

Pakeha, Maori and the Challenge of Religious Diversity to New Zealand Biculturalism

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Today, in light of the injustices of the past, New Zealand actively embraces a bicultural partnership between the indigenous Maori and the Pakeha peoples (Europeans). However, recent immigration from other parts of the world is testing this biculturalism. Questions have arisen about the extent to which this partnership excludes the other peoples who now live in the nation. I will outline how these historical and evolving cultural tensions have been replicated in the changing religious diversity of the population. I will briefly cover three periods of New Zealand history: the colonial period, the post-colonial period 1975 - 2000 and post 9/11 period. The seminar will conclude by discussing some of the challenges that this evolving history provides for New Zealand scholars of religion. In particular, I will highlight the challenges, with reference to Canada that indigenous peoples face from the evolving ethnic and religious diversity that has resulted from globalisation and its resultant processes of immigration.

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