

Aotearoa New Zealand Histories: A National Narrative, a National Identity

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Abstract

In 2015, a student-led petition called for creating a history curriculum that taught about the New Zealand Land Wars. As a result, under the Ardern government, the *Aotearoa* New Zealand Histories curriculum (ANZHC) was drafted in early 2021, implemented, and taught in schools nationwide since 2023. Initially, there was a bipartisan agreement for the curriculum, but ever since the drafting, there have been ongoing disputes on the content of the curriculum. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern originally announced that the ANZHC aims to commit “to a better New Zealand that we can all be proud of, and which recognizes the value of every New Zealander” and to cover a “full range of New Zealanders’ experiences.” With the change in government came the calls for a “rebalancing” of the ongoing political and ideological debates surrounding history education in New Zealand. This article examines the ANZHC through the lens of national identity construction, drawing on modernist theories of nationalism and the role of education in shaping collective memory. ANZHC exemplifies what Gellner highlighted as the specialized, state-sponsored education constructed by the nation’s elites that seek to unify the people. The article finds that while the ANZHC represents a significant step towards a bicultural history, there are serious omissions in what is not being taught in the curriculum, and amendments necessary to ensure a more balanced and impartial portrayal of the nation.

Keywords: New Zealand, National Identity, Nationalism, History Curriculum, Education

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Introduction

For the past year in New Zealand, the public education system has implemented and begun teaching the national history curriculum called the *Aotearoa* New Zealand Histories Curriculum (ANZHC). The ANZHC itself came to be due to a student-led movement by Rhiannon Magee, Tai Jones, and Leah Bell from Otorohanga College in December 2015. The students, Magee, Jones, and Bell, were “shocked and horrified at the stories told by the *kaumatua*, a Māori elder, who were distraught sharing their ancestors’ stories about innocent women and children and elders being burned alive” (Small & Smallman, 2015). This was in reference to the New Zealand Wars that occurred between the 1840s and the 1870s, primarily from disputes over land ownership and sovereignty, fought primarily between the British and colonial forces and the Māori. The petition called for a National Day of Commemoration for the New Zealand Wars and for the history of this conflict to be taught in all schools. There was another petition, this time by the History Teachers’ Association, in early 2019. This petition called for the New Zealand Parliament to pass a law to “make compulsory the coherent teaching of our own past across appropriate year levels in our schools” (Ball, 2019). Responding to these calls later in the same year, Ardern announced that New Zealand history would be taught in all schools and *kura* by 2022. Ardern stated, “This Government is committed to a better New Zealand that we can all be proud of and which recognizes the value of every New Zealander.” The history curriculum prior to the ANZHC was a limited subject that often overlooked New Zealand history, and it was only offered as an elective during the final three years of secondary school (Sheehan, 2011, 177). Ardern announced that the aim was to cover a “full range of New Zealanders’ experiences” for the national history curriculum (Ardern, 2019), including:

- The Arrival of Māori to *Aotearoa* New Zealand
- First encounters and early colonial history of *Aotearoa* New Zealand
- *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* / Treaty of Waitangi and its history
- Colonization of, and immigration to, *Aotearoa* New Zealand, including the New Zealand Wars
- Evolving national identity of *Aotearoa* New Zealand, in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries
- *Aotearoa* New Zealand’s role in the Pacific
- *Aotearoa* New Zealand, in the late 20th century and the evolution of a national identity with cultural plurality

Initially, there was bipartisan agreement with the announcement of the ANZHC; however, since the draft and the implementation, there has been growing criticism of the curriculum and the gaps in the content. At that time, National Party’s education spokesman Paul Goldsmith criticized the draft by saying it was “lacking in balance and needs revision.” He continued, “The themes are mainly about identity and identity politics. That’s part of the story – but there are other elements to New Zealand’s history” (Collins, 2021). A panel convened by the Royal Society of New Zealand also criticized the draft curriculum by stating, “Despite the prominence given to Māori history, there is a 600-year gap between the arrival of Māori and the arrival of Europeans (Gerritsen, 2021). It is almost as if Māori arrive in New Zealand and become instantly the victims of colonialism.” The panel also pointed out that the draft was missing significant history topics or very lightly covered, including women and *wāhine* Māori, labor, welfare, disease and demographics, and economic activity as a driver of New Zealand history. As Belgrave (2020) highlights, these critiques point to the complexities of integrating indigenous voices and local perspectives into New Zealand’s education system

and the challenges involved in reshaping the curriculum to reflect a more inclusive and accurate portrayal of the country's past.

The ANZHC represents a significant shift in the educational landscape of New Zealand, aiming to foster a more comprehensive understanding of the nation's past to the younger generation. However, since the change of government in late 2023, the right-leaning, National-led coalition government, the policy of equality first as opposed to equity, where actions taken in the past year have seen the undoing of various policies aimed at leveraging Māori inequality. The policy changes include dismantling the Māori Health Authority, changes to language use, and reviewing the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Dowling, 2024). This has sparked numerous protests, including the *Hīkoi mō te Tiriti*, which drew over 40,000 New Zealanders objecting to the Treaty Principles bill (Alam-Simmons, 2024). For the ANZHC, there have been calls to “restore balance to the *Aotearoa* New Zealand Histories curriculum.” The ACT Party (2024) rebuked the curriculum, stating that it “divides history into villains and victims, contains significant gaps, and entrenches a narrow understanding of New Zealand's history.” History teacher Chris Abercrombie, the president of the Post Primary Teachers Association, stated:

I'm concerned, based on some of the rhetoric coming out of some parts of the coalition government, the place of Māori history will be diminished in the curriculum, and there could be a glossing over of some of the areas of our shared history. (Ruru, 2024)

What precisely the “restored balance” means is yet to be defined. However, what can be examined is what the current curriculum entails, the resources made available for teachers, and what precisely the ANZHC envisions for the national identity of New Zealand. A thorough analysis of the curriculum will give a glimpse of what the future holds for the identity of New Zealand, especially for the newer generation that undertakes this curriculum. This article will explore national identity in the context of education, a brief comparison to other national curricula, and the analysis of the ANZHC and explore what values it emphasizes, the narrative of history, and how it crafts the future identity for the nation.

The National Identity and History Education

This article will examine the nation from the modernist perspective, which views nations and nationalism from the modernization processes and demonstrates that “states, nations and nationalisms, and notably their elites, have mobilized and united populations in novel ways to cope with modern conditions and modern political imperatives” (Smith, 1998, 223-225). Gellner (1983, 56) emphasized culture's influential role in promoting nationalism. He placed the professor as the base of the modern social order, and the monopoly of legitimate education central to the state (1983, 34). Through modernization came state-sponsored education, language, and culture, which converged into one. They thus created a shared culture, a high culture that replaced the low culture, in which nationalism could flourish (O'Leary, 1997, 194). Gellner asserts that the nation is only a socially conceived “construct,” an artificially created entity with the possibility of continued existence through the continuation of the perpetuation of the concept by the nation's elites (Finkel, 2016). Kumar (2017, 398) explains Gellner's theory as nationalism being an effect of modernization and that it is “beneficial for modernizing states due to the highly specialized division of labor required for a unified high culture, which is underpinned by a highly developed and specialized education system.”

Dieckhoff and Jaffrelot (2005, 19) further explain the importance of education in the national construct. They state:

The process of national construction, it is argued, thereafter progresses in accordance with the rate of entry into the education system of people living more and more in outlying areas, which have understood that learning the dominant language and possessing a basic education are the prerequisites to their social ascent and their ability to defend their rights vis-à-vis the administration of the nation-state in the making... A man's education is by far his most precious investment and, in effect, confers his identity on him.

They explain that it is through the power of the elites in creating a curriculum that confers a particular framework for the national identity that “work through the school system, the army, and literature, not only to reinforce national cohesion in order to develop adhesion to the state but also to exalt the specificity, originality, and glory of the nation” (2005, 66). Public education serves as “the strategic medium” for societal reproduction, acting as both “the foundation of the state's power” and a key tool for transitioning from traditional, hierarchical communities to egalitarian modern societies. According to Neill and colleagues (2022), schools play a crucial role in shaping students' appreciation of historical knowledge, influencing their understanding of the world, their national identity, and other identities. Apple and Christian-Smith (1991, 3) assert that the question of whose knowledge is taught, or “official knowledge,” is usually centered around what is included and also what is excluded in textbooks, which signifies more profound political, economic, and cultural relations and histories. ANZHC is precisely this specialized, state-sponsored education constructed by the nation's elites that seek to unify the people. Thus, this article will examine what the nation's elites seek to unify and how the curriculum imagines the national narrative.

Politics of Education Compared

Beilharz and Cox describe Australia and New Zealand as unique cases in the scholarly study of nations and nationalism. They argue, “Australia and New Zealand present a fascinating case regarding nation and nationalism. Both are evidently imperial artifacts, the results of the expansion of the British Empire into the Southland in the eighteenth century” (Beilharz & Cox, 2006, p. 555). While the two nations share a similar colonial background, a shared history, and comparable government structures, they have evolved in strikingly different ways. One critical difference today is New Zealand's significant emphasis on its bicultural heritage—particularly the influence of both *Pākehā* and Māori—while Australia has largely resisted recognizing its Indigenous peoples in its national identity.

In Australia, the historical narrative has traditionally focused on the white settler experience, leading to an insular curriculum that prioritizes the United Kingdom and Australia, with minimal attention to Aboriginal culture and history. The center-left Rudd government attempted to address this imbalance by promising a more inclusive national curriculum. History was included with a stated aim to develop critical historical knowledge, understanding, and skills, focusing on diversity and global engagement, including “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures” and “Australia's engagement with Asia.” However, Fozdar and Martin's (2021, 148) research highlights the limitations of these efforts, noting:

The curriculum's failure to critically engage with or fully integrate narratives about Indigenous Australians and non-Anglo migrants, and its neglect of the broader regional and global context (apart from in the early years), perpetuates a monolithic Anglo identity and orientation for young Australians, and encourages a nationalist insularity rather than cosmopolitan openness and global engagement.

Globally, national history curricula have often been used to foster a shared collective identity. Durrani, Kaderi, and Anand's (2020) study of history curricula in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh demonstrates how selective historical narratives have been employed to shape national identity and promote social cohesion. Their findings reveal that history education in these contexts has been a powerful tool for constructing dominant national ideologies and shaping the "ideal citizen." In Pakistan, Islam was the cornerstone of national identity, while in India, narratives oscillated between secularism and Hindu nationalism. Bangladesh's curriculum prioritized Bengali nationalism, with religion playing a more variable role over time.

Similarly, Nozaki, writing about the Japanese history textbook controversy, observes: "A modern democratic nation with a universal (state) education system always faces a curriculum question concerning the knowledge taught in its schools: Whose knowledge ought to be presented to students, who ought to decide it, and by what processes?" (Nozaki, 2008, 276). The same questions apply to the ANZHC, where Labour politicians have voiced their stance on deciding what knowledge to include, what ought to be taught, and how it should be presented. National identity is a flexible construct, open to influence and manipulation from multiple sources. Governments play a crucial role in developing and articulating specific versions of national identity, using tools such as education to embed a particular narrative (Roseneil and Seymour, 1999, 201). Given the above examples of how a history curriculum has been used for national identity, how does New Zealand's approach differ? What are the foundations of the New Zealand education system, and what driving ideologies underpin its national history narrative?

National Identity of New Zealand and Education

Liu (2005, 1) explain that although New Zealanders' quest to arrive at a singular definition of their national identity is ongoing, "what is clear is that the process of identity-making here is dynamic." Liu (2005, 12) also highlights that to understand New Zealand's identity, one must comprehend the dynamic interplay between the shared knowledge on which it is based and the comparative context or divisions in the social environment that defines who is included and excluded from the social identity. Historian Claudia Orange (2021) also highlights the Treaty of Waitangi as a cornerstone of New Zealand's historical and social identity, emphasizing its role in shaping the nation's bicultural framework. Historian Michael King (2004) also emphasized the importance of this in the bicultural framework. He highlighted that New Zealand's identity does not exist in isolation; instead, it is an ongoing interaction between the Māori and *Pākehā* heritages, which together form the foundation of this nation.

What is particularly interesting is that New Zealand's history can be configured as narrative in at least two ways: from a bicultural perspective or a liberal democratic perspective. The liberal democratic perspective refers to the "inclusive form of democracy guided by the ideals of freedom and equality, operating within an open society with a free market economy, governed by an elected government under the rule of law" (Liu, 2005, 4). Liu explains that this perspective begins with Great Britain as the centerpiece and also holds to great

importance the events of the arrival of Europeans, the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, the colonization of New Zealand, the Land Wars, the formation of the government, women's suffrage, and the World Wars. In this perspective, ANZAC Day is the most potent symbol and is celebrated for the sacrifice of the ANZAC forces that fought against authoritarian governance. In contrast, the bicultural perspective places both the Māori and *Pākehā* heritage as the center of the narrative and holds *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* as the most powerful symbol. Liu and colleagues (1999) explored the question regarding the most important historical events in New Zealand history with a general sample of adults and university students. It was revealed that there are some differences, yet the two accounts share a significant overlap. Nevertheless, while there were some shared events of importance, the Māori students selected the events central to the liberal democratic narrative only as regarded as important to the history of Māori, such as the Māori Declaration of Independence and the Māori Cultural Renaissance. The findings are shown in the tables below.

Table 1: Ten Most Important Events in New Zealand History According to Māori and Pākehā Students

	Māori		Pākehā	
1	Tiriti o Waitangi	100%	Tiriti o Waitangi	94%
2	Land Wars	71%	European Arrival	67%
3	Māori Declaration of Independence	58%	Land Wars	53%
4	European Arrival	54%	Women's Suffrage	49%
5	Kupe's Arrival	50%	World War I	48%
6	Māori Arrival	46%	World War II	47%
7	Māori Language Revival	33%	Māori Arrival	44%
8	Abel Tasman's Voyage	24%	European Settlement	42%
9	Māori Land March	21%	Springbok Tour	24%
10	Horoua Waka Arrival	21%	Great Depression	18%
11	Māori Resource Payoffs	21%		

Māori (N=24), Pākehā (N=87)

Table 2: Ten Most Important Events in New Zealand History According to General Sample of Māori and Pākehā

	Māori		Pākehā	
1	Tiriti o Waitangi	54%	Tiriti o Waitangi	69%
2	Land Wars	35%	World Wars	66%
3	Māori/Polynesia Arrival	30%	Māori/Polynesia Arrival	41%
4	European Arrival	30%	European Arrival	40%
5	World Wars	30%	The Land Wars	35%
6	Women's Suffrage	19%	Women's Suffrage	29%
7	Colonization	16%	Arrival of James Cook	28%
8	Education Act passed providing free education	14%	Colonization	16%
9	NZ became independent state	14%	The Depression	14%
10	Musket Wars	14%	1981 Springbok Tour	14%
11	NZ government formed	14%		
12	1981 Springbok Tour	14%		

Māori (N=37), Pākehā (N=94)

The ANZHC attempts to forge a history curriculum based solely on the bicultural narrative of New Zealand history instead of the liberal democratic narrative. The curriculum challenges the long-standing trend of “forgetting” the contentious past of the nation, notably the significant nineteenth-century conflicts that have established settler dominance (Bell & Russell, 2022). Neill and colleagues (2022) stated that, despite some criticism, the final version of the ANZHC successfully avoided significant political or academic conflicts, largely due to its postcolonial focus. The Ministry of Education effectively managed the process by steering the debate towards curriculum content rather than allowing it to expand into broader cultural issues. The ANZHC is a statewide effort to place Māori as the central focus of New Zealand’s national identity, recognizing their integral role in the nation’s history and cultural narrative. It is no wonder why the focus on the bicultural narrative has led the conservative right-wing parties to advocate for “rebalancing” of the curriculum, reflecting the ongoing debates over how the history of New Zealand should be taught in schools. The curriculum is subject to change due to shifting priorities in government and education. Currently, what is available is the teaching resources made accessible to anyone online. While this is also stated to be closing and changing to another website, the current information is this article’s primary source of analysis. My research questions are as follows: What is the central message of the ANZHC? What is the national identity it seeks to promote in the public education of New Zealand history? In addition, what omissions are present, and what could the National-led coalition government’s proposed rebalance include (Murray, 2024)? I will use content analysis of the online materials as this research method. I aim to determine the underlying national identity messages conveyed through ANZHC. Furthermore, I will consider how these narratives align with or diverge from the two perspectives on New Zealand’s national identity, the bicultural and the liberal democratic, including the potential curriculum changes the National coalition government might include.

Results

ANZHC is structured under three key elements: understand, know, and do. They are not separate elements, nor are they in a sequence. The curriculum is designed to allow teachers to design lessons and learning experiences that weave the three elements together. The ANZHC website states that the curriculum is designed in a progression model which “gives clarity about the direction of learning and the key outcomes that matter across the phases, enabling teachers and *kaiako*, *ākonga*, and *whānau* to know what is important and how learning develops.”

The ANZHC can be divided into four main groups according to the grades: years 1-3, years 4-6, years 7-8 and years 9-10. As of July 2024, there are 39 resources available to aid teachers with the curriculum, which overlap year groups, allowing teachers to use one resource for multiple year groups. Another way the resources are categorized is through the four themes, which include resources that overlap with the others; these are:

1. *Whakapapa me te whanaungatanga*; Culture and identity
2. *Tino rangatiratanga me te kāwanatanga*; Government and organisation
3. *Tūrangawaewae me te kaitiakitanga*; Place and environment
4. *Kōwhiringa ohaoha me te whai orange*; Economic activity

I will examine the content of the ANZHC according to the four themes. Beginning with culture and identity.

Figure 1: ANZHC Content Structure With the Three Elements

Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories within the refreshed Social Sciences learning area		
Understand Big ideas	Know Contexts	Do Practices
Māori history is the foundational and continuous history of Aotearoa New Zealand*	Culture and collective identity*	Asking rich questions to guide worthy investigations.
Colonisation and settlement have been central to Aotearoa New Zealand's histories for the past 200 years*	Sovereignty, organisation, and government*	Thinking conceptually.
People's lived experiences have been shaped by the use and misuse of power*	Place and environment*	Collecting, analysing, and using sources.
People hold different perspectives on the world depending on their values, traditions, and experiences.	Economic activity*	Identifying values and perspectives.
People participate in communities by acting on their beliefs and through the roles they hold.		Thinking critically about the past*
Interactions change societies and environments*		Communicating arguments and ideas using social science conventions.
*Also used in Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories content		Analysing decisions and taking social action.

Culture and Identity

The culture and identity portion of the curriculum resources includes eight teaching guidance and four teaching resources. These resources delve into New Zealand minority groups with less representation in the main body of New Zealand history. There are *Tūhura* (discover/explore) documents, including “migration and settlement,” “where we came from,” “our changing identities,” and “contested identities.” Another repeated document file type is titled: “Our Stories,” which sheds light on aspects of New Zealand history that have rarely been explored in the past, including the stories of Deaf New Zealanders, disabled New Zealanders, Jewish New Zealanders, New Zealand Indians, and the LGBTQIA+ community, Chinese histories, and Pacific people. Within one document, various links are available to other resources, such as stories, cartoons, videos, websites, and news articles that give more information and teaching materials and readings for teachers to use. To illustrate the resources in one of these documents, the teaching guidance on “Our stories: Chinese histories”

includes eight separate documents. “Our Stories: Pacific People” includes ten separate documents. A sample of these documents, teaching resources, and *Tūhura* documents are listed below. The theme of “culture and identity” is a major recurring element in the ANZHC. Key historical events highlighted include the poll tax on Chinese migrants, racism against Chinese gold miners, the Dawn Raids, the Polynesian Panthers, and other instances of discrimination and resilience. In these events, European New Zealanders are often portrayed as the dominant group responsible for the negative repercussions, shaping the experiences of marginalized communities while being positioned as the “other.”

Figure 2: *Tūhura* Documents

	<p>Contested Identities</p> <p>Eight historical prompts include: Māori and European population numbers, coat of arms, poll tax certificate for the Chinese migrants, Portrait of Johnny Pohe, the first Māori to train with the Royal New Zealand Air Force, legal alien story of Trude Barford from Samoa, and the model New Zealand family and the Polynesian Panthers.</p>
	<p>Migration and Settlement Stories</p> <p>Eight historical prompts include: <i>Te Aurere-iti</i> (sailing boat), star map artwork of Nikau Hindin, <i>Pākē</i> a rain cape that Māori wore, whalers' tryptot that was used by whalers to turn whale fat into oil, Hunter family's piano (early British migrant), Choie Sew Hoy's shop sign in Dunedin, Polish refugee children with Peter Fraser, <i>Ngatu</i> the Tongan tapa cloth.</p>
	<p>Where We Came From</p> <p>Eight historical prompts include <i>Kupe and te Wheke</i> (Māori legend), fishing lure (<i>pā</i>) used for fishing by ancient Māori settlements, kumara and how the Māori grew it in the climate of New Zealand, hue a vegetable like pumpkin that is used for many things, <i>Moriori rākau momori</i> which are engravings found in tree on <i>Rēkohu</i> (Chatham Islands), <i>Tokelau foe</i> (paddle), <i>waka ama</i> a outrigger canoe that is now used for racing, and Syria – Ferial Abdul Hameed an immigrant to New Zealand.</p>

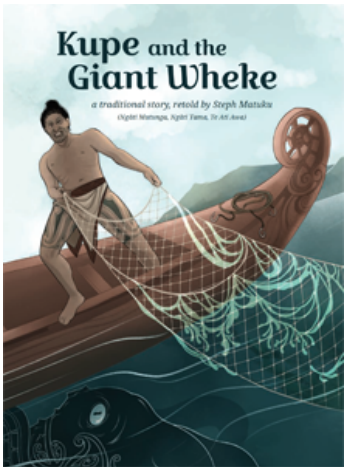
Figure 3: Sample Our Stories Learning Documents

 <p>ONCE A PANTHER</p> <p>BY VICTOR RODGER — ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHEL MULPOLA</p>	<p>Once a Panther by Victor Rodger</p> <p>This fictional comic is based on the true story of the Polynesian Panthers in 1970s New Zealand. Inspired by the Black Panther Party in the United States, the Polynesian Panthers were a group of young New Zealanders who wanted to tackle the widespread prejudice faced by Pacific communities.</p>	<p>Series: School Journal Story Library</p> <p>Learning area: English, Social Sciences</p> <p>Curriculum level: 4</p> <p>Publication date: March 2019</p>
 <p><i>Chinese New Zealanders</i> by Helene Wong</p> <p>Ever since the first Chinese came to New Zealand, the response to them has been mixed. In the early years, some people even formed groups to campaign for fewer Chinese migrants.</p> <p>New gold mountain It's thought that the first group of Chinese to arrive in New Zealand were twelve goldminers who came from the gold fields in Victoria, Australia. They arrived in Otago in 1861. The men were welcomed for many reasons: they were hard working, they didn't want to starve long-term, and they were willing to work on claims other miners had abandoned. Gold had been discovered in 1861, but after five years, most miners were leaving Otago for the gold fields on the West Coast. Otago's city leaders were worried. There were fewer people around to spend money. They wanted to keep miners in the area for as long as possible.</p> <p>Within three years, more than two thousand Chinese miners were working in New Zealand – 'new gold mountains' as they called it. Many came from villages in southern China, where there was poverty and war. They hoped to find gold, become wealthy, and return home to provide a better life for their families.</p> <p><i>Wong Gong, who came to New Zealand as a young boy to mine with his father</i></p>	<p>Chinese New Zealanders by Helene Wong</p> <p>This document provides an overview of migration to <i>Aotearoa</i> New Zealand from the 1860s until the present day. The article outlines push-and-pull factors that contributed to various waves of migration, how <i>Pākehā</i> New Zealanders responded to these waves, and adaptations made by Chinese migrants as they adjusted to their new home.</p>	<p>Series: School Journal Level 4 November 2019</p> <p>Learning area: English, Social Sciences</p> <p>Curriculum level: 4</p> <p>In: School Journal Level 4 November 2019</p> <p>Publication date: November 2019</p>
 <p>The Polish Refugee Children – Adelphi Zawada talks to Ali MacKisack –</p> <p>PART 1 When my babcia (bub-chi) – my grandmother – was only seven years old, her mother put her on a train with her brother and sister. The train pulled out of the station. Babcia didn't see her parents again for seventeen years.</p> <p>This happened during the Second World War. The USSR had invaded eastern Poland. The invading soldiers made Babcia's family leave their home. They were sent to one of the many work camps in the USSR, along with over a million other Polish people and their children. Hunger, sickness, and overwork killed thousands of them.</p>	<p>The Polish Refugee by Ali MacKisack</p> <p>This true story of Adelphi Zawada's grandparents will be engaging for students in year 4, although it is complex and presents some interesting challenges. Adelphi tells how her grandparents, as children, along with over a million other Polish people, were sent to work camps in Russia following the invasion of their country by the USSR during the Second World War.</p>	<p>Series: School Journal Level 2 November 2016</p> <p>Learning area: English, Social Sciences</p> <p>Curriculum level: 2</p> <p>In: School Journal Level 2 November 2016</p> <p>Publication date: November 2016</p>

Place and Environment

The Place and Environment section includes mostly documents found in the other tabs. It only includes four documents: “A Sense of Place,” “Our Stories: Pacific Peoples,” “Our Stories: Chinese Histories,” and “Our Stories: Refugee Histories.” The one unique document here, is “A sense of place,” “A struggle for land and sovereignty.” It is targeted towards the junior levels of Years 1-3 of primary school. Teachers are given several resources and provide examples of how to use the five main texts to explore the context of *tūrangawaewae me te kaitiakitanga*, place, and environment. These resources include the story of *Kupe* and the Giant *Wheke*, The *Kōrero* of the *Waka*, *Pepeha*, *Kāhahu Pekepeke*, and *Tōku Pepeha*.


Figure 4: A Sense of Place

	<p><i>Kupe and the Giant Wheke</i> by Steph Matuku</p> <p>This traditional tale is featured in the oral traditions of many iwi. It tells of how <i>Kupe</i> discovered <i>Aotearoa</i> while pursuing a giant <i>wheke</i> (octopus) across the Pacific. As he chased the creature around <i>Aotearoa</i>, <i>Kupe</i> explored the new land and named many places.</p>	<p>Series: School Journal Level 2 May 2020</p> <p>Learning area: English, Social Sciences</p> <p>Curriculum level: 2</p> <p>In: School Journal Level 2 May 2020</p> <p>Publication date: May 2020</p>
	<p><i>Kōrero of the Waka</i> by Keri Welham</p> <p><i>Te Waka Rangimārie o Kaiwaka</i> is a 25-metre <i>waka</i> at the entrance to Kaiwaka School in Northland. The <i>waka</i> welcomes people to the school and is also enjoyed as a <i>kapa haka</i> platform, a play area, and a quiet place to sit. This article focuses on the <i>whakairo</i> (carvings) of the <i>waka</i>, which tell stories about the <i>Kaiwaka</i> area and the school community.</p>	<p>Series: School Journal Level 2 November 2020</p> <p>Learning area: English, The Arts, Social Sciences</p> <p>Curriculum level: 2</p> <p>In: School Journal Level 2 November 2020</p> <p>Publication date: November 2020</p>

Government and Organisation

This section also repeats various documents already found in above theme. The one unique document is titled “A struggle for land and sovereignty.” The document is about the struggles of the Māori in resisting colonialism, retain. The document explores three texts from the *School Journal* series that can support learning about *tino rangatiratanga* and *kāwanatanga*, and how Māori defended their land, and upheld *mana motuhake*.

Figure 5: Struggle for Land and Sovereignty

	<p><i>Hakaraia: Warrior Peacemaker</i> by Mark Derby</p> <p>The life of an important Māori leader is remembered.</p>	<p>Series: School Journal Level 4 May 2015</p> <p>Learning area: English, Social Sciences</p> <p>Curriculum level: 4</p> <p>In: School Journal Level 4 May 201</p> <p>Publication date: May 2015</p>
	<p><i>Ngā Pakanga o Aotearoa/The New Zealand Wars</i> by Ross Calman</p> <p>“The New Zealand Wars” describes the wars fought between 1845 and 1872. The wars were about who controlled the country and who owned the land. This long and fascinating article explains the circumstances of the wars, including the areas and tribes involved. There are good general descriptions of the main confrontations and key players, both Māori and British.</p>	<p>Series: School Journal Level 4 November 2014</p> <p>Learning area: Social Sciences</p> <p>Curriculum level: 4</p> <p>In: School Journal Level 4 November 2014</p> <p>Publication date: November 2014</p>
	<p><i>Ngā Tātarakihi o Parihaka</i></p> <p>This story, set at <i>Parihaka</i> just prior to the government raid in 1881, is told from the perspective of a young girl who was living there. The author's great-grandmother was living at <i>Parihaka</i> at that time, and the story is partially based on oral history.</p>	<p>Series: School Journal Level 4 May 2016</p> <p>Curriculum level: 4</p> <p>In: School Journal Level 4 May 2016</p> <p>Publication date: May 2016 Order this text</p>

Economic Activity

While economic activity is also among the four themes, only two documents can be found. They are the two teaching resources “Connecting Current Events to the Past: The Ventnor

Story” and “Connecting Current Events to the Past: The Dawn Raids.” The Ventnor story retells the tragic accident of SS Ventnor that sank off the coast of Hokianga, which claimed the lives of 13 people alongside the remains of 499 Chinese men, most of whom were gold miners who were part of the Otago gold rush. This story exemplifies the Chinese and the Māori coming together to honor the dead. The document includes five links teachers can use to teach their students and four links for more information about Chinese New Zealand history. Similarly, the document “The Dawn Raids” retells the tragic story of the government-led raids in the 1970s targeting Pacific Island communities in New Zealand. These raids aimed to find and deport individuals who had overstayed their visas despite many Pacific migrants having been actively recruited to support the country’s labor shortages.

Conclusion

This article finds that the national narrative of history in the ANZHC lacks coverage of New Zealand’s history in some significant areas. Indeed, it presents voices that have been silenced or have not been explored or taught in public education in the past, such as LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, or Chinese New Zealanders. While the centering of the Māori perspective and the inclusion of minority groups is indeed important, a major flaw in the curriculum is the vast amount of history it does not explore. The most significant omission in ANZHC is excluding the largest ethnic group in New Zealand, those of British and Irish ancestry. While there are documents with informative resources for the Chinese, Pacific People, and the Māori, *Pākehā* New Zealanders are left out of the curriculum. The formation of the New Zealand government, the British monarchy, and women’s suffrage are all important historical events that are left out of the ANZHC. The bicultural narrative here includes the Māori and, on the other side, the minority New Zealanders rather than the *Pākehā*, who account for 67% of the population.

Furthermore, the curriculum also leaves out major global wars that have shaped the nation, such as the stories of the ANZAC and their involvement in World War I, World War II, and New Zealand’s role in the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Malayan Emergency, and in peacekeeping missions. Domestically, crucial moments in New Zealand’s landmark protests, such as the 1953 Royal Tour, the anti-nuclear movement, the Springbok Tour of 1981, and the Rainbow Warrior bombing, are not adequately explored. Additionally, recent historical events, such as New Zealand’s response to COVID-19 and the Christchurch Mosque attacks, could also be included to provide valuable contemporary perspectives to enhance students’ understanding of the nation in the present day and historical continuity without placing the narrative on one side or the other.

The ANZHC envisions a national identity embedded in biculturalism, inclusivity, and critical engagement with history. It seeks to educate students as early as primary school to instill a national identity based on the diverse threads that make up the New Zealand community. It briefly explores various areas of New Zealand’s history, from Māori land wars to the Chinese miners and the Polynesian Panthers. However, it comes short of its aim to recognize “the value of every New Zealander,” as it excludes the stories of the *Pākehā* New Zealander, the liberal democratic narrative of New Zealand’s history. These gaps and limitations suggest room for improvement in representing the full spectrum of New Zealanders’ experiences and global connections. It remains to be seen whether the rebalancing of the ANZHC will genuinely expand to include a more balanced and comprehensive narrative, ensuring that all aspects of New Zealand’s diverse history are acknowledged and taught with equal depth and nuance.

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