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Abstract

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INTRODUCTION

‘Development’ is a complex and many-faceted term, but despite a lack of clarity over what exactly it refers to, it is safe to say that for the last half century a ‘development paradigm’ has been in place in terms of how Western societies have sought to improve not only themselves, but also other, less ‘modernised’ cultures. New Zealand, where emphasis is placed on economic growth as a measure of the nation’s success, and as a way to bring the indigenous Maori population into line with the rest of the population, is no exception. In recent years, Maori ‘development’ through the adoption of Pakeha business models has increasingly been promoted and explored (witness the recent Hui Taumata conference in Wellington), and tourism ventures in particular have been held up as appropriate ways for Maori populations to facilitate development and economic growth. Yet there are numerous assumptions about development and what it means for non-Western societies, both generally and in the specific context of tourism, which appear to have gone largely unchallenged.

Two of Patricia Grace’s novels, *Potiki* (1986) and *Dogside Story* (2001), address ideas of development and progress, particularly in the context of tourism, and raise challenges and concerns about what these terms mean in the New Zealand context, and to Maori. In *Potiki*, a close-knit hapu (extended family

group or clan) face the challenge of a Pakeha businessman attempting to set up a major coastal development on land adjacent to their traditional home, while in *Dogside Story* another coastal hapu undertake their own project of economic development by capitalising on their idyllic location to run a temporary tourism venture. The characters and communities in the novels are forced to debate and grapple directly with the issues raised by these impending projects and the impact that they will have on their communities. In this essay I examine the stance taken by Grace on these issues. I believe her stance evolves from an outright rejection of Pakeha-style economic development for Maori to an acceptance that the development paradigm may be negotiated to accommodate and serve Maori concerns. It may seem unusual to undertake an analysis of development and tourism — typically discussed in a more techno-bureaucratic setting — using works of fiction, but I believe literary fiction has a unique ability to challenge the traditional development paradigm in ways that other forms of discourse cannot.

DEVELOPMENT THEORY

In order to discuss Grace's attitudes towards development it is important to have an understanding of what is meant by that term. The word 'development' is loosely used in many contexts, and there are a number of key debates and important definitional factors which must be taken into account.

According to Björn Hettne, writing in Vandana Desai and Robert B. Potter's *Companion to Development Studies*, 'development' originated in the desire to rebuild the damaged economies of countries in Europe after World War II. Hettne offers a useful general definition of development when he says that 'Development implie[s] the bridging of the gap [between rich and poor countries] by means of an imitative process, in which the less developed countries gradually assume the qualities of the developed' (7).

While this definition is generally accepted, there is debate within the field of development studies over how the success of development programmes should be measured. For a long time, development was seen by economists and policy analysts as being equivalent to economic growth, with Gross National Product (GNP) as the main indicator. Development generally involved a transformation in economic structure away from primary goods towards manufacturing and service activities in order to facilitate economic growth. However, as Andy Storey notes in 'Measuring Development', this understanding of development came under scrutiny in the 1960s and 1970s, when a phenomenon known as 'growth without development' became apparent (27). This phrase referred to countries like Brazil, where although GNP was increasing rapidly, inequality and poverty were steadily worsening. With this concern in mind, British economist Dudley Seers notes:

The questions to ask about a country's development are therefore: What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels then

beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result 'development' even if per capita income doubled. (qtd in Storey 27)

Measuring development is difficult because there is no consensus on what development entails. While it has traditionally been seen in primarily economic terms, Storey, Seers and others believe development should take into account more than economic factors. Yet even using social factors to measure development can be difficult. In fact, for some theorists the idea of measuring development at all is inherently problematic because 'the very attempt at measurement may result in, or reinforce, Western domination' by holding 'Third World' societies up to Western standards (Storey 25–26). This concern echoes the 'imitative process' identified by Hettne above, which sees development as a process in which less-developed cultures take on the qualities of the more developed (Hettne 7).

Theorists who reject this imitative process have developed a critical position known as 'post-development,' which rejects development discourse on the basis that it forces Western standards onto other cultures:

According to the post-development approach, the principal effect generated by development discourse is to legitimise and reinforce Western domination over the 'Third World,' in part through its very definition or categorisation of the 'Third World' as being in *need* of Western-style development. (Storey 35)

It is important to note that taking a post-development stance does not necessitate rejection of change and growth. James Sidaway makes this point in a section on post-development in Desai and Potter's *Companion*:

... to criticize development is not necessarily to reject change and possibility. Rather it is to make us aware of the consequences of framing this as 'development.' Alternative visions considering, for example, democracy, popular culture, resourcefulness and environmental impacts would transform the imagined map of more or less developed countries. Recognition that development is but one way of seeing the world (and one which carries certain consequences and assumptions) can open up other perspectives. (18)

This observation is important for assessing Grace's attitude towards development in the Maori context. I believe Grace, like Sidaway, recognises that rejecting certain aspects of development is not to reject change and possibility. The question is whether taking a post-development approach necessitates a wholesale rejection of the development paradigm. Is it possible to tread a middle ground between rejecting and accepting development if it can be made to accommodate more than purely Western cultural assumptions?

One possible answer to this question is embodied in the relatively new concept of 'participatory development', which has emerged as a response to the criticisms levelled by post-development. As Giles Mohan notes, advocates of participatory development argue that development, as it has been pursued historically, has left those being 'developed' out of the equation:

The tendency is to equate development with the modernity achieved by 'Western' societies and to copy 'advanced' countries through planning by experts. The flipside is that 'non-expert,' local people [are] sidelined and their only role [is] as the object of grandiose schemes.... Participation is conflictual whereby the less powerful must struggle for increased control over their lives. (Mohan 50–51)

Participatory development seeks to give a greater role to 'non-expert' local people by promoting community-driven initiatives in which members of local communities can work together on development projects. Mohan points out that there is a central disagreement over what the aims of such programmes should be. Some see participation as a tool to increase the efficiency of 'formal' development programmes, while others argue that it should stand in opposition to formal development, and not aim to imitate Western societies in any way, shape or form.¹

This discussion surrounding development, and the concept of participatory development in particular, has relevance to *Potiki* and *Dogside Story*. Although she may not even be aware of the term, I want to argue that Grace essentially proposes a participatory approach for the Maori communities she depicts in these novels, as in each one local people work together on projects to benefit the community. These projects stand in opposition to traditional, Pakeha-style conceptions of development, which Grace presents as having serious detrimental effects when they are imposed on Maori communities from the outside. The central question is whether Grace's advocacy of participation for Maori communities constitutes a wholesale rejection of the aims of 'formal' development or an attempt to carve a niche for Maori communities within the development paradigm. I argue that Grace's position shifts from the former, in *Potiki*, to the latter, in *Dogside Story*.

DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEW ZEALAND CONTEXT

It is important to situate the above definitions and discussion in the New Zealand context. There is no question that the majority of Maori are in a far worse socio-economic position than most non-Maori in New Zealand. Maori have higher rates of infant mortality, cancer, heart disease, crime, welfare dependency and incarceration, and correspondingly lower levels of life expectancy, average income and educational attainment. These discrepancies have to be attributed to various factors, but strong arguments have been made that they all relate to a legacy of colonial mistreatment: fraudulent land sales and confiscations resulting in loss of economic base, repression of language and culture through education, forced assimilation through state-sponsored urbanisation and so on.

In recent years, attention has turned to addressing these discrepancies, and traditional conceptions of development have been appealed to in doing so. For example, Maori who believe that the Treaty of Waitangi has been breached may take a claim to the Waitangi Tribunal, which will hear the claim and then make non-binding recommendations² to the government. If the tribunal finds in favour

of the claimant group, the government, through the Office of Treaty Settlements, will usually enter into discussions with the claimants to negotiate a settlement package. Based on an assumption that development in economic terms is the most important and effective method of repairing past grievances for Maori, these settlements have been primarily monetary, most notably settlements of \$170 million each to Ngai Tahu and Tainui in the late 1990s. Similarly, Te Puni Kokiri (the Ministry of Maori Development) places a strong emphasis in its policies and strategies on regional economic growth for Maori. Maori tourism ventures in particular receive high-level support from branches of the New Zealand government. Since 2000 a number of Maori Regional Tourism Groups (MRTGs) have been established by the government to oversee and encourage Maori tourism projects. The website of the Ministry of Tourism lists twelve Maori-specific business assistance programmes which exist to provide financial aid to cultural tourism operators at the various stages of their business lifecycle, while the Community Employment Group has an entire section of its website devoted to Maori Tourism.

There can be no doubt that some Maori have benefited from this focus on economic development. Ngai Tahu, for example, have tripled the capital of their initial settlement through investment, and are using the interest to fund health, education, welfare, and language projects for their members. Members of the iwi (tribe) who established Whale Watch Kaikoura in the early 1990s have benefited financially from the company's success and the economy of the previously depressed area has been drastically rejuvenated following the establishment of the tribal business. Yet the strong emphasis in government policy on *economic* development reveals a fundamental assumption in line with traditional development discourse that economic factors must be considered above all else. This economic focus is revealed in a telling statement which appears on a page of the Community Employment Group website extolling the benefits to Maori of undertaking tourism developments: 'Whatever your local *asset* is that attracts visitors, whether it is snow, sand, mountain or bush, it is more likely to be looked after *if income is derived from it*' [emphasis added].

It is because of this assumption that Maori 'progress' should be measured in economic terms that theoretical positions like post-development and participatory development, initially conceived to apply internationally, can also be applied to the situation of Maori in New Zealand. This state-sponsored focus on economic success through emulation of Western models raises concerns about unquestioning Maori adoption and imitation of these models, and concepts such as post-development and participatory development can be useful in assessing what alternatives might be available to Maori. *Potiki* and *Dogside Story* open up similar questions with reference to Maori communities, and the terminology of development theory is helpful in assessing the Maori attitudes towards development that Grace articulates.

POTIKI

In *Potiki*, a small coastal hapu is challenged by a proposed tourism project on adjoining land. A representative from the company involved, privately nicknamed Mr Dollarman by the community, comes to meet with the hapu to request that they make some of their land available for an access road to the new facility. Mr Dollarman believes that to do so would be in the interests of the hapu because of the economic benefits it would bring.³ A discussion ensues between himself and members of the community who argue that his ideas of development and progress do not have the same significance for them as they do for him:

‘Well now, you’ve said that the developments here would be of no advantage to you. I’d like to remind you of what I’ve said earlier. It’s all job-creative. It’ll mean work, well-paid work, right on your doorstep, so to speak. And for the area ... it’ll bring people ... progress....’

‘But you see, we already have jobs, we’ve got progress....’

‘I understand, perhaps I’m wrong, that you’re mostly unemployed?’

‘Everything we need is here. This is where our work is.’

‘And progress? It’s not ... obvious.’

‘Not to you. Not in your eyes. But what we’re doing is important. To us. To us that’s progress.’ (90)

This exchange exemplifies the cross-cultural divide between Maori and European conceptions of development and progress. As his nickname suggests, Mr Dollarman is symbolic of a dominant European tendency to measure progress and development in economic terms. His position is in line with classical development theory as identified by Hettne, Storey and others, which views economic markers as the sole factors for the measurement of successful development. Mr Dollarman is unable to comprehend the world-view of the hapu, which is similar to that of post-development theorists, and which prefers to measure development in terms of culture, language and community values.

The hapu we meet prior to Mr Dollarman’s arrival is in a state of growth and renewal. They have suffered economically as a result of the recent closure of the ‘works’, where a number of their community members were employed. Hemi, the husband of the main narrator Roimata, finds himself out of work and decides that he has some ‘important things to do, things that had been on his mind for years now’ (59). He reflects on his youth, a time when his Grandfather Tamihana taught him the skills of gardening that had allowed the community to remain self-sufficient; after the works close Hemi decides to re-establish the gardens. His decision reflects the political climate in the 1980s which gave rise to renewed Maori interest in their land, language and culture:

These days people were looking more to their land. Not only to their land, but to their own things as well. They had to if they didn’t want to be wiped off the face of the earth. There was more determination now — determination which had created hope, and hope in turn had created confidence, and energy. Things were stirring, to the extent of people fighting to hold onto a language that was in danger of being lost,

and to the extent of people struggling to regain land that had gone from them years before. (60)

This renewed interest in their land and language is what the hapu are referring to when they tell Mr Dollarman that they already have jobs and progress, but he is unable to understand or accept this assertion. Mr Dollarman's predictions of increased land values, jobs, tourism and so on may well be accurate. It appears, at least when we first meet Mr Dollarman, that his intentions towards the hapu are honourable (although this is seriously undermined by subsequent events), and that he genuinely believes his project will bring nothing but positive outcomes for them. The fundamental question is whether the hapu need the kinds of changes he promises. Their rejection of his assumptions is a perfect example of the concerns characterising the post-development approach, which criticises development discourse on the basis that it legitimises and reinforces Western domination over non-Western cultures through its assumption that these societies need Western-style development (see Storey 35). In *Potiki*, a Maori community struggles to assert its autonomy in the face of Western-style development, which is imposed from outside, telling them there can be no progress or development outside of what it offers.

Grace's condemnation of traditional development discourse in *Potiki* is unequivocal. The hapu reject the coastal development outright, and do not give consent for their land to be used for access. They feel they do not need the economic changes it would bring, and refuse to cooperate because the project would require the destruction or movement of their whareniui (meeting house) and urupa (cemetery). This indicates that they value cultural factors more highly than economic ones. They pay dearly for this decision. Malicious representatives of Mr Dollarman's company deliberately dam a creek upstream from the hapu's land, which partially washes their urupa away. Later their whareniui is deliberately set alight, and afterwards the title character, Toko, is killed in a rigged explosion in the new building.

The brutality that Grace attributes to the proponents of Western-style development in this novel is extreme, and her depiction constitutes a damning criticism of the imposition of European values on Maori communities. In this novel Grace advocates an outright rejection of economic development when it is imposed on Maori communities without attention to their cultural concerns and values. The participation she depicts favourably in this novel would not find favour with those development theorists who see participation as a tool to increase the efficiency of formal development programmes, as it sees the community moving away from an engagement in the Pakeha economy and towards self-sufficiency and an assertion of separate identity. From a reading of *Potiki* it would seem that Grace's answer to the dilemma at the heart of the participatory development movement identified by Giles Mohan (whether it should assist formal development or stand in opposition to it) is to have Maori communities reject

development outright, and certainly not carve a niche for themselves within its traditional framework. The inward-looking actions of the hapu in Potiki may be called participatory in that the community members work together to improve their situation, but in such a way as to openly reject the aims and models of traditional conceptions of ‘development’.

DOGSIDE STORY

But what if a coastal Maori community decided to take on a project of economic development similar to that of Mr Dollarman’s company in *Potiki* without the involvement of an outside party? Would Grace be as damning in her criticism of such a venture? These questions are explored in *Dogside Story*, where the approach to development is quite different.

In this novel, another small community discovers that a wayward relation of theirs has internalised the Western emphasis on the primacy of economic gain. He has been planning to make money for himself, without informing or consulting the hapu, by renting out their land as campsites to tourists who want to be the first to see the sun rise on the year 2000. When his plan is discovered, with places already booked and deposits already received, the hapu discuss how to move forward. Wai, a female leader, suggests that they go ahead with his plan and use the profits for their own purposes. The idea is presented as a one-off, money-making venture to fund the building of a new wharekai. A hui (public meeting/conference) is held for the entire extended family to discuss the issue. Some of them question the desirability of pursuing a goal for money alone, which is seen as a Pakeha value with little validity for Maori:

All that money being spent, but people are still poor. Airlines, hotels, motels all doubling their prices so everyone can come and hoon around and be first to watch the same old sun come up. Poor old Te Ra. People letting their houses out for \$1000 a week, leasing out their backyards to campers — all for nga Merikana, nga Hapanihi, nga Tiamana, nga Wiwi, He aha te mea nui? He moni. (147)

Undertaking a Pakeha-style venture is also criticised for being tantamount to conceding to colonisation:

All this 2000 business. What is it anyway? It’s a Christian celebration, that’s what. So why are we celebrating it. What’s ‘New Year’ to us — nothing to do with our people, our culture. If we want to be celebrating then we should celebrate our own survival in our own Matariki star time. Never mind all this other rubbish dumped on us by missionaries and colonisers — all eyes to heaven while they take the land from under your feet. We got to decolonise ourselves, unpick our brains because they been stitched up too long. (146)

The fact that Grace has the characters debate these issues in a hui situation is significant.⁴ This uniquely Maori form of decision-making serves as a counter to the techno-bureaucratic, top-down forms of decision-making that characterise economically driven Western-style development projects. In a hui situation, decisions are reached by consensus, ensuring that everyone with a stake in the

matter has participated in the decision-making process, emphasising the collective focus of the community.

The discussion of the project raises a number of key questions about development for Maori communities. What differentiates a hapu undertaking a Western-style economic development project themselves from the imposition of a similar project⁵ from outside as seen in *Potiki*? Is it tantamount to internal colonisation to use the tools of Pakeha society to advance the goals of a Maori community? While Grace's stance in *Potiki* might have indicated that this question should be answered with a resounding yes, in *Dogside Story* the development is shown to have positive consequences for the community in question, and because it is undertaken by the Maori community with their own goals in mind, is not placed in the same category as colonisation, internal or external.⁶

The approach taken by Grace in this novel is very different from the outright rejection of the development paradigm in *Potiki*. After much discussion, even the dissenters lend their support to the proposed project, and the experience of preparing for the arrival of the tourists is depicted as a constructive one for the whole community. Relatives who have moved away from home even return to help out. Through the shared participatory experience, the community is revived and rejuvenated. Grace's depiction of development in this case is positive. The distinction between the tourism project in this novel and the project in *Potiki*, apart from scale, is that because the community it will affect initiates and implements it, they ensure that it is done with respect for their cultural values and beliefs, and that the economic gain from the project goes towards a communal goal with cultural benefits. In this novel, the participation Grace depicts falls on the opposite side of the debate to what was advocated in *Potiki*. Rather than rejecting the development paradigm outright, the events in *Dogside Story* put the case that participation can be used to carve a niche within the traditional development paradigm and further the aims of an indigenous community whilst still employing Western tools.

We have seen that Grace's stance shifts from outright rejection of development as a Western ideology in *Potiki* to a renegotiation of development from a Maori perspective in *Dogside Story* (although the apparent embracing of the development paradigm in *Dogside Story* should not be read as unequivocal). This evolution in stance can be seen to reflect changes in the political climate in New Zealand in the intervening period between the two novels. The mid-1980s, when *Potiki* was written, was a time of intense political action for Maori, which centred largely around the assertion of Maori identity in the face of perceived threats from mainstream society to that identity. By 2001, the focus of Maori political concern had moved from asserting Maori identity, now reasonably secure and well established, to improving the socio-economic position of the Maori population. It can be argued, therefore, that Grace's changing stance towards projects of economic development reflects a shift in focus in Maori politics more

generally. Nevertheless, the apparent embracing of the development paradigm in *Dogside Story* should not be read as unequivocal. To a certain extent, it can be argued that Grace's uses of narrative and formal techniques in *Potiki* and *Dogside Story* reinforce the conclusions drawn above about each novel's stance towards Maori development.

TRADITIONAL FORMS

A number of critics have discussed the narrative structure and form of *Potiki* and have made various arguments pertaining to its relationship to traditional Maori art forms. Christine Prentice argues that *Potiki* imitates the art of weaving in its form and structure. She points out that the text is not controlled by a single narrative voice and that each chapter and narrator builds on the others to aid the reader's understanding in a manner akin to the interweaving strands of a tukutuku panel (33–34). Eva Rask Knudsen goes a step further than Prentice and argues that 'the entire narrative of *Potiki* is told from and by the walls of the *wharenuī*' (187), and that the novel takes as its underlying structure or 'subtext' the parts of the *wharenuī*. She points out that the carvings in a *wharenuī* serve as the repository for the people's stories, history and ancestry, and relates this to the central role played by carving and the *wharenuī* in *Potiki* (192). She argues that Grace's role as author is analogous to that of carver:

... by extracting the philosophical principles inherent in carving and its symbolic spiral and by inscribing them as a trace-line of creativity in *Potiki* Grace succeeds in making her text become, like the *wharenuī*, the meeting place of a community's mind. (195)

As well as drawing on traditional art forms to structure *Potiki* (both weaving and carving), Grace also utilises the device of the spiral in her treatment of time and narrative in the novel. The concept of spiral or cyclical time is introduced by Roimata:

It was a new discovery to find that these [past] stories were, after all, about our own lives, were not distant, that there was no past or future, that all time is a now-time, centred in the being. It was a new realisation that the centred being in this now-time simply reaches out in any direction towards the outer circles, these outer circles being named 'past' and 'future' only for our convenience ... the enormous difficulty is to achieve refinement in reciprocity, because the wheel, the spiral, is balanced so exquisitely. These are the things I came to realise as we told and retold our own-centre stories. (39)

Roimata's musings reflect a common Maori belief that time does not progress in a linear fashion but instead moves in a cyclical manner. Maori communities are often accused of being 'backward-looking,' by European detractors, including Mr Dollarman (*Potiki* 93–94), but this reflects a fundamental lack of understanding of the Maori view that past events have bearing on the present and future because they form part of the same circle or spiral. When the knowledge from an outer circle is imposed upon another, we gain a deeper understanding of the event or emotion being related. To this end, the spiral is a common motif in

most forms of Maori art, and is also reflected in the process of traditional Maori storytelling. Just as Roimata and her whanau draw on the spirals of past and present time in telling their stories, Grace utilises the motif in her writing. As Prentice points out, the chapters of *Potiki* are ‘not subject to the fixity of print, [the] stories evolve and adapt with the storytelling context ... the narrative chronology is spiralling back on itself, but always moving forward in a kind of evolution’ (33–34). Thus the opening of the novel, in which a space is left by the master carver on a poupou for a ‘future time’ (*Potiki* 12), when re-read in the knowledge of the events which spiral out during the course of the novel, is imbued with a deeper significance than is at first apparent.⁷

As we have seen, the treatment of the development project at the plot level in *Potiki* constitutes an unequivocal rejection of traditional concepts of development for Maori communities, and indeed depicts them as having extremely harmful results. The alternative advanced in the novel is a form of participatory development which stands in opposition to the aims of conventional development. This position, held up by Grace as a valid Maori response to the encroachment of Pakeha-style development on their community, is reinforced by her literary techniques, which also advocate a return to traditional Maori practices by drawing heavily on traditional art forms. By subverting European literary conventions and structuring her novel instead around the Maori art forms of weaving and carving, Grace elevates these forms to a position of equal importance in the cultural sphere, holding them up as valid artistic expressions for Maori in the face of European cultural hegemony. Her reliance on the spiral motif in the rendering of chronology in the novel constitutes a critique of the European view that time moves forward in a linear fashion and that, by implication, progress and development will also be measured by linear movement towards a particular goal.

Dogside Story, on the other hand, has a very different narrative structure. Unlike *Potiki* (and indeed most of Grace’s novels), it does not have a number of different characters narrating different and interweaving chapters. Instead it relies principally on two narrative voices — that of the protagonist, Rua, and that of an omniscient narrator who relates the historical/mythological chapters and presides over chapters which deal with community-wide happenings such as the hui over whether or not to go ahead with the millennium tourist project. The omission of the multiple-character narration is significant because it signals a move away from the weaving parallel employed in *Potiki*. The decision not to employ this mode of narration marks a significant departure from a narrative framework Grace has relied upon in the past to stand in opposition to Western models of development and progress.

It is important to note that the inclusion of both past and present narratives is still an important factor in *Dogside Story*. The novel opens with the story of two sisters, Ngarua and Maraenohonoho, whose quarrel over a canoe results in the

establishment of two communities on either side of an inlet. The story of the sisters and the establishment of 'Godside' and 'Dogside' forms the backdrop of the present action in the novel, which concerns the residents of 'Dogside,' and serves an important function in attributing to the community a sense of shared history and identity. In this novel, as in *Potiki*, history is shown to be vital to the past, present and future of Maori communities, and to a certain extent it is placed on a spiral which informs the present with the wisdom of the past and vice versa. However, once the history of the community is established, it is not often referred to, and Grace utilises the spiral technique less explicitly than in previous novels.

Similarly, the importance of tradition is not overlooked in *Dogside Story*, and the community's wharenuī plays a similarly vital role to that of the wharenuī in *Potiki*: it is a repository for the collective history and identity of the community:

... the wharenuī is the repository of talk, and rafters are its storage place: Ko nga kupu e iri nei i tara-a-whare mau tonu, ma tonu. It was a way of transferring the old stories into the new house for safe-keeping. (141)

Yet despite the importance of tradition to the community, traditional Maori art forms play a minimal role in the narrative structure of *Dogside Story* in contrast to their centrality in *Potiki*. In *Potiki* the use of traditional forms is central in reinforcing the message of opposition to Pakeha forms of development, so their absence from *Dogside Story* is significant, especially in relation to the shift in position on the development issue apparent from an examination of the plot of the novel. Just as the community in *Dogside Story* accepts the aim of economic advancement and undertakes a Pakeha-style tourism venture, distinguished from that depicted in *Potiki* because it is undertaken by the Maori community to further communal aims in line with what is traditionally important to that community, Grace has written a more conventional European narrative in *Dogside Story*, but one which still draws on the importance of history and emphasises the importance of tradition for Maori communities. In this way, it can be argued that the literary techniques employed by Grace in *Dogside Story* reflect the stance taken in the novel towards the aims of conventional ideas about development.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LITERARY FORM

The above analysis is complicated, however, by the fact that Grace uses a Western cultural form — the novel — to draw these conclusions. As noted, an analogy can be drawn between the development project undertaken by the hapu in *Dogside Story* and the act of writing which Grace herself undertakes. Yet if this analogy stands up, it may be impossible to truly advocate a complete rejection of the aims and forms of conventional Western development (as in *Potiki*) in any novel, because Grace's own literary form may negate this message. The problem of terminology flagged earlier (note 2) poses a similar problem: it may be impossible for anything conceived of as 'participatory development' to truly stand in opposition to traditional development discourse, given that it points to that

discourse in its own name. Thus, it could be cynically argued that the shift in attitude apparent in these two novels is in some sense prefigured by the medium and terminology available to Grace. If writing in English is necessarily an acceptance of European conventions, and thus some kind of concession, then perhaps it is only to be expected that Grace's stance towards the conventions of European society should shift towards acceptance as her writing progresses.

Although the problems with terminology and medium are of genuine concern, I believe it would be a mistake to see Grace's shift in attitude as some sort of resignation or as 'giving in'. As a result of the history of colonisation in New Zealand, it is both impossible and unfair to expect Maori to assert themselves culturally, in widely accessible formats, without drawing on European conventions. Elizabeth Koster argues that the repeated phrase 'the stories are changing' in *Potiki* suggests that Grace sees the adoption of a written mode of storytelling as a necessary change for Maori (95). Other Maori writers like Witi Ihimaera have articulated similar sentiments (Grace & Ihimaera 85). If it is necessary for Maori to embrace Western cultural forms, this should be done in such a way as to challenge the assumptions and representations of Pakeha written culture, which both of these novels do. In much the same way, these novels challenge traditional development discourse from a Maori point of view. The shift in attitude apparent in *Dogside Story* should not be viewed as a concession, but as a positive sign that Grace no longer defines her Maori characters and communities in relation to the threat of the Pakeha world. Instead, just like the Western medium of the novel, the Pakeha world is shown as something that Maori can now engage with and utilise on their own terms, whilst maintaining their cultural uniqueness as *tangata whenua* (indigenous people/first inhabitants). I believe this is reflected in the changing focus of Maori politics during the years between the publication of these two novels.

These novels demonstrate that literature has a valid role to play as a form of political discourse. Development theory has primarily been discussed in the domain of academic, bureaucratic and commercial discourse, which has necessarily meant that it has carried the assumptions and expectations of these techno-bureaucratic institutions with it. By exploring the issue of development in literary works, Grace is issuing a fundamental challenge to the way development has traditionally been conceived. Just as having her characters make decisions at hui constitutes a challenge to techno-bureaucratic forms of decision-making, exploring issues of development through literature constitutes a challenge to the spheres in which debate about development has traditionally been contained. Similarly, because most forms of political discourse about development discuss it with reference to tangible real-life situations, they necessarily seek or promote specific results. Because literature depicts fictional situations, it can explore the issues of development without needing to advocate or seek particular results. This ability to counter conventional ideals at an imaginative level is literature's

greatest political potential. Thanks to this capacity, literature will always be able to subvert traditional, techno-bureaucratic modes of development discourse, even if the critical movements which also attempt to do this (like post-development and participatory development) change drastically. In this way, literature is able to provide a truly unique form of political criticism.

A FINAL NOTE

The line between embracing aspects of development discourse and becoming complicit with its more dangerous side-effects is a fine one. In practice, of course, Maori engagement with traditional development discourse has not always been positive, and some economic development projects undertaken by Maori have been decidedly destructive. One such example is provided by Michael King. I opened this essay with a quote from King illustrating the destructiveness of Pakeha imposed development on the Coromandel Peninsula. Thirty years later, he deplored two similarly destructive development projects, which would have ‘done severe irreparable damage to natural values and waahi tapu.’ These projects were ‘both initiated by Maori owners for Maori commercial advantage’ (236). As King points out, it is both dangerous and foolish ‘to make sweeping judgments that identify Pakeha as rapacious exploiters of natural resources and Maori as kaitiaki (guardians) committed to protect them’ (235–36). Members of both groups frequently defy these stereotypes. Grace’s position, whilst emphasising the positive potential of Maori acceptance of development discourse, should be qualified by this reality. The issue of ‘negative’ Maori economic development is both intriguing and concerning and is increasingly being highlighted as Maori are encouraged to pursue tourism projects to facilitate economic growth. It can and will not be addressed without serious and controversial debate. There is not scope for that debate in this essay. Nevertheless, I believe this growing issue will warrant serious consideration in the future.

NOTES

- ¹ This crucial question is yet to be resolved by development theory, and is central to the arguments in this essay. I will analyse Grace’s novels within the framework provided by participatory development, and assess how the attitudes towards development depicted relate to this central debate about the aims of participation. However, it is worth noting that the terminology itself is not innocent. Simply using the phrase ‘participatory development’ to describe community initiatives makes it difficult to argue that these programmes can stand in complete opposition to development discourse. They do, after all, have ‘development’ as part of their name, and the word ‘participation’ implies complicity with the aims of this ‘development.’ This problem of terminology is significant, and I would like the reader to bear it in mind with reference to the discussion below.
- ² Except in the case of State-owned Enterprise and Crown Forestry land, where the Tribunal can make binding recommendations
- ³ In fact his arguments, and the situation that ensues, are strikingly similar to the real-life events described by Michael King in the epigraph I have chosen for this essay.

- ⁴ This is a technique she uses often in her novels. See *Potiki* pp. 88–95 and *Baby No-Eyes* pp. 200–202.
- ⁵ Apart from an obvious disparity in scale, the two are similar in nature: coastal ventures designed to attract tourism and visitors to the area.
- ⁶ Another issue which is raised during the discussion of the tourism project is that of tribal governance: ‘Well now, while we’re on the topic of fish, and rip-offs, have a look at what our own Runanga’s doing to us ... making money for themselves to fly here and there in aeroplanes, sleep in flash hotels, set their kids up as consultants and managers’ (*Dogside Story* 147). When it comes to negotiating and distributing Treaty settlements the Crown requires iwi groups to have a corporate structure in place (the Runanga referred to) before it will allocate assets for settlement. An argument can be made that in this instance development, in terms of corporatising and artificially fixing traditional Maori groupings, has been imposed on Maori from the outside, despite the appearance of participation and self-determination. The introduction of Western forms of governance to Maori groupings in the name of development may have caused greed and personal gain to be internalised by some Maori who end up in positions of power, resulting in negative consequences for their constituents. However, while this issue is flagged, it is not of central concern to the novel.
- ⁷ Of course the messages signalled by Grace’s use of traditional Maori art forms as structural metaphors may be lost on readers unfamiliar with these art forms, but even this lack of knowledge functions on a political level. Miriam Fuchs points out that the non-Maori reader is forced to accept exclusion and confusion when attempting to interpret a novel through what she terms ‘culturally coded defamiliarization’ (580). Grace and other Maori writers use a similar technique of inserting un-glossed phrases in te reo Maori to highlight the inadequacy of the European literary ‘toolbox.’

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