Australia, Canada and South Africa, are known for their historical racist immigration practices (Bartley, 2014), and fears of Chinese immigration were common among the British Empire from the late 1800s (Knusel, 2012), New Zealand has endeavored to hide its racist history from the international community (Brawley, 1993).

This section and the following two sections relate to the approximate period of 1880 to 1920, where several laws were enacted to keep New Zealand a country of Whites (Ferguson, 2003). It is the following laws that are commonly referred to as the commencement of the 'white New Zealand' policy by scholars; a term not used by the government. The Chinese Immigrants Act 1881 was the first legislation in New Zealand designed to restrict entry to a specific group of people (Nakhid & Devere, 2015); albeit, according to Lee (1889), the motive of the earlier Public Health Act 1876 was "simply to keep out the Chinese" (p. 223). Other anti-Chinese legislation, such as the Aliens Act 1891, Asiatic Immigration Restriction Act 1899, and Immigration Restriction Amendment Act 1920, were passed to limit Chinese immigration to New Zealand (Spoonley, 1988). For those Chinese who were already in New Zealand, the government denied social welfare entitlements, including unemployment benefits and pensions even to those Chinese who were born in New Zealand or were naturalized citizens (Ip & Pang, 2005). According to Byrnes (2016), research has shown that thousands of Chinese suffered hardship, including systematic economic and social discrimination during this period. The 'white New Zealand' policy was grounded in the fundamental belief that Chinese were racially inferior to Whites (Ip, 2013). Ng (1993) described how some Whites believed that Chinese were –

...heathens prone to thievery, a filthy, inferior people who did not know the white man's superior laws and customs and had a vile way of living... they introduced loathsome diseases, they were immoral barbarians who trapped young girls into catering for their depraved sexual appetites. (p. 105)

It could be argued that the fear of interracial relationships between Chinese men and White women contributed to the development of the 'white New Zealand' policy during this era. For example, an associate member of the National Council of Women sponsored a proposal that the council should insist upon heavy penalties for Chinese men who "interfere with our girls in New Zealand" (cited in Brookes, 2007, p. 506), which resulted in the council passing a resolution to lobby the government to enact legislation that would prevent Chinese men employing White girls (Brookes, 2007). Shum (2003) wrote that anti-Chinese urban myths were circulated "to warn European women that they were

not to mix with Chinese men” (p. 78). White women who had sex with Chinese men were considered “worse than the Chinese themselves – as the vilest of the vile” (Ng, 1993, p. 243). Concerns about interracial relationships with Chinese were also held by some Māori who saw Asians as another threat to Māori cultural vitality (Moon, 2013).

An examination of newspaper archives shows an abundance of anti-Chinese news media coverage in this era. As stated earlier, archival research initially relating to Māori was undertaken using newspaper archives of the National Library of New Zealand, which hosts all major newspapers in New Zealand, but upon inadvertently locating racist statements about Chinese, search terms such as ‘China’ and ‘Chinese’ were inputted which led to the discoveries in this paper. For example, *The Wanganui Chronicle* (1914) quoted an inspector as saying: “There are a number of white women living with such men [Chinese] as the accused in this neighbourhood” (“Chinaman’s white slave: What occurs in Wellington,” 1914, p. 5). While the *Patea Country Mail* newspaper described Chinese people as “a pest to the white community. Socially, they are a nasty lot. But apart from bad morals and social filth, the political objections to Chinese immigrants are overpowering” (“John Chinaman,” 1881, p. 2). Hence, the social context in New Zealand was conducive for a dedicated periodical, *Anti-Chinaman*, to begin publishing in 1887 (Scholefield, 1958). The anti-Chinese sentiment continued, and after World War I, the Returned Soldiers’ Association (RSA) declared a “White New Zealand” (“White New Zealand,” 1919, p. 6), and demanded that the government deny entry to all Chinese and everyone else who was not White from entering New Zealand. Such overt racism is difficult to fathom in contemporary times; however, a closer inspection of political discourse in and around 1880 to 1920 reveals the extent and acceptance of anti-Chinese sentiment in New Zealand.

Political Discourse between 1880-1920

Most studies of political discourse are concerned with the “text and talk of professional politicians or political institutions” (van Dijk, 1997, p. 12). Political discourse is reflective of society (Ledouble & Gourirand, 2013) as voters will select political candidates who share their values and beliefs (Yates, 2016). Moreover, as van Dijk (2004) posited, “racist societies and institutions produce racist discourses, and racist discourses reproduce the stereotypes, prejudices and ideologies that are used to defend and legitimize white dominance” (p. 354). Accordingly, the political discourse in and around 1880 to 1920 suggests that racism was prevalent in New Zealand society, with Māori (the indigenous people of

New Zealand) and Chinese the focus of racist discursive practices. For example, the disparaging term ‘nigger’ was used to refer to Māori by John Duthie (1841-1915), who, during his political career was the Mayor of Wellington and Member of Parliament, and was the co-founder of *The Dominion* newspaper. Duthie said in a speech at Westport: “The Government was stopping the sale of native lands. They wanted to make the Maoris landlords. Fancy a free-born Britisher having a nigger for a landlord” (“A nigger for a landlord,” 1889, p. 4). As Duthie viewed Māori as inferior and subjugated to Whites – akin to slaves – he struggled with the possibility of social and economic equality, or worse, Māori as the landowning bourgeoisie and Whites as the proletariat class. The same could be said of John Payne (1871-1942), the Member of Parliament for Grey Lynn, who stated in parliament: “I do not take orders from a nigger” (“A minister insulted,” 1916, p. 10), which was a comment directed at Dr Māui Pōmare, a Māori politician. The word ‘nigger’ is a hateful epithet (Lorimer, 2013; Pulera, 2002) that is rooted in slavery (Counter, 1985), and is used by racists to denote racial inferiority (Kirkland, 2015).

The other target of racism in political discourse were the Chinese who were framed as evil, disgusting, filthy, and a range of other hateful terms. The New Zealand Parliamentary Debates were searched to support the evidence from the news archives; for example, William Swanson (1819-1903), Member of Parliament for Newton, stated in parliament that “the Chinese evil is simply intolerable” (Swanson, 1881, p. 72). The binary opposition between good and evil served a purpose to frame Chinese as the ‘Other’, wicked and nasty. The idea of allowing any such evil in a country of goodness was considered preposterous and absurd, as holders of the highest office, such as Frederick Whitaker (1812-1891), who served as Premier of New Zealand (Prime Minister of New Zealand) and Attorney-General of New Zealand, fanned the fear of Chinese immigration. Whitaker said in parliament: “We cannot shut our eyes to the facts staring us in the face in regard to the evils of Chinese immigration on a large scale” (Whitaker, 1881, p. 209). Whitaker had also professed that the Chinese would introduce “unknown moral and social diseases amongst us” (Whitaker, 1881, p. 73). The subject of disease was a common theme in relation to Chinese, as John Hall (1824-1907), Premier of New Zealand (Prime Minister of New Zealand), stated in parliament:

I have not got much imagination, but one thing has taken a strong hold of my mind, and that is the picture of the horrors of Chinese haunts in the places where they are in large numbers, the frightful diseases, the disgusting habits, and the state of things that renders it unsafe for any woman or child to go near those places. That is a kind of thing it is our duty to keep out of this country, and I for one

shall do my very best to keep it out. (J. Hall, 1881, p. 74)

The above statement strategically associates “frightful diseases” and “disgusting habits” with women and children to evoke strong feelings of protection. Hall’s assertion constructs (White) women and (White) children as innocent, who will become disease-ridden should they come into contact with Chinese. Hall’s mention of “our duty” is a nationalistic call to arms; a command to mobilize the nation against the perils of Chinese immigration. “Filthy” was another common adjective used in political discourse to describe Chinese; for example, George Marsden Waterhouse (1824-1906), who served as Premier of New Zealand (Prime Minister of New Zealand), stated in parliament: “I believe there are qualities connected with the Chinese which rendered them undesirable citizens; and the particular quality to which I refer is the undoubted fact that, as a people, they are filthy in the extreme” (Waterhouse, 1881, p. 214). Waterhouse’s use of “undoubted fact” privileges his statement as truth and therefore demands acceptance as absolute and universal. His comment that Chinese “are filthy in the extreme” shows disgust and contempt for Chinese. Waterhouse also connoted that Chinese lacked human qualities and were sadistic: “An atmosphere which would be absolutely poisonous to Europeans is breathed not only with safety but with pleasure by Chinamen” (Waterhouse, 1881, p. 214). His depictions of Chinese as inhuman, or animalistic, can also be seen with his association of Chinese and ants:

You can scarcely go to one island in the South Pacific without meeting one or two Chinese who have already found their way there, how they scarcely know, but they have found their way there as the ant finds its way before its companions; and, as the ant is inevitably followed by its companions, so these Chinese will be followed by thousands of their countrymen. (Waterhouse, 1881, p. 213)

The act of describing people who are not White as animals is a typical narrative of white supremacy (Clifton & Van De Mierop, 2016) and functions to dehumanize and demonize people who are not White (Beckles, 1996) by subjugating their humanity. Another common narrative of white supremacy is the notion of white racial purity (Bush, 2009; Coleman, 2007; Dorr, 2004; Smith, 2002) which is founded on the idea that “the white race would be diluted, polluted, and dumbed down” (Foster, 2013, p. 1785) through miscegenation. The myth of white racial purity (Dalmage, 2000; Higginbotham & Kopytoff, 1989; Hunter, 2005; Spickard, 2016) is a central tenet of Nazism (Bloor & Bloor, 2013; Woodley, 2010), so it will become apparent that the following public statements bear resemblance to passages from Adolf Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*.

Politicians who propagated for racial purity included those who held the highest office; for example, Richard

Seddon (1845-1906), Prime Minister of New Zealand between 1893 and 1906, said that New Zealanders should be “true to the race from which they sprang” (“Racial purity,” 1906, p. 2). Seddon’s values were shared by Joseph Ward (1856-1930), Prime Minister of New Zealand between 1906 and 1912, who stated in a special message to the public of New Zealand: “Preserve the purity of your race from every undesirable mixture” (“Messages to the people,” 1907, p. 7). An article in *The Evening Post* reported that Ward “declared himself strongly in favour of a White New Zealand... determined to fight for the preservation of the purity of the white race in New Zealand. He would not allow aliens, particularly coloured aliens, to come into this country” (“A white New Zealand,” 1907, p. 2). The advocacy for racial purity was not restricted to prime ministers, as regular members of parliament shared similar views; for example, Richard McCallum (1863-1940), who served as the Member of Parliament for Wairau after tenure as Mayor of Blenheim, stated in parliament: “...if we can possibly do it we should keep New Zealand ‘white’. Let New Zealand be populated with our own kith and kin, the people of Great Britain and Ireland” (McCallum, 1920, p. 923). McCallum’s statement suggests that ‘White’ was a restricted term and not for all people of European descent, which supports Ip’s (2003) argument that “such tolerance was extended only with great reluctance to the southern Europeans, including the Greeks, Italians, and Yugoslavs” (p. 339). This doctrine of racial purity was propagated by the government through official reports; an example is the 1921 census report –

Racially the population of the Dominion is, and always has been, of a high standard of purity; indeed, the maintenance of the pure European or “white” standard of population has been invariably a consideration of immigration legislation. The importance of racial purity has long been recognised. History has shown that the coalescence of the white and the so-called colour races is not conducive to improvement in racial types. (Census of N.Z., 1921, p. I)

The above statement from the census report is clear and leaves no room for doubt or misconstruction, and it follows the ideology of the Prime Minister of New Zealand at the time – a man who was religiously fanatical with a ‘white New Zealand’ – William Ferguson Massey (1856-1925). Massey entered parliament in 1894 as the Member of Parliament for Waitemata, and was Prime Minister of New Zealand from 1912 until his death in 1925 (Roche, 2009). Like the aforementioned politicians, Massey was a white supremacist (according to the definition) and was infatuated with the idea of a ‘white New Zealand’. In a parliament discussion, Massey stated: “... this Dominion shall be what is often called a ‘white’ New Zealand, and that the people who come here should, as far as it is possible for us to provide

for it, be of the same way of thinking from the British Empire point of view” (Massey, 1920, p. 905). Massey believed in the myth of racial purity, and he went on to say: “Clearly, we want to keep the race as pure in this Dominion as it is possible to keep it” (Massey, 1920, p. 908). His obsession with racial purity was evident in numerous public statements, including the 1921 Prime Minister’s New Year message to the citizens of New Zealand: “New Zealanders are probably the purest Anglo-Saxon population in the British Empire. Nature intended New Zealand to be a white man’s country, and it must be kept as such. The strain of Polynesian will be no detriment” (Massey, 1921, p. 5).

While Massey had referred to the “strain of Polynesian”, the ethnic group for whom he held the most contempt was the Chinese; Massey said: “I must say at once that I am not a lover or admirer of the Chinese race, and I am glad to know that the number of Chinese in this country is not increasing. I say I am not an admirer of the Chinese” (Massey, 1910, p. 402). Massey’s repetition that he is not “an admirer of the Chinese” was his own emphasis and minimizes the likelihood of an aberrant decoding. Massey went on to say: “But if it turned out that the number of Chinese did increase in this country, I should be one of the very first to insist on very drastic legislation to prevent them coming here in any numbers, and I am glad such is not the case” (Massey, 1910, p. 402). In fact, Massey did insist on very drastic legislation to restrict Chinese and other people who are not White to enter New Zealand, and it lasted until a policy change in 1974 (Ip, 2013).

Massey and the Religious Cult

Evidence from newspaper archives and the New Zealand Parliamentary Debates shows that Massey’s ideology of white supremacy was a fundamental doctrine of his religious beliefs. Massey was a member of the British Israel movement (“British Israel Association,” 1922), also known as the Anglo Israel movement. The origins of the British Israel movement can be traced back to the prophecies of Richard Brothers (1757-1824), a former British Royal Navy lieutenant who declared himself the “Prince and Prophet of the Hebrews and Nephew of the Almighty, and claimed to be descended from King David through James, the brother of Christ” (Kidd, 2006, p. 205). Brothers was found to be insane and was confined to an asylum but his publications gained support which led to the eventual foundation of the British Israel movement (Kidd, 2006). A primary tenet of the British Israel movement is the ridiculous claim that Anglo-Saxons are a lost tribe of ancient Israelites (Barberis, McHugh, & Tyldesley, 2000; Barkun, 1997; Fine, 2015; Melton, 2005). Followers of the British Israel movement hold steadfast that Anglo-Saxons are “God’s chosen people” (Dentice, 2016, p. 481; Johnstone, 2012, p. 263; Lamy, 2006, p. 175), and

they believe that Whites are destined to dominate and rule the world (Kidd, 2006; Melton, 2005). Another key tenet of the British Israel movement is white supremacy (Barberis et al., 2000; Brackney, 2012; Melton, 2003), and therefore they “characterize racial purity as an important component of their belief system” (Quarles, 2004, p. 92). Not surprisingly, the British Israel movement has been labelled a religious cult (Higham, 1983; Jeansonne, 1996; Palmer, 1999).

Massey’s involvement with the British Israel movement provides some explanation about his conscientious anti-Chinese views, for his beliefs were influenced by a theodicy of divine racism. Massey’s religious fundamentalist prophecies were bellowed in parliament on numerous occasions, so it is not an illogical presupposition to suggest that Massey enacted anti-Chinese legislation because it was God’s will. For example, he said in parliament that the bible was “a light unto our feet and a lamp unto our path, a guide for us in this life, and a direction for the world to come” (Massey as cited in “Mr. Massey on the bible,” 1924, p. 7). He also preached his British Israel prophecies outside of parliament; for example, the following statement by Massey is from a public speech at the Wellington Town Hall –

I believe that the House of Israel exists today, and that along with the House of Judah it has taken a very important part in the events of the present century... I believe that the prophecies contained in the sacred writings will be fulfilled to the very letter. Prophecy is being fulfilled today, and I think you will agree with me that a very long step forward was taken when the troops of the Allies – mostly British – under General Allenby, captured Jerusalem and took possession of Palestine. (Massey as cited in “Mr Massey on prophecy,” 1920, p. 5)

Several months after Massey’s death in 1925, the *Horowhenua Chronicle* published an article which said: “Mr Massey was an Anglo-Israelite, which means that he regarded the British people as the lost Ten Tribes of Israel, for whom Providence has a wonderful destiny in store” (“Massey and Seddon,” 1925, p. 4). The archival evidence shows that Massey was a devout fanatic of the cult; while he was Prime Minister of New Zealand he also held office in the British Israel Association and attended international events of the British Israel World Federation (“British Israel Association,” 1922; “Mr. & Mrs. Massey,” 1921). It is a reasonable assertion that the ‘white New Zealand’ policy was influenced, at least partially, by the British Israel religious cult.

Massey University – What’s in a Name?

As outlined in this paper, Massey was a white supremacist and a follower of a racist religious cult – so it would seem preposterous that a public university in New Zealand was named after him, and continues to bear

his name today. Massey Agricultural College officially opened in 1928, and it became Massey University in 1966 (Marsden, 2002). A page on Massey University's website quotes Lord Porritt, Governor-General, at the opening of a building on campus in 1968: "William Massey was without doubt one of the country's greatest politicians and statesmen" (Massey University, 2016a, para. 50). Massey University's website does not mention Massey's ideology of white supremacy, such as his anti-Chinese statements – most likely because it is in contradiction to the university's values and ideals about "openness to students of diverse backgrounds" (Massey University, 2015, para. 5). Further, drawing attention to Massey's anti-Chinese statements may harm the university's ability to recruit full-fee paying Chinese students and other opportunities with China (e.g., Sligo, 2014; Tapaleao, 2015).

Influenced by critical race theory and its tenet to unsettle, disrupt and displace the ideology of white supremacy, it is pertinent to discuss the significance of the university's name. Communication theory posits that signs communicate meanings (Griffin, 2012). In the semiotic tradition, a sign can include words, objects, images, sounds, and so forth (Chandler, 2007). The name of a university is a sign which communicates meaning relating to identity, values and culture; for example, "who we are" and "who we are not". This is demonstrated by the name of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University which evokes notions of inclusiveness, respect, dignity and human rights. In contrast, Rhodes University bears the name of Cecil Rhodes, a white supremacist (Charumbira, 2015; Fredrickson, 1995) who advocated for racial segregation in South Africa (Wong, 2016). It is reasonable to suggest that through name association, Rhodes University connotes white racial superiority, imperialism and oppression. And what of Massey University? Using the famous words of Roland Barthes: "I see very well what it signifies to me" (Barthes, 1991, p. 115).

It is pertinent to mention that the values of Massey University today are not aligned with the ideology of William Massey; the university is inclusive and promotes diversity. There is an irony in the fact that a university named after a white supremacist who had an intense dislike of Chinese, is actively seeking to increase Chinese student numbers (e.g., Massey University, 2013, 2014, 2016b), and gave an honorary doctorate to the wife of the President of China (Tapaleao, 2015). With that in mind it makes sense for Massey University to discuss whether it should continue to be branded with the legacy of white supremacy while simultaneously imposing itself on the Chinese education market. By initiating this discussion, Massey University will join overseas universities that have confronted similar issues. For example, in June 2014, Duke University announced that the university's Aycock Hall, named after a white supremacist former

governor, would be renamed East Hall (Phillip, 2014). In May 2015, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill announced that the university's Saunders Hall, named after a white supremacist leader of the Ku Klux Klan, would be renamed Carolina Hall (Svokos, 2015). In March 2016, Harvard Law School announced the school's crest, which had been modelled on the coat of arms of a brutal white supremacist slave owner, would be changed (Harvard Law Today, 2016; Reclaim Harvard Law School, 2015). In February 2017, Yale University announced that the university's Calhoun College, named after a white supremacist statesman, would be renamed (Remnick, 2017). Closer to New Zealand, in April 2017, the University of Melbourne announced that the Richard Berry building would no longer be named after a white supremacist (Dobbin-Thomas, 2017) who "strove to prove Aboriginal people were not as smart as white people" (BBC News, 2017, para. 5). These recent cases are just some examples of universities recognizing that white supremacy does not have a place in the academy, except in history books.

The process of dismantling white supremacy is not confined to universities, as calls to decolonize places and landmarks have also gained momentum. The renowned African postcolonial theorist, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, author of seminal works such as *Decolonising the Mind* and *Writing Against Neo-Colonialism*, recently declared that the South African city of East London should be renamed. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o said, "You need to do something about the name of this city and its streets. You need to take all those names, put them in an envelope and write return to sender," (Obera, 2017).

Detractors against the abolition of place names associated with white supremacy will argue that history should not be judged through the lens of the present. The issue with that argument is that it reproduces racism by suppressing criticism of it, and it privileges the dominant group as having the only standards that matter. For example, a colleague stated that African slaves who were brought to America did not need "enlightenment or god or scholarship or evolution to understand what was happening was immoral, insane and unfair" (B. Borell, personal communication, October 6, 2016). However, apologists will say that slavery was accepted, prevalent and a part of the times. Another argument put forward by detractors is that renaming will mean that all other places named after white supremacists should also be renamed – the answer to this is simple: yes, stop honoring white supremacists. The idea of dismantling white supremacy by renaming places is not about rewriting history, but perhaps there needs to be a *re-righting* of history, as a glaring omission in the scholarship (e.g., Farland, 2008; Gardner, 1969; Macdonald, 1982; Watson, 2010; Watson & Paterson, 2011) is the absence of a significant discussion about Massey's ideology of

white supremacy, which is troubling given the evidence presented in this paper.

Conclusion

In conclusion, using the lens of critical race theory, this paper has further exposed the ‘white New Zealand’ policy and has highlighted historical racism and anti-Chinese discursive practices in New Zealand. Racist public statements by New Zealand politicians from in and around 1880 to 1920 were presented, including statements by William Ferguson Massey, former Prime Minister of New Zealand – Massey University bears his name. Statements were sourced from newspaper archives and New Zealand Parliamentary Debates, and have not been published as a collective in an academic journal. Moreover, many of the statements reviewed in this paper have never been published in scholarly texts. The statements were overtly racist and were articulated with ease, and were situated within a colonial context that facilitated racism. By reviewing the political discourse of this era, this paper has revealed that racism was normalized in New Zealand society because, as already stated, political discourse is reflective of society (Ledouble & Gouirand, 2013). As mentioned earlier, although the ‘white New Zealand’ policy is attenuated in New Zealand (Bennett, 2001; Brawley, 1993; Ferguson 2003; O’Connor, 1968), this paper has shown that New Zealand was not an accepting multicultural society in and around 1880 to 1920. Therefore, this paper makes a contribution to scholarship by raising awareness of historical racism in New Zealand which confronts what Majavu (2017) says is a lusotropicalist ideology that is prevalent in contemporary New Zealand; or in other words, the myth that historically, all White New Zealanders were good colonialists and treated everyone equally with respect.

Finally, it is pertinent to mention that this research has already succeeded as an impetus for discussion about historical racism in New Zealand. On 28 September 2016, research from this paper was presented at a research seminar held at the author’s university. A local education reporter attended the seminar, and later that day, the reporter’s summary of the research seminar became the lead news article on one of New Zealand’s largest national news media websites (Stuff.co.nz/Fairfax). Consequently, this research was covered by national television, national radio, and national newspaper outlets – including their respective websites, and well-known political and social commentators wrote commentary pieces in national newspapers about the research (e.g., Duff, 2016; du Plessis-Allan, 2016; Kightley, 2016;). Therefore, it could be said that this research has contributed towards the ongoing development of critical race theory by working to unsettle, disrupt and displace the ideology of white supremacy.

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