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**GLOBAL CAPITALISM AND THE REVIVAL OF ETHNIC
TRADITIONALISM IN
NEW ZEALAND**

THE EMERGENCE OF TRIBAL-CAPITALISM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction		7
Section One	Creating Structures and Enabling Agency	53
Chapter One	The Bicultural Project of the 1980s	54
Section Two	Retribalisation	81
Chapter Two	The Rimu Whanau	82
Chapter Three	The Ascendancy of Ngati Kuri	97
Chapter Four	The Rimu Whanau Marine Farm on Ngati Kuri Tribal Lands	124
Section Three	Kura Kaupapa Maori	140
Chapter Five	Establishing a Traditionalist Enclave	141
Chapter Six	Commodifying Neo-Traditionalism	161
Section Four	Tribal Fisheries	178
Chapter Seven	Juridification	179
Chapter Eight	The Commercial Settlement	204
Conclusion	The Limitations of Culturalism	238
Appendix One	Epistemological and Ontological Assumptions	263
Two	Theorising Tribal Capitalism	281
Glossary		318
Bibliography		320

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ABSTRACT

The social and economic restructuring accompanying increasing globalisation has provided new opportunities and new limits for social and ethnic movements in New Zealand as elsewhere. The purpose of this thesis is to establish the theory of tribal-capitalism through an examination of the responses to these changing global economic circumstances that have characterised the Maori ethnification, indigenisation and retribalisation movements since the 1970s.

Although both the initial 'prefigurative' and the later 'strategic' (Breines,1980:421) routes to *tino rangatiratanga* ('Maori sovereignty') were attempts to restore traditional social relations and secure political and economic autonomy from the dominant Pakeha society, the projects are distinguished by different approaches. On the one hand the 'prefigurative' traditionalist project indicted both capitalism and Pakeha society as its exponents sought a return to the precapitalist social relations of the pre-Contact era. On the other hand exponents of the 'strategic' project sought to establish a concordat with capitalist Pakeha society based upon the assumption that a capitalist economy could be made compatible with Maori political and cultural autonomy. It is argued that neither project, 'prefigurative' traditionalism nor the 'strategic march through the institutions of capitalism', achieved the objective of *tino rangatiratanga*. Irrespective of approach, Maori ethnification, indigenisation and retribalisation became reshaped and reconstituted by the conditions that made the movements possible and that shaped them in decisive ways. These *tino rangatiratanga* movements emerged from the institutional channels enabled by Pakeha bicultural idealists and given substance by the Waitangi Tribunal as a tribal-capitalist regime of accumulation characterised by exploitative class relations and reified communal relations.

An extensive range of case studies is employed to provide evidence that tests the hypothesis of the emergence of tribal-capitalism from out of the projects that attempted to retain the traditional in a world dominated by capitalist relations. Despite the structural opportunities provided by Pakeha bicultural idealists, and despite the different approaches of the Maori *tino rangatiratanga* projects, it was not possible to restore communal relations of production. Objective forces, rather than internal miscalculation, ineptitude or corruption, brought about the failure as firstly 'prefigurative' and then 'strategic' projects became doomed attempts to sidestep class location within capitalist structures.

The various studies examine the ways in which the 'prefigurative' and 'strategic' projects not only led to the transformation of the ethnification and indigenisation movements into the new class formations of tribal-capitalism, but actually became constitutive of the class fractions that define the regime. The dialectical interactive of agency and structure which transformed the projects became a reconstituting and shaping mechanism of change.

First the study of the Pakeha new class's bicultural project grounds the later studies by locating the institutional inclusion of Maori indigenous particularity in the universalism of the new class humanists. Biculturalism established relatively benign conditions for the tino rangatiratanga projects by providing both opportunities and resources for Maori development. It is in the retribalising form of that development that an indigenous version of the capitalist regime of accumulation is located. The next three sections of the thesis examine the 'prefigurative' and 'strategic' routes of this indigenous particularity into the new inclusive structures in studies of: a reviving Maori family, an ascendant tribe, a separate Maori education system and the creation of the national Maori fishing industry.

The outcomes of each study are examined to trace the failure of both approaches as particular groups within the retribalisation movement developed new and exclusive relationships to the traditional lands, waters and knowledge. The concluding section contrasts culturalist theories of the Maori tino rangatiratanga projects with the hypothesis of the emergence of tribal-capitalism advanced in this thesis. The claim that cultural strength can resist the imposition of capitalist class relations is found not to be sustained.