

Performing Identity Entrepreneurship During the Colonisation of New Zealand: A Rhetorical Construction of ‘Loyal Subjects of the Empire’

Sarah Y. Choi¹, James H. Liu¹, Michael Belgrave²

[1] School of Psychology, Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand. [2] School of Humanities Media and Creative Communications, Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand.

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Corresponding Author: Sarah Y. Choi, School of Psychology, Massey University, Private Bag 102904, Auckland 0745, New Zealand. E-mail: y.s.choi@massey.ac.nz

Abstract

A thematic analysis of New Zealand’s historical Speeches from the Throne (10 speeches, from 1860-1899) investigated rhetorical strategies used by Governors during colonisation, to mobilise both settler and indigenous people’s participation in the British Empire. Identity leadership (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00246>), augmented by critical theories of emotion (Williams, 1977, *Marxism and literature*. Oxford University Press) under the cultural framework of hierarchical relationalism (Liu, 2015, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12058>) was applied to show how unequal but reciprocal relationships were invoked by Governors, as representatives of the Crown and advocates for the general public in New Zealand. Governors attempted to mediate a positive shared identity within the British Empire; but at the same time to isolate those who excluded from subjecthood by their hostility to the Crown. Governors alternated between efforts to mobilise people against indigenous Māori who challenged them, and offers to include Māori who conformed to the conventions required of a hierarchical relationship between Crown and subject. We reflect on how these dynamics of rhetorical performance may still be relevant today, especially in contexts of hierarchy and in the domain of leader-follower relations more broadly.

Keywords

identity entrepreneurship, emotion, hierarchical relationalism, thematic analysis, rhetorical analysis, colonisation, coloniality

Non-Technical Summary

Background

Indigenous Māori in Aotearoa (New Zealand) were colonised by the British Empire during the 19th century. The New Zealand wars, fought between Māori and the Imperial/Colonial government, eventually led to the confiscation of large areas of Māori territory. Māori leaders who led organised resistance against Crown sovereignty were punished or suffered loss of status, while Māori allies who fought alongside the British were praised and held in high esteem by the colonial government. During this period, ‘Speeches from the Throne’ were publicly delivered by the New Zealand Governor at the opening of each parliamentary session. These speeches articulated government priorities and concerns to serve current political/legislative agenda. As such, they are rich with discourses and rhetoric that worked to justify violence by the state against Māori throughout this critical period. This history of colonisation bears an enduring legacy in New Zealand to this day.



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Why was this study done?

It is important to understand the arguments that have been constructed behind colonising discourses, and how they have continued, adapted and/or transformed over time. Our goal was to understand the rhetoric constructed by Crown-appointed Governors during the peak (and aftermath) of the New Zealand wars, which took place from 1860 to 1881. Specifically, we focused on the rhetorical strategies that were used for constructing a shared group identity for both British settlers and Māori as loyal subjects and followers of the Crown, so that they could collectively be mobilized for the aims of colonisation.

What did the researchers do and find?

We analysed Governors' Speeches to the Throne from the mid to late 19th Century (1860-1899), focusing on how Governors defined their followers as a common group. Specifically, we were interested in how this construction of a common group was negotiated with the exclusion of Māori to justify violence against them on one hand, and the assimilation of Māori into colonial society on the other. Our findings showed that Governors inscribed relationships between the Crown and her subjects through describing rituals of emotion. These included: 1) emotions of loyalty and devotion prescribed to their followers 2) emotions of benevolence and duty prescribed to the Crown. Depending on the interests and goals of the colonial government throughout the wars, these relationships were also selectively extended to Māori to include them as the Crown's subjects. This strategy functioned to persuade both settlers and Māori to conform to the colonial order, and exclude and punish those who resisted.

What do these findings mean?

This research shows how relationships (as described and performed through emotional expression) can provide a powerful tool not only for defining people as part of a common group, but also defining different roles and power relations within the group. Constructions of emotion also afford great flexibility in expanding (or constraining) who is included in the group depending on changing political interests. This suggests that there is a need to consider the ways in which emotions (and their associated relationships) are and have been invoked in the rhetoric of leaders across contexts and across time. Our research also shows how colonial violence against Māori has historically been justified (at least on a public level) through rhetorical persuasion. That is, by offering a reciprocal relationship with the Crown in return for their subordination, which was coded through emotion as loyalty.

This paper seeks to enrich the framework of identity entrepreneurship (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001) through a fusion of thematic and rhetorical analysis of official speeches delivered by British governing elites during the late 19th century to consolidate control over indigenous and settler populations in Aotearoa/New Zealand. We investigate how an inclusive identity was constructed through careful articulation of hierarchical (but intimate) *relationships* between the sovereign and her subjects. Within this rhetorical construction of colonial identity (or colonial subjecthood), we examine how indigenous Māori were positioned, both as the racialized 'other' and as colonised subjects of the Crown.

In analysing patterns of rhetoric in a corpus of public speeches (selected over 40 years during a critical period of colonisation, see Belich, 1986) we applied the cultural lens of hierarchical *relationalism* (Liu, 2015) to describe how identity leadership (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001) applies in a society where some people are normatively ranked as superior to others (see Fiske, 1991). The theory of identity entrepreneurship/leadership was shaped by our contemporary era where democracy and egalitarianism are assumed to be virtues. What happens when elitism and hierarchy are assumed to be virtues (Cannadine, 2002) as it was during the peak of the British Empire?

Despite being situated in a historically distant time period, this research is relevant to issues of ongoing coloniality in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In recent decades, the work of the Waitangi Tribunal has attempted to address historical grievances emerging from this period, but it also demonstrates the extent to which the impact of colonisation continues to the present (Belgrave, 2018). A new history curriculum (for elementary to secondary school levels) also emphasises the experience of colonisation as a continuous process (Belgrave, 2020). This is especially needed when historical negation (i.e., denying the relevance of colonisation to present-day issues in New Zealand) has been found to reduce support for policies that address historical grievances (Sibley et al., 2008).

Historical contexts provide important insights into the construction and essentialization of group identity through time (Archer, 1995). Empire, which peaked in the late 19th century, was formative in shaping the identity positions of both Māori and Pākehā (New Zealand Europeans), with effects extending to contemporary times. In Wetherell and

Potter's (1993) seminal work, they identified how 'race talk' in New Zealand draws on universalised principles of equality, fairness and rationality (i.e., principles of enlightenment) to deny racism (see also Liu & Robinson, 2016). Nairn and McCreanor (1991) also identified a 'standard story' where Māori resistance is seen as "disrupting otherwise harmonious race relations and are, therefore themselves the source of racial tension" (Tuffin, 2008, p. 597).

Driven by decolonial scholarship in psychology, the current paper seeks to 'turn the analytic lens' (Adams et al., 2015) on the identity positions of Pākehā in New Zealand, and in doing so, render their construction visible. Colonialism endures not only materially but through the disruption imposed by Eurocentric and colonial 'ways of being' (Wynter, 2003). It is important to trace the ideological roots of such processes to challenge their naturalization. More specifically, the current paper seeks to interrogate how colonial identity has been *constructed* through time, *imposed* on colonised peoples, thereby *(re)constructing* identity positions of indigenous people in ways that serve a European project of colonial domination.

New Zealand's historical 'Speeches from the Throne' provide a window for close examination of colonising discourses. These speeches were delivered by the New Zealand Governor in parliamentary sessions involving a new government as a 'Statement of the State of the Colony'. They articulated governmental priorities and legislative concerns in ways that were designed to impart an impression of stability and strength to London and to the public (see Reeves, 1983). Governors held a position where they formally represented the Queen on one hand, while also being spokesperson for colonial administrations on the other (Riseborough, 2002). They were also charged with responsibility for Māori welfare. Thus, these speeches enable investigation of how Governors attempted to balance the aims of colonisation (claiming new lands for the Empire), with maintaining the peace and well-being of the Empire's subjects, supposedly *including* Māori.

Identity Entrepreneurship

Identity entrepreneurship is an elaboration of the social identity/self-categorization approach to leadership, which assumes leadership to be a dynamic group process (Reicher et al., 2005). When people share a common group identity, then a leader can claim to represent what group members have in common, and what they could achieve as a collective. Moreover, those who prescribe definitions of shared identity are positioned to exert influence over the group (Haslam et al., 2011).

Reicher and Hopkins (2001) outlined three main strategies of identity entrepreneurship. First, there is the strategy of defining who is included within the *boundaries* of their shared category. Defining a set of people as belonging to a shared category creates social power through mobilising (persuading/influencing) them to act collectively as an ingroup, typically in contrast to (or against) an excluded outgroup (see Khan et al., 2017). As formal representatives of the Crown, Governors could construct a shared identity between their audience (colonials) and their superiors (the Queen and her ministers). Defining these groups as belonging in a shared category would have in turn, created room for the rhetorical construction of a common "other".

The second main strategy is defining category *content*. This involves prescribing what it means to belong to the in-group, thereby determining how and for what purpose a group will act as a collective. An identity entrepreneur will define shared identity with *content* (i.e., values, priorities, norms and goals) that is in line with their political agenda. For Governors, this was underpinned by goals like provision of Māori land for settlers, maintenance of the Queen's laws, and the amalgamation of Māori into British social order.

The third strategy involves defining a category *prototype*. That is, identifying who is most prototypical of the ingroup, and therefore best fit to lead it. A prototypical leader is framed to "be exceptional in being fully representative' of the group's shared values and beliefs" (Haslam et al., 2011, p. 155). In the historical context of the British Empire with a monarchy and nobility atop the social hierarchy, we propose that these principles of defining group boundaries, content and justifying leadership through prototypicality may manifest differently compared to in contemporary democratic societies. We apply the cultural logic of *hierarchical relationalism* to investigate this dynamic.

Identity Entrepreneurship in Social Hierarchy

Hierarchical relationalism was formulated by Liu (2015) to describe the high-power distance structure of East Asian societies. It refers to a hierarchically-ordered relational universe (Liu, 2017) where unequal positions are assigned to group members according to reciprocal but unequal duties and obligations. Authority figures are supposed to have a sense of moral and relational obligation towards their subjects (Fiske, 1991; Liu et al., 2015) and this warrants the expression of their followers' loyalty and gratitude in return. When such beliefs are positioned as normative, they provide the basis for rationalising hierarchy as a mutually beneficial arrangement (Hofstede & Bond, 1984). Applying these insights, we interpret the British Empire as a *relationally* mediated class structure rather than as a homogenous social category. Through this lens, reciprocal but unequal obligations between the Crown and her subjects become normative to maintain a social order of both positional inequality and social cohesion.

The present study seeks to examine how Governors defined a shared category that was widely inclusive and simultaneously hierarchical in its internal organization. Identity leadership needed to be managed within an articulation of unequal but mutually beneficial *relations* between the sovereign, her appointed representatives and their subjects. Governors would need to balance their image as a formal representative of the *monarch*, with their image as a representative or prototype of the *masses* (i.e., the model colonial subject). Furthermore, an important tension to explore is how Governors negotiated the desired inclusion of Māori as subjects of this hierarchy alongside their exclusion when they resisted conforming to the desired social order.

Emotion and Empire

Through the lens of hierarchical relationalism, the current study interprets *emotion* as an important resource for constructing an inclusive and relationally mediated identity. That is, a certain *capacity for feeling* (Zembylas, 2022) can become constitutive of a certain identity. Importantly, critical theorists of emotion have explained how any conceptualization of emotion must engage with its constructed and contextual nature (Guilmette, 2020). For example, Fernández-Dols and colleagues (2007) argued that emotions in rituals or public events are driven by specific *conventions*. That is, shared understandings of emotion within a social context are constructed through behavioural or linguistic conventions prescribing the expression of these emotions (and the associated relationships between people in these settings) as normative. These ideas are captured by the classic framework provided by Williams (1977) that various institutional and cultural voices work together to establish dominant 'structures of feeling', which anchor how issues and relations are interpreted in public discourse.

This perspective can be applied to examine the rhetorical invocation of emotion in the Governor's speeches, for historians have long observed how managing the "public circulation of emotion" is useful for maintaining a social order (Jackson, 2018, p. 2). Denison (1928) noted how emotions of reverence towards authority were normative for people governed in Empire. In line with hierarchical relationalism, vertical relationships in a hierarchy can be supported and maintained by certain norms of emotional expression, attachment and intimacy, which serve to unify people under a common authority (see Fiske, 1991; Liu et al., 2015; Saller, 2002). Conversely, research on the coloniality of emotion has also shown how emotion has been invoked to exclude on the basis of otherness. For example, Ngai (2005) theorized about how animatedness or exaggerated emotional expressiveness characterized colonial perceptions of racialized groups to mark their dehumanization.

We are interested in emotion as *both* rhetorical resources for colonial intimacy (inclusion) and as resources for 'othering' (exclusion). To the first point, we seek to examine the conventions that Governors articulated to their audiences to cultivate emotional intimacy (as indicators of relationship) towards both the British Crown (vertical) and fellow subjects of Empire (horizontal). To the second point, we seek to examine how Governors cultivated fear, anxiety and hostility (Jackson, 2018) towards a racialized other during periods of conflict, to justify punitive acts against Māori who *challenged* the normative relationships built around colonial intimacy.

In summary, the present study will examine the tensions in how Governors articulated identity positions to balance the expansion of harmony and satisfaction through colonial assimilation on one hand, with the mobilisation of hostility

through racialized exclusion on the other. There are two major aims to this investigation, the first of which is to interrogate the ideological origins of identity positions in New Zealand, which are intimately connected with colonisation (Adams et al., 2015; Wynter, 2003). Secondly, this investigation seeks to advance theories of identity leadership beyond democratic contexts where egalitarianism is taken for granted (e.g., Augoustinos & De Garis, 2012). Whereas populist leaders today may seek to build an alliance with ordinary citizens *against* the elite (Mols & Jetten, 2016; Reicher & Haslam, 2017), we investigate how identity leadership may be applied to bolster hierarchy and bottom-up support *for* the elite. A mode of identity leadership that justifies unequal relations between leaders and followers (through emotion and intimacy), may offer theoretical advance, especially for contemporary hierarchical (Liu et al., 2015) and authoritarian (Biersack & O'Lear, 2014; Scott, 2020) societies with paternalistic leadership.

Method

Corpus

Thematic patterns of rhetorical discourse were analysed in a selection of New Zealand's historical Speeches from the Throne. Copies of these speeches were collected from the New Zealand National Library's Papers Past database (paperspast.natlib.govt.nz). They were available as computer-generated base transcripts of scanned newspaper articles, which we edited for accuracy on Nvivo10 (see also Liu & Robinson, 2016 for details of this larger corpus). In total, there were 68 speeches available in the database (ranging from 382 to 5329 words, $M = 1658.3$, $SD = 879.4$).

In selecting the speeches that would make up the corpus for this study, we prioritized those that corresponded to significant historical events and/or politically transitional periods, particularly those associated with outbreaks of war. This selection process was informed by historical accounts provided by Belgrave (2017), Belich (1986), King (2003), McLean (2006) and Orange (2004). According to these historical accounts, the first major outbreak of war occurred in 1860. By the 1880s, there was a cessation of wars and other major violent conflicts, and this was reflected in the speeches by a significant drop in content explicitly addressing race relations. Therefore, we judged that the speeches chosen from within this timeframe (mid to late 19th Century) would be most relevant to our analysis.

We then selected the final list of speeches on the basis of the events occurring at the time and their content. From close reading, we identified speeches that corresponded in close timing with major political events as well as having content that explicitly addressed and/or responded to these events. The final dataset included the full texts of ten Speeches from the Throne, delivered between 1860-1899 by seven different speakers (ranging from 849 to 3108 words, $M = 1592$, $SD = 634.9$). The historical significance of the selected speeches is outlined in Table 1. As the figure who served as Governor longest (16 years in two separate terms), George Grey is prominent here.

Analytic Approach

Braun and Clarke's (2019) reflexive thematic analysis (TA) was followed for a situated and contextualized analysis of identifying shared patterns of meaning in the speeches. While TA was chosen as the overarching framework, techniques of rhetorical analysis (Billig, 1996) were incorporated in the process of identifying themes. Rhetorical analysis emphasizes processes of argumentation by which speakers strategically 'work up' certain ideas in their text or speech (Gibson, 2013). This provides a useful approach for analysing Governors' rhetorical use of language, to identify specific strategies of argumentation used to construct a shared identity while legitimizing hierarchy.

Procedurally, the first author became familiar with the data through repeated, close reading of the speeches. This led to (deductively) identifying the relevant extracts for analysis. Relevant extracts were identified on the basis of whether speakers were observed to invoke discursive strategies for identity construction. In the next phase, the first author analysed each extract to identify common strategies for identity construction on the basis of repetition, recurrence and emphasis (Owen, 1984). This was an iterative process which involved repeated reading of the extracts, and was facilitated by generative discussions between the three authors of repeatedly reflecting, questioning (and imagining) how these rhetorical strategies related to our research questions. This led to identifying rhetorical strategies that were *co-occurring* within extracts and strategies that were affected by the historical period in which they were situated, thus

Table 1

Key Historical Events Relevant for Each Selected Speech

Year of Speech	Historical Events
Beginning of main conflicts	
1860 (Governor Thomas Gore Browne)	Taranaki War (1860-1861)
1863 (Governor George Grey)	Waikato War (1863-1864)
Mid-conflict (New Zealand Wars)	
1865 (Governor George Grey)	Māori land confiscation in Waikato launched
1866 (Governor George Grey)	Māori leaders imprisoned without trial, land confiscation being implemented throughout the central North Island
1867 (Governor George Grey)	Limited Māori resistance continues, colonial defence relies on loyal Māori forces
Cessation of warfare	
1879 (Governor Robinson)	Māori armed resistance has ceased
1882 (Governor Gordon)	Parihaka invasion (1881)
1883 (Governor Jervois)	Te Whiti o Rongomai and other Māori prisoners released
Transition to peace	
1896 (Governor Glasgow), 1899 (Governor Ranfurly)	Period of heightened attention to imperialism

showing systematic *variation* across time periods. Those strategies for identity construction that showed meaningful co-occurrence or variation across time periods were combined into broader themes or patterns of shared meaning. Again, this was facilitated by an active, collaborative discussion between the authors to reach a consensus of interpretation on relevant themes. The identified themes were outputs of an analysis that focused on how a colonial identity is rhetorically constructed by Governors, through addressing and/or speaking on behalf of both their followers (colonials) and superiors (monarch). We considered how Māori were positioned and addressed in discursive constructions of colonial identity, and in particular, how *emotion* was used as a resource for these discursive strategies. The quotes and extracts presented in our analysis section represent the most illustrative examples of these ideas.

Reflexivity

By taking a reflexive approach to TA, we acknowledge the importance of making our positionalities (and associated subjectivities) visible as an analytic resource for this interpretive analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019). As migrants, the first and second authors' entry point into learning Aotearoa/NZ histories was through dominant or 'mainstream' discourses, which tend to be sanitized (O'Malley & Kidman, 2018) and symbolic (Sibley et al., 2005) in content, for example, by establishing historical closure between colonisation and material/structural conditions of the present (Sibley et al., 2008). In recognition of our immigrant status based on Te Tiriti O Waitangi, our motivations for embarking on this research are grounded in obligations to both learn and contribute to a more critically conscious and continuous history of Aotearoa/NZ. As researchers, we are committed to combatting the historical sanitization of colonisation and in exposing the continuity of settler colonialism through time, not just materially, but through legitimizing discourse and ideology. As part of these commitments, we sought the expertise of the third author, who as a Pākehā historian has written extensively on the relationship between Māori and the Crown. The third author was able to contribute important nuance to the contexts and conditions in which Governors' rhetoric (as the object of our analysis) were situated. Finally, the second author, who has written and studied in East Asian psychology, was able to recognise a meaningful connection between benevolent hierarchy in Confucian Asia and Empire in 19th Century Britain (see also Cannadine, 2002). It is these shared motivations and expertise in conversation, which have both shaped and enriched the interpretations of the present analysis.

Analysis

We identified four main themes based on emphasis and recurrence as well as historically-situated variation across the texts. The first theme pertained to the ways in which *intimacy* was invoked by Governors to define a relationally-mediated identity embedded in hierarchy. The second theme explored how certain Governors invoked colonial *anxieties and fear* as part of an exclusionary identity discourse, to isolate and target Māori who were engaged in armed resistance against the Crown. The third theme captures the conditions that were defined for the symbolic inclusion of Māori in the colonial order, to maintain Māori loyalty and even active military support. Finally, the fourth theme explored how Governors defined the shared identity content of *both* settlers and Māori in ways that aligned with the broader imperial project of colonisation.

Theme 1: Invoking Emotion to Mark the Boundaries and Order of the British Empire

The main strategy employed by Governors for defining identity boundaries, involved attaching symbolic conventions to the emotional relationship between the Crown and her subjects. This strategy served to define a shared category that was inclusive of all classes and races, while maintaining a hierarchical order of authority. An important element of this was the self-positioning of Governors as a relational conduit or mediator (Gleibs et al., 2018) between the Crown and settler population, and between the Crown and Māori.

Extract 1

"I have thus had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with most of its leading towns and rising settlements, in all of which I have, as the Queen's representative, met with the most cordial reception. By the people of Auckland also, on the occasion of my recent visit to that part of the country, I have been most warmly and loyally received. It has been a pleasing duty to me to report to the Secretary of State that in no part of the Empire has Her Majesty more loyal subjects than the inhabitants of the districts through which I have travelled."

(Grey, 1867)

The above extract is from a time when the government was faced with significant difficulties associated with the withdrawal of imperial troops, while the threat of hostilities remained. Amidst this tension, the self-positioning of Governor Grey as a messenger between the Queen and her subjects, enabled him to signal both 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' emotions to mediate a positive relationship between them. Bottom-up emotions encompassed feelings of loyalty, devotion and admiration that were often described to characterise people's attachment to the Crown. Such emotional expressions are acknowledged in this extract by Grey ("met with the most cordial reception" and "I have been most warmly and loyally received"). As the mediator for this relationship ("as the Queen's representative"), these affections are framed as being indirectly expressed toward the Queen.

This repertoire of bottom-up emotions recurred frequently throughout the speeches, particularly when Governors were describing their visits to various districts. Thus, these visits came to represent a social convention (Fernández-Dols et al., 2007), that prescribed a predictable set of emotions to the audience, signalling their status as loyal subjects of the Crown. The specific recognition expressed of the loyalty of those in Auckland is also important because of the existence of intense regional differences (on top of the New Zealand Wars) prevalent at the time, including provincial campaigns to secede from the colony as a whole.

The Governor also invokes top-down emotions on behalf of the Queen, which were characterised by expressions of benevolent duty and satisfaction. On behalf of the Queen, Governor Grey expresses a "pleasing duty" in response to the loyalty displayed by the inhabitants he visits. He also reminds the audience who their loyalty belongs to ("in no part of the Empire has Her Majesty more loyal subjects"). In this way, benevolence is framed as being *reciprocal* to the bottom-up emotions of inhabitants, triggering a sense of dutiful obligation towards emotionally-willing subjects. In 1867, the voting franchise was expanded to include both miners and Māori on the basis of universal male suffrage, despite large sections of the population still having no formal means of participating in government. In this context,

being a loyal subject of ‘Her Majesty’ provided people with a meaningful sense of participation in the Empire, that was intimate and relational rather than formal and procedural.

As part of their visits to various districts, Governors often emphasized the interpersonal nature of their exchanges and interactions with local residents.

Extract 2

“Since my assumption of the government of this colony, to which Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to appoint me, I have visited a considerable portion of each island, and have thus been able to obtain a personal knowledge of various districts, and to make the acquaintance of many of the residents. I cannot but regard the cordial manner in which I have been everywhere received as an evidence of the loyal attachment of the people of New Zealand to the throne and person of our beloved Sovereign. I have been specially gratified by the hearty welcome given to me by the natives whom I have met in different parts of the country.”

(Jervois, 1883)

Here is an assertion of the Governor’s motivation to get personally acquainted with residents of different districts, building a sense of interpersonal intimacy (“I...have thus been able to obtain a personal knowledge of various districts”). As shown in both Extracts 1 and 2, certain conventions like the warm welcome extended to Governors by inhabitants were routine and conventionalised throughout the speeches. Their accompanying emotional scripts (the inhabitants’ loyalty and the Queen’s satisfaction in return, expressed through the Governor as mediator) also recur frequently through predictable phrases. When referring to the Crown as “our beloved Sovereign”, the Governor expresses his own subordination to the Crown, and again, reminds the audience that he himself is not the true recipient of their expressions of loyalty. Thus, the loyalty that is acknowledged in the speeches is at once both personal/intimate (in expression) and impersonal/official (in implication). The relationship that is articulated symbolises a higher order attachment to Crown, which the Governor is also embedded in. By acknowledging that “Her Majesty has been graciously pleased” to appoint the Governor, he emphasizes a sense of benevolent satisfaction in her approval of him as a subject. In these ways, the Governor signals his own inclusion in the shared category that is being articulated to his audience, while positioning himself as the prototype by modelling the thoughts, emotions and behaviours of the desired colonial subject.

This emotionally mediated personality of the Queen also offers a key mechanism for the Treaty of Waitangi, where Māori were formally granted status as subjects of the Crown. In Extract 2, Governor Jervois reinforces the idea that Māori can be included in the shared category, but only with explicit acknowledgments of Māori loyalty (“I have been specially gratified by the hearty welcome given to me by the natives”). Throughout the war, Māori were divided into those resisting the Crown (whose resistance was a demonstration that they had put themselves beyond the protection of the Queen) and those actively engaged in supporting the Governor, or at least maintaining a degree of neutrality. The withdrawal of imperial troops from the colony made the government increasingly dependent on Māori allied troops to put down the remaining resistance. The dynamics of shifting categorisation processes to balance these demands will be explored in the following themes.

Theme 2: Cultivating Colonial Fears to Mobilise Violence

Public reactions of political leaders to events are important in shaping a ‘structure of feeling’ (Williams, 1977) for how a group collectively interprets and emotionally processes those events (de Rivera, 1992; Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, 2006). Applying this lens, the current theme focuses on how Governors’ rhetorical efforts were directed towards the construction of a *casus belli* (good reason to declare war) and justifications for punitive responses to Māori resistance.

An important condition for mobilising violence is the construction of the outgroup as a dangerous threat (Stephan et al., 2000). This is because elicitation of threat is effective in cultivating anxiety and fear as drivers of action (Bar-Tal & Antebi, 1992). The threat-related beliefs that were disseminated by Governors during the New Zealand Wars included perceptions of high Māori agency combined with perceptions that Māori dissidents harboured hostile, anti-social intentions towards not just the Crown, but the wider European ingroup. In 1863, Grey’s speech worked to justify an invasion of the Waikato and an attack on the Kingitanga three months earlier, where he had argued that Auckland was

under threat of attack. He had used this argument to persuade the Colonial Office to transfer sufficient imperial troops from British India to allow an invasion to take place.

Extract 3

"They have deliberately resolved upon war, and to try their strength with the British race."
(Grey, 1863)

Here, Governor Grey explicitly acknowledges Māori agency. The first part ('deliberately resolved') recognises their intention (see Choi et al., 2020), while the latter ('try their strength'), recognises their competence. Māori are constructed as competent rivals and categorically positioned against the 'British race'. Grey continues to use racial categories that define Māori as a collectively threatening outgroup in the following:

"They have for some time been endeavouring to form a general combination of the natives, having, for its avowed object, the indiscriminate slaughter of the European inhabitants of the colony"
(Grey, 1863)

Here, the capacity of Māori to organise and plan activities effectively is acknowledged, even dramatically overstated, as there was no evidence of any such intent. Their movement is framed as an offensive that is motivated by a collective goal ("its avowed object") and their determination in warfare is acknowledged. This extract also emphasizes Māori barbarism and (uncontrolled) aggression, indicating some attempt at dehumanization (Opatow, 1990) with the threat of "indiscriminate slaughter" invoked. At the same time, use of the phrase "to form a general combination of natives" draws parallels with how trade unions were framed during these times (Thompson, 1980). This suggests how such rhetoric can be deracialized when circumstances demand, its highest logic being the mobilisation of followers against all dissidents of the Crown.

The resistance that is alluded to in the above extract is the Kīngitanga movement, which emerged as a movement that imagined a future of Māori working in parallel with the established constitutional and political institutions, rather than being subordinated to them. Through Grey's rhetoric, the Kīngitanga became framed as a dangerous movement, fuelled by enough force and agency of its supporters to warrant serious retaliation and extreme solutions. His identity performance of constructing Māori as a strong and competent opponent functioned to convince settlers, Māori allies, and the Colonial Office to support a military invasion of the Kīngitanga.

Another important condition for mobilising a shared agenda of violence, is the categorical construction of the ingroup as *virtuous* (Reicher et al., 2005; Schwartz & Struch, 1989). A virtuous construction of the ingroup combined with a threatening perception of the outgroup legitimises violent action as self-defence.

Extract 4

"The resumption of a block of land by my orders at Taranaki, which had, long previously to the late war, been peacefully occupied by our settlers, but which the continued threats of the natives had since prevented their return to, was followed by the entirely unprovoked murder of nearly the whole of a small escort of her Majesty's troops"
(Grey, 1863)

The morally virtuous construction of the ingroup is exemplified in Extract 4, where settlers are positioned as peaceful subjects who had maintained peace before being threatened by "the natives". Moreover, by stating that the murders of British troops were "entirely unprovoked", Māori are framed as senseless instigators of violence. At times, Governors presented clear intent behind Māori actions to construct an outgroup with enough will and motivation to be taken seriously as an enemy (see Choi et al., 2020), while sometimes presenting low cognitive agency to maintain a sense of danger and barbarism through their unpredictability.

Extract 5

"To provide a material guarantee for the preservation of peace — such measures will be necessary as will render future insurrections of the natives hopeless. The most obvious and effective of such measures are the construction of roads through the interior of the country, and the introduction, into

the disaffected districts especially, of an amount of armed population, sufficient to defend itself against all aggression.”

(Grey, 1863)

Extract 5 highlights the way in which Governor Grey equated his military agenda to measures that “guarantee for the preservation of peace”. These measures are framed as a precautionary approach, aiming to secure peace for the whole population by preventing violent acts of Māori before they happen (“[such measures] will render future insurrections of the natives hopeless”). Mobilising armed colonial settlers into “disaffected” Māori districts is framed as a justified method of self-defence rather than an armed invasion (“to defend itself against all aggression”).

Throughout invasions, it was imperative for Governors to uphold a noble and virtuous image of the Crown, her troops, and loyal subjects, both Māori and European. This was especially relevant when discussing acts like the Government’s violent response to the Parihaka resistance (in 1881), which was a peaceful, pan-iwi movement of organized Māori resistance after the New Zealand Wars (King, 2003).

Extract 6

“My Government desire it to be recognised that in the course pursued they have been and are actuated by anxiety to avert consequences disastrous to all classes of her Majesty’s subjects rather than by any desire to inflict punishment.”

(Gordon, 1882)

Here, in discussing the Parihaka invasion, the Governor states that the Government’s orders were intended to protect subjects rather than inflict any harm on those who are implied to not be included within the grouping of ‘her Majesty’s subjects’. Anxiety is invoked to justify the urgency of action as is common in racialized discourses of colonial affect (Jackson, 2018). By referring to “all classes” of subjects, Gordon frames the event in terms of collective concerns, while also implicitly reinforcing the social order that is under threat. Again, the Government’s actions are framed as being preventative (“to avert consequences disastrous”), disregarding the fact that Parihaka was conscientiously committed to peaceful resistance.¹

Through a rhetoric of fear, Governors communicated a dominant structure of feeling for their audience to interpret the New Zealand Wars through. This involved portraying disloyal Māori as a legitimate threat to settlers during periods of conflict, while simultaneously disseminating beliefs of (non-resisting, loyal) subjects as peaceful, vulnerable to harm, and thus in need of the Crown’s protection.

Theme 3: The Conditional Inclusion of Māori as ‘Her Majesty’s Subjects’

Defining category membership through emotional intimacy (Theme 1) granted enough flexibility to include Māori when it favoured Crown interests. Such processes marked the beginning of Māori amalgamation into the imperial order. However, the need to differentiate between Māori and target those who continued to challenge the Crown’s sovereignty remained salient throughout the late 19th century. Therefore, the symbolic inclusion of Māori remained explicitly selective.

The symbolic inclusion of Māori largely depended on their perceived *capacity for feeling*. That is, only when they were presented as being warmly disposed towards both the Crown (vertical) and living harmoniously with fellow British subjects (horizontal), was their inclusion acknowledged.

1) In 2017, a reconciliation package including an apology was offered by the Crown as a form of redress, compensation, and acknowledgement of this shameful history.

Extract 7

"The loyalty expressed to her Majesty, together with the friendly greetings and hearty welcome accorded to me personally, will ever be implanted in my memory, and I am fully assured that friendly relations with these once turbulent and warlike tribes have been firmly established, and that they are now peaceable and loyal subjects."

(Glasgow, 1896)

By the middle of the 1890s, no areas of the country remained under independent Māori control. The Premier, Richard Seddon, promoted the idea of a national society, a distinctly New Zealand nation which included Māori participation in the state. As shown in Extract 7, a narrative of persuasion, where the future is contingent upon friendly race relations, was consistently emphasized and contrasted to the violence of the past. The Governor employs a rhetorical contrast between the 'turbulent and warlike' times preceding colonisation, and the natural transition of Māori to loyal and peaceful subjects following their subordination. In this extract, the Governor again uses familiar conventions of "friendly greetings and hearty welcome" to invoke images of Māori loyalty to the Crown and legitimize his claim. In a familiar way, this is invoked on a level that is personal to him ("accorded to me personally"), to extend a sense of interpersonal intimacy.

Extract 8

"Additional proof has been afforded, through the operations at Taranaki and Wanganui, that the Colony may rely with confidence on the skill and gallantry of its own officers and men, whilst the devoted courage evinced by the loyal Natives has placed beyond doubt the attachment of a large portion of the Native race to the Crown, to their European fellow subjects, and to the cause of order against turbulence and fanaticism."

(Grey, 1865)

While Extract 7 demonstrates how Māori were symbolically included during periods of relative tranquillity, Extract 8 highlights how this strategy was employed more explicitly during the peak of the New Zealand Wars. Here, Māori seeking to build positive relationships with the British are praised as examples of "Good Māori" (see [McCreanor, 1997](#)). By 1865, resisting Māori presented a legitimate challenge to the colonial military ([Belich, 1986](#)). Therefore, Māori 'loyalists' became increasingly relied upon ([McLean, 2006](#)). In Extract 8, as well as being praised for their courage, Māori allies are symbolically marked as ingroup members through conventional descriptors like "devoted" and "loyal". By asserting that this is felt by a "large portion" of Māori "beyond doubt", Grey claims that such positively disposed (i.e., subordinated) Māori are prevalent and attempts to provide some sense of confidence amidst a period of heightened tension and uncertainty.

Positive horizontal (or fraternal) relations between Māori and settlers are also emphasized in efforts to foster solidarity between them as fellow subjects of the Empire ("attachment...to their fellow European subjects"). By contrast, the final phrase of the extract highlights rhetorical attempts to divide Māori against each other (see [McCreanor, 1997](#) for contemporary examples). Māori allies are positioned as standing against the "turbulence and fanaticism" of Māori 'rebels', creating the space for a common enemy to be constructed for both the British and their Māori allies alike.

This criteria for selective inclusion and differentiation between 'good' and 'bad' Māori was employed across varied situations. As the peak of the New Zealand Wars subsided and a transition to peace was enacted, a recurring narrative that emerged was the *conversion* of dangerous Māori 'rebels' to non-threatening, compliant subjects.

Extract 9

"The behaviour of Tawhiao and his people continues favourable and peaceful, and my advisers have good reason to believe that these relations will be maintained. At the same time, the well-known chief Rewi has given further important proof of his loyalty; the attitude taken by him affords a guarantee for the continuance of peace, and the maintenance of this would in a short time lead to the opening up of the interior for settlement."

(Robinson, 1879)

The extract above highlights how a narrative of Māori pacification played out with key leaders of Māori resistance. Māori who had been leaders of the Kingitanga during the Wars (Belgrave, 2017), were described as being converted to “peaceful and loyal subjects” (following massive land confiscations from Māori ‘rebels’ after the war, see Ward, 1974/2013). Here, the “favourable and peaceful” description of Tawhiao’s behaviour is used as a forecast for the maintenance of peaceful relations. A similar assertion with respect to Rewi, a major figure in Māori resistance (Belgrave, 2017; Belich, 1986), is significant because Rewi’s “proof of loyalty” is used to warrant both peace and land acquisition for settlers (“this would in a short time lead to the opening up of the interior for settlement”). Through this framing, it is the emotional capacity of Māori, especially influential Māori figures, for warmth and loyalty that afforded peace. This peace then afforded further British settlement.

Theme 4: Framing the ‘Enlightenment’ of Māori Subjects

Governors consistently invoked Eurocentric ‘ways of being’ as definitions of civilised life (Wynter, 2003) when constructing the shared identity of their audience.

Extract 10

“I was at once struck by their extent and importance, and gratified by the presence, notwithstanding the circumstances under which they were formed, of that regard for law and order which is the characteristic of our race, I can say with confidence that security for life and property, and respect for the law, exist in as marked a degree in those recently populated districts as in any part of her Majesty’s dominions”

(Grey, 1867)

This extract states “respect for the law” as a defining characteristic of the ingroup in categorical terms (“our race”) during the wars. The use of the term ‘characteristic’ shows identity construction in action. When racial categories are imposed on this European understanding/aspiration of self (as lawful people), it creates or reinforces the context for a racial ‘other’ that is *unlawful* and disorderly. While previous themes explored how certain identities were privileged based on an emotional character, the current theme demonstrates how signifiers of *modernity* (or enlightenment, see Liu & Robinson, 2016) were also incorporated to construct and classify identities as part of the colonial project. Along with ‘regard for law and order’ which signals a capacity for rationality and reason, economic security and property ownership are also invoked as indications of European ways of life. Such economic conditions are constructed as natural and fundamental to European (colonial) ways of being (conditions that are visible “as in any part of her Majesty’s dominions”), when they are conditions that rely on the violent subordination of colonised people (see Themes 2 and 3) and extraction from their lands. In these ways, Extract 10 exemplifies how modernity is embedded in coloniality (Mignolo, 2011; Wynter, 2003).

Extract 11

“Especially, it is most gratifying to remark the almost unexampled progress in wealth and population made by the settlements in the Middle Island.”

(Grey, 1863)

Another core ideal of enlightenment or modernity as a colonial project, is the aspiration for (unlimited) progress (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). In the extract above, the growing population of settlers is equated with a natural rise in economic prosperity. Settler identity is defined based on an “unexampled” ability to accumulate material growth. This selectively privileges the identity of settlers as a group that can *improve* or build upon the value of the land. Aspirations for progress, industrialization and development that underpin modern individualism stand counter to indigenous ways of being across colonised settings (Adams et al., 2018). The Governor prioritizing these Eurocentric ideals as the norm highlights a process in which a ‘coloniality of being’ is gradually imposed.

Through this rhetoric, Governors linked the expansion of British presence with increasing abundance, which justified the displacement or ‘education’ of those who were framed to *lack* these capacities for supposed growth and progress. Reflecting this, utilitarian discourses became more inclusive towards the late 19th century after Māori

resistance had been militarily broken. The awakening of Māori to “enlightened” values of modernity is a narrative that reinforces the gradual broadening of category boundaries and participation (i.e., assimilation). By now, Governors were able to shift the focus of their rhetoric from building a climate of racialized exclusion and fear to building a climate of inclusive hope and imperial satisfaction.

Extract 12

“The natives in all parts of the colony have evidenced a strong and earnest desire to have their lands opened by roads, and thus bring themselves into closer touch with civilisation. Their anxiety to have schools established in their midst shows that they are alive to what will prove of great moment to their children in the future.”

(Glasgow, 1896)

The ‘enlightening’ of Māori to a British way of life is articulated in this extract. Using this narrative, the Governor could justify the establishment of British institutions as serving the best interests of Māori subjects. A structure of feeling that associates the movement of Māori towards British values with their willingness, such as their “strong and earnest desire” to have roads built and to “bring themselves into closer touch with civilisation”, works to communicate a sense of European benevolence and satisfaction as providers of the path to enlightenment. This newfound confidence of the Governor to speak on behalf of Māori desires as their representative, further indicates that Māori agency has been subordinated to that of the Crown. By this time, the colonial frontier had largely disappeared (Belgrave, 2017).

By framing values of modernity and enlightenment (law and order, economic progress; see Liu & Robinson, 2016) as increasingly inclusive values when defining their followers, Governors could make proposals to advance colonisation in ways that appealed to the shared identity of the Queen’s subjects. Governors could increasingly appeal to these values to mobilise their audience, both Māori and European, towards the establishment of British institutions and infrastructure.

Discussion

The current study incorporated the social identity framework of leadership (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001) with critical theories of emotion (Williams, 1977), to examine the rhetorical construction of an identity that is both inclusive and hierarchical (Liu, 2015). Theme 1 showed how the routine articulation of unequal relationships maintained rigid hierarchical differences between sovereign and subject, while simultaneously building a sense of intimacy to bind them together. Specifically, top-down emotions of duty and satisfaction reflected the relational obligations that the Crown claimed to hold towards her subjects, while bottom-up emotions of loyalty were presented by her subjects in reciprocity. Both pathways were actively mediated by Governors as messengers and receivers of emotional expression.

In the context of 19th century settler colonies, the acceptance of hierarchy (and the place of the Queen within it) was more rooted in a wilful recognition of colonial functioning rather than passive subordination to power (Cannadine, 2002). The rhetoric in these speeches demonstrate how the *conventionalising* of emotion preserved this recognition by appealing to subjects on a level that was both personal and impersonal, both intimate and constitutional at the same time. By performing emotion as part of an official script or ritual, Governors were able to model and reinforce norms of acceptable emotional expression to justify exclusion as a consequence of failure to accept these norms. Such strategies which draw on emotion and intimacy to promote social norms may show relevance for leadership today, especially for societies where formal/procedural participation in governance is more limited (see Fiske, 1991; Liu et al., 2015). On a broader level, emotional conventions (though qualitatively distinct from those observed in 19th century British Empire) may be observed in both democratic (Olson, 2020) and non-democratic leadership (Repnikova & Fang, 2018) today, particularly when viewed through the lens of para-social relationships between leaders and followers (Hakim & Liu, 2021). With 21st century communications technology, intimacy between a country’s leader and their followers can perhaps be maintained even more directly through mass/social media rather than via intermediaries.

When defining identity content, Governors often invoked notions of *peace* and social cohesion (Theme 2). In turn, the explicit construction of a threatening outgroup had the effect of stoking colonial fears to justify colonial policy,

and this became crucial during periods of instability to the social order. Rhetorical contrasts between groups that were marked as loyal versus disloyal, functioned to legitimise the use of force against Māori who resisted. At the same time, Governors continued to reward and persuade Māori allied troops by acknowledging their inclusion as subjects of the Empire, thereby extending to them an emotional relationship with the Crown. This dividing of the colonial subject into “Good Māori” and “Bad Māori” is still prevalent in NZ discourse today (McCreanor, 1997).

The conditions for symbolic inclusion/exclusion of Māori revolved around the framing of their *emotional capacity* (Theme 3). Duality in their disposition as being rejecting or accepting of warm, friendly relations with settlers resonates with patterns of race talk prevalent in New Zealand today (Tuffin, 2008). The key insight was that such relational dispositions were not fixed but *fluid* and subject to change. Māori who had been excluded in the past, could be granted inclusion, as long as they participated in the appropriate relationships and the emotions scripted for these, and thus agreed to participate in the desired British order. This was reflected in a narrative that emerged towards the end of the wars, where a switch in the relational disposition of Māori ‘rebels’ came with explicit acknowledgement of their changed status as loyal and deserving subjects of the Crown. Thus, Governors provided enough space for Māori to convert and thereby ‘redeem’ themselves as acceptable subjects. Based on their fluid definitions, Governors constructed a category that maintains (and even welcomes) the potential for Māori to be accepted, while still maintaining selective inclusion/exclusion.

Also contributing to the fluidity of the shared category was its ideological content, which was organised by British Enlightenment thinking (Theme 4). Because ingroup values were increasingly framed to reflect broader civilisational sophistication rather than racial differences, they could be ascribed to more and more Māori over time and this was framed as indicating progress of a ‘civilising mission’. It could be argued that this selective but fluid expansion in both category boundaries (relational) and content (ideological), is what warrants claims of a ‘universal’ identity in New Zealand (Wetherell & Potter, 1993), that manages the symbolic inclusion of Māori to this day (see Sibley & Liu, 2007).

An important contribution of the current analysis is its application of identity leadership for understanding rhetoric from a historically and politically distant society. This demonstrated the robustness of identity leadership as a theory, while also producing novel insights about how certain strategies are managed to meet conditions of hierarchy and imperialism, and thus expand the literature. We identified a performance that demanded intentional balancing between persuasion and punishment to leverage power, and thus, fluid boundaries between inclusion and exclusion. Such boundaries were not defined by racial or other fixed markers of difference. Instead, identity entrepreneurs prescribed the criteria for ingroup membership as ‘loyal’ subjecthood: something seemingly subjective but explicitly conventional.

A related innovation of the present analysis was how prescriptions of emotion played an important role in defining social identity (see also Reicher & Jogdand, 2017). By incorporating emotion, Governors were able to build on intimacy as the basis for defining a shared identity that was fluid and expanding, while maintaining internal differences. These insights ought to be relevant for contemporary contexts where identity discourse is directed to support rhetoric of assimilation. Moreover, investigations of how populist leaders invoke emotion and intimacy in mass/social media to leverage popularity with voters (Hakim & Liu, 2021) may be a particularly fruitful avenue for temporally extending the work done here. More broadly, we believe that further diachronic analyses of group leadership will lead to rich and novel insights on how the performance of leadership has transformed or adapted *over time*, in tandem with changes in the structuring of societal relations.

Our interpretations are not without limitations. Because the corpus was made up of Governors’ speeches, the study could not address the actual experience and prevalence of certain emotions in this context. Thus, the present research cannot claim to address whether the rhetorical strategies described were effective in priming certain structures of feeling. Indeed, past research on individualized accounts of emotion (e.g., through analysis of petition letters) has shown that the actual experience of emotion during these periods would have been much more pluralistic (Jackson, 2018). We also acknowledge that these interpretations are made from the vantage point of a temporally distant social and political context. Given that political processes are constantly evolving, interpretations and understandings of coloniality may also differ across time.

Conclusion

The present study examined how colonial Governors of New Zealand invoked emotion in unequal relationships as part of their rhetorical strategies to both satisfy and mobilise followers in service of a hierarchical order. Governors selectively defined their audience as part of a colonial ingroup through the articulation and ritualisation of intimacy. Ritualised scripts guided emotional participation in certain relationships, which functioned to reify unequal positions within a hierarchy. At certain points of disruption, as in the case of the New Zealand wars and Māori resistance, exclusionary discourses were prioritised to mobilise action that would re-establish the desired social order. The exclusion of Māori 'rebels' from the articulated relationships justified their suppression, not solely by conquest but also by possible conversion in their emotional disposition. This functioned as a form of rhetorical persuasion for Māori to give up their resistance and subject themselves to an assimilative relationship with the British Crown, which both personally and formally granted their symbolic inclusion and protection within the Empire.

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