

1. Maori

2. **English** is the language of day-to-day business within New Zealand, a remnant of ties to the British Commonwealth. **Maori** is a Polynesian language similar to the languages of other Pacific Island cultures, such as Hawaiian, Tongan, and Samoan.

Population: 4,193,817

Ethnic Make-up: New Zealand European 74.5%, Maori 9.7%, other European 4.6%, Pacific Islander 3.8%, Asian and others 7.4%

Religions: Anglican 24%, Presbyterian 18%, Roman Catholic 15%, Methodist 5%, Baptist 2%, other Protestant 3%, unspecified or none 33% (1986)

The Maori language has been part of New Zealand and its culture since the first people came to the Islands. However, Maori has only been recognised as an official language of New Zealand since the Maori Language Act of 1987. English-Maori bilingualism and the development and use of the Maori language is encouraged by Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Maori-the Maori Language Commission.

Maori and English are used throughout the country in various television and radio programs. As with other regions in the world where two cultures have been mixed, English has influenced Maori and Maori has influenced English. A number of words in each language have crossed in to the vocabulary of the other. English has introduced motuka (car) and Maori has replied with taboo (tapu).

Many places in New Zealand have been christened with two names - one English, one Maori (the original Maori name and the adopted English one). And, in some cases, these names are used interchangeably

Kiwi Society & Culture

There can be marked differences between Maori and NZ European (Pakeha) societies and culture. This is particularly apparent when moving in tribal (Iwi) circles. Due to colonisation and tribal differences, there can also be subtle but important variations in protocols. The following sections outline aspects most likely to occur when doing business with tribal groups but can also equally apply to any group that includes Maori.

Kiwi Demeanour

- . New Zealanders are friendly, outgoing, somewhat reserved initially yet polite, and enjoy extending hospitality.
- . They are quite easy to get to know as they say hello to strangers and will offer assistance without being asked.
- . Because they do not stand on ceremony and are egalitarian, they move to a first name basis quickly and shun the use of titles.
- . Kiwis dress casually, but neatly.
- . Most restaurants do not have dress codes and except in business, dress is decidedly casual.

. Business dress is conservative, although jackets may be removed and shirtsleeves rolled up when working.

Maori demeanour

. Maori are generally friendly and reserved and place great value on hospitality.
. They will generally offer (often to the point of going without) assistance to their guests and will attempt to hide the inconvenience as much as possible. . Maori will spontaneously launch into speech and song. Even though they may not have met each other, they will know many songs they can sing together and often use these to close or enhance speeches. . They will often call for visitors to do the same and it would be wise to have 2-3 practised songs from your own country to reply with.

The local attitude towards the environment is largely influenced by the viewpoint of the indigenous population, the Maori.

. They believe that all things have a 'mauri' - a life force.
. Damage to this life force, or human attempts to dominate it, result in the mauri losing its energy and vitality, which affects the lives of people as well as the resilience of ecosystems.
. Maintaining the mauri of the environment and ecosystem resilience are equally important for sustainable development.

New Zealand - Culture, Etiquette and Customs



Facts and Statistics

Location: Oceania, islands in the South Pacific Ocean, southeast of Australia

Capital: Wellington

Population: 3,993,817 (July 2004 est.)

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Religions: Anglican 24%, Presbyterian 18%, Roman Catholic 15%, Methodist 5%, Baptist 2%, other Protestant 3%, unspecified or none 33% (1986)

Language in New Zealand

The three official languages of New Zealand are English, Maori and NZ Sign Language. English is the language of day-to-day business within New Zealand, a remnant of ties to the British Commonwealth. Maori is a Polynesian language similar to the languages of other Pacific Island cultures, such as Hawaiian, Tongan, and Samoan. Over 157,000 people in New Zealand speak Maori (2006 Census).

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each other, they will know many songs they can sing together and often use these to close or enhance speeches. . They will often call for visitors to do the same and it would be wise to have 2-3 practised songs from your own country to reply with.

Environmentalism

- . Kiwis are environmentally concerned and have a strong desire to preserve their country's beauty.
- . One of the major local issues is the importing of predators.
- . Border controls are very tight and there are huge fines for importing food or other natural products such as wood, cane etc.
- . The local attitude towards the environment is largely influenced by the viewpoint of the indigenous population, the Maori.
- . They believe that all things have a 'mauri' - a life force.
- . Damage to this life force, or human attempts to dominate it, result in the mauri losing its energy and vitality, which affects the lives of people as well as the resilience of ecosystems.
- . Maintaining the mauri of the environment and ecosystem resilience are equally important for sustainable development.

Egalitarianism

- . The country has no formal class structure.
- . Wealth and social status are not important to Kiwis.
- . They take pride in individual achievements and believe that opportunities are available to all.
- . As a 'welfare state' unemployment benefits, housing and access to health is all available free of charge to those who can't afford it.
- . Maori have a hierarchy especially apparent in formal situations.. For example, the elder (male or female) is seated in a specific area and will be asked to open or close a meeting. Mostly they are men but not always.

Meeting and Greeting

- . Greetings are casual, often consisting simply of a handshake and a smile.
- . Never underestimate the value of the smile as it indicates pleasure at meeting the other person.

Maori meeting and greeting

- . Maori stand on ceremony and have distinct protocols regarding how visitors should be welcomed and seen off.
- . If the business dealings are with a tribal group (Iwi) the welcoming protocols may be practiced through the process of Powhiri – a formal welcome that takes place on a Marae.
- . A Powhiri can take between 30 minutes to 2-3 hours depending on the importance of the event.
- . It begins by calling the visitors onto the area in front of the traditional meeting house. Visitors should walk as a group and in silence expect if they have a responding caller to reply to the home peoples' caller (usually an older woman).

- . A Powhiri dictates where people sit, in what position in their group, and who speaks.
- . In most cases, but not all, you will notice the men are seated forward and only males speak. There is a tension between the men and women on this matter and in a few places this has been resolved and you will see both genders stand to speak. In the interests of not causing friction in your business dealings, always follow the lead of the home people.
- . The welcoming speeches are given by the agreed speakers of the home people and always end with the most revered speaker or elder.
- . Speeches are given in the Maori language and each one accompanied by traditional song. You may not understand what is being said but you can rest assured it is likely to be from the best orators in the group and often very complimentary.
- . The visitors are expected to have at least one speaker reply on their behalf.
- . If possible, the speaker should prepare a learned opening in Maori – it is critical that he/she focus on the pronunciation. Mispronounced words often result in whispers and sniggers and is considered disrespectful. It is better to have a very short opening said well, than a long one said badly.
- . The speaker's reply should never be about the detailed purpose of the visit nor should it be to self-promote as this would be considered arrogant.
- . The speaker should use the opportunity to briefly show respect to the place that they stand (ie. the location), to the houses (the traditional carved meeting house and dining room are named after ancestors and so are greeted accordingly), to greet the home people, and to explain where his/her group have come from (place is important to Maori). This should be followed by a song from the visitors' country that the visitors' group should sing together.
- . The Powhiri can be daunting to visitors and can be fraught with traps that may offend. This is why most visitors seek the assistance of a Maori person to 'guide' them.
- . Once the last elder of the home people has spoken, they will gesture the visitors to come forward in a line to shake hands, kiss (once) on the cheek or hongi (touch noses) with the home people.
- . Following this the kitchen is ready to call people in to eat.
- . Following the food, the meeting proper can begin.
- . While this seems to be a set routine, I have been to many a Powhiri where variations of this occur. It pays to be vigilant and to follow the lead of others, or to discreetly ask questions if unsure.

Gift Giving Etiquette

- . If invited to a Kiwi's house, bring a small gift such as flowers, chocolates, or a book about your home country to the hosts.
- . Gifts should not be lavish.
- . Gifts are opened when received.

Dining Etiquette

- . New Zealanders are casual as is reflected in their table manners.
- . The more formal the occasion, the more strict the protocol.
- . Wait to be told where to sit.
- . Meals are often served family-style.

- . Keep your elbows off the table and your hands above the table when eating.
- . **Table manners** are Continental -- hold the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right while eating. They will not look askance, however, if you adopt American table manners.
- . Indicate you have finished eating by laying your knife and fork parallel on your plate with the handles facing to the right.

Maori Dining Etiquette

. Following a Powhiri, the visitors will be asked to the dining room (a separate building to the carved meeting house) to sit to eat at long tressle tables. . They should not eat until the food has been 'blessed' or an acknowledgement said by an elder of the home people even if the food is getting cold. . Visitors should try to enable the home people to sit amongst them to chat and get to know them while eating. . Often, younger people will be serving and older people will be working in the kitchen. . It is important to realise that in most cases they are working voluntarily and it is appropriate to formally and publicly thank them near the close of the meal before leaving the dining room to begin the meeting. As a result of this, the visitors may be light-heartedly asked to sing. . To sing a song from your home country would show respect and thanks.

In Aboriginal and Māori literature, the circle and the spiral are the symbolic metaphors for a never-ending journey of discovery and rediscovery. The journey itself, with its indigenous perspectives and sense of orientation, is the most significant act of cultural recuperation. The present study outlines the fields of indigenous writing in Australia and New Zealand in the crucial period between the mid-1980s and the early 1990s – particularly eventful years in which postcolonial theory attempted to 'centre the margins' and indigenous writers were keen to escape the particular centering offered in search of other positions more in tune with their creative sensibilities. Indigenous writing relinquished its narrative preference for social realism in favour of traversing old territory in new spiritual ways; roots converted into routes.

Standard postcolonial readings of indigenous texts often overwrite the 'difference' they seek to locate because critical orthodoxy predetermines what 'difference' can be. Critical evaluations still tend to eclipse the ontological grounds of Aboriginal and Māori traditions and specific ways of moving through and behaving in cultural landscapes and social contexts. Hence the corrective applied in *Circles and Spirals* – to look for locally and culturally specific tracks and traces that lead in other directions than those catalogued by postcolonial convention.

This agenda is pursued by means of searching enquiries into the historical, anthropological, political and cultural determinants of the present state of Aboriginal and Māori writing (principally fiction). Independent yet interrelated exemplary analyses of works by Keri Hulme and Patricia Grace and Mudrooroo and Sam Watson (Australia) provided the 'thick description' that illuminates the author's central theses, with comparative side-glances at Witi Ihimaera, Heretaunga Pat Baker and Alan Duff (New Zealand) and Archie Weller and Sally Morgan (Australia).

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[Feather cloaks](#)



[Early European engraving](#)



[New Zealand currency \(1st of 2\)](#)



[Trevor Lloyd cartoon](#)



[South Canterbury Battalion badge \(1st of 3\)](#)

Māori

Māori always regarded the kiwi as a special bird. They knew it as ‘te manu huna a Tāne’, the hidden bird of Tāne, god of the forest. Kiwi feather cloaks (kahu kiwi), originally made by sewing kiwi skins together, were taonga (treasures) usually reserved for chiefs. Kiwi feathers, now woven into flax cloaks, are still valued. Māori also ate kiwi, preserving them in the birds’ fat, and steaming them in a [hāngī](#) (earth oven).

A taste of kiwi

Among the few Europeans who ate kiwi was the 19th-century explorer Charlie Douglas. He thought the eggs made great fritters when fried in oil from the kākāpō bird, but was less sure about the meat. After spraining an ankle he came across two kiwi, and being famished, he ate them. He said the best description of the taste was ‘a piece of pork boiled in an old coffin’.²

Early Europeans

From the first, Europeans regarded kiwi as unusual birds. The first skin was taken to England in 1812 and inspired the first illustration of the bird, looking more like a penguin. As early as 1835, the missionary William Yate described the kiwi as ‘the most remarkable and curious bird in New Zealand.’¹ In 1851, the first living bird was sent to England as a specimen for the London zoo.

Use as an emblem

As the kiwi began to disappear from the bush, its image began to appear as an emblem. In the second half of the 19th century, it was used as a trademark – for veterinary medicines, seeds, drugs, varnishes, insurance, on the Auckland University College crest, and on Bank of New Zealand notes.

When the first New Zealand pictorial stamps were issued in 1898, the kiwi was on the sixpenny stamp. About 1899, one observer said, ‘From the fact that bank notes, postage stamps and advertisement chromos generally have a portrait of this unholy looking bird on them, it is evident that the kiwi is the accepted national bird of New Zealand.’³

National symbol

In the 20th century the kiwi began to represent the nation. In August 1904 the *New Zealand Free Lance* printed a cartoon which showed a kiwi growing in size after New Zealand’s rugby 29–0 victory over an Anglo-Welsh team. This is possibly the first use of the kiwi as a cartoon symbol for the nation. The next year the *Westminster Gazette* printed a cartoon of a kiwi and a kangaroo going off to a colonial conference. In 1905 Trevor Lloyd also drew his first sporting cartoon using a kiwi when he showed the bird unable to swallow Wales following the defeat of the All Black rugby team. Lloyd more often symbolised the All Blacks with a moa during that tour, but by 1908 the kiwi had clearly become the dominant bird symbol in cartoons, especially sporting ones.

Besides the moa, other symbols for New Zealand at this time included fern leaves, a small boy and a young lion club.

‘Kiwis’

Until the First World War, the kiwi represented the country and not the people – they were En Zed(der)s, Maorilanders or Fernleaves. During the First World War, New Zealand soldiers were often described as Diggers or Pig Islanders. But by 1917 they were also being called Kiwis. It was probably not because they were thought to be, like the birds, short, stocky scrappers – this was a more common image of Australians, while New Zealanders liked to emphasise their stature and good manners. It was simply that the kiwi was distinct and unique to the country.

The kiwi had appeared on military badges since the South Canterbury Battalion used it in 1886, and it was taken up by several regiments in the First World War. Cartoonists also used the bird often during the war to symbolise New Zealand. At the end of the war New Zealand soldiers carved a giant kiwi on the chalk hills above Sling Camp on Salisbury Plain in England.

An Australian boot polish called Kiwi was widely used in the imperial forces. It was named by its founder, William Ramsay, in honour of his wife’s birthplace.



This wood engraving of a group of Māori visiting England was published in the *Illustrated London News* in 1863. The Māori chief Wharepapa is in the back row, in profile facing left. William Jenkins, the organiser of the visit, is also in the back row, in profile facing right.