

NEW ZEALAND AND SLOVENIA: CULTURAL CONTACTS, 1923–2000

Andrej Podbrežnik

Abstract

Situated many thousands of miles apart, possessing very different historical experiences and occupying different positions in the world, Slovenia and New Zealand nonetheless share a number of common features as a result of the political, economic and cultural contacts that have been established between the two countries. The author of this paper attempts to gauge the intensity of the contacts, mostly cultural, that have been forged between the two countries, with an emphasis on descriptions of New Zealand and portrayals of its people in the work of some of Slovenia's most outstanding travel writers. Alma Karlin (*Samotno potovanje*), Miran Ogrin (*Na jugu sveta*) and Tomo Križnar (*Samotne sledi*) have all succeeded in acquainting the Slovene reading public with New Zealand and its people and culture. So that readers might understand more fully the observations offered by these writers, the author of this paper provides background information in the form of a short account of the history of New Zealand and of New Zealand literature, going on to focus on those New Zealand writers whose work has been translated into Slovene, most notably Katherine Mansfield. Other writers whose work has been translated include Janet Frame, Dorothy Eden, Ngaio Marsh, Stephanie Johnson and Samuel Butler.

In order to understand the cultural phenomena that typify New Zealand, one has to look at some of the events that have played a crucial role in the process of shaping the country and its culture, and the New Zealanders as a nation.

Abel Tasman, an unknown Dutch mapmaker and navigator, was the first European known to have visited the region, named New Zealand. This was in 1642, but the land had been discovered and settled a thousand years earlier by people from eastern Polynesia, perhaps the Cook Islands or Tahiti. It was in the mid 19th century that descendants of these people adopted the name *Maori* (from *tangata Maori*, meaning "ordinary person"), to distinguish themselves from the *Pakeha* (European settlers).

In 1769 Captain James Cook came south to investigate Tasman's discovery. He sailed round the two main islands, becoming embroiled in several bloody conflicts with the Maori, and accurately placed New Zealand on the map. He recommended the place he called "Thames" as a site for a colony, and claimed New Zealand for Britain. European contacts with New Zealand came largely from the British convict settlement in Sydney. In the 1790s Australian settlers began deep-sea whaling and sealing off the New Zealand coast, and cargoes of spars and flax were taken from the Hauraki Gulf in

1794 and 1795. The Maori became involved in these activities, and missionaries settled in New Zealand to convert the Maori to Christianity.

Increasing commerce and colonisation led to conflicts between the Europeans and the Maori, and the British government moved to impose law and order on the region. The Maori were more violent towards one another than they were towards the Pakeha. Fighting was common between the tribal groups, and those that were first to obtain European weapons used them in attacks on their traditional enemies. Nevertheless, the missions continued to expand rapidly in the 1830s, indicating that the Maori were being converted to Christianity in large numbers. However, conversion was largely superficial and was undertaken by the Maori for their own motives, the most important being that the missions provided them with the key to literacy.

Increased European settlement was proving problematic, which necessitated a policy that would regulate land deals between white settlers and the Maori. In 1840 the so-called Treaty of Waitangi was signed, with the Maori ceding sovereignty of their country to Britain in exchange for protection and guaranteed possession of their lands. But relations between the Maori and the Pakeha soon deteriorated, with the Maori becoming increasingly alarmed at the effect the Pakeha were having on their society and the fact that their rights as outlined in the treaty were not being respected. In 1860 war broke out between the Pakeha and the Maori, continuing for much of the decade; it ended in Maori defeat. By the late 19th century the situation had calmed, albeit temporarily. The discovery of gold had engendered much prosperity, and widescale sheep farming meant New Zealand had become an efficient and mostly self-reliant country. New Zealand was given dominion status in the British Empire in 1907 and granted autonomy by Britain in 1931; independence, however, was not formally proclaimed until 1947.

Sweeping social changes – women's suffrage, social security, the encouragement of trade unions and the introduction of childcare services – cemented New Zealand's reputation as a country committed to egalitarian reform.

The economy continued to prosper until the worldwide recession of the 1980s. Today the economy has stabilised, thanks to an export-driven recovery. Internationally, New Zealand was hailed during the mid 1980s for its anti-nuclear stance – although it meant a quarrel with the United States – and its opposition to French nuclear testing in the Pacific.

The Maori population is now increasing faster than the Pakeha, and the resurgence in *Maoritanga* (Maori culture) has had a major and lasting impact on New Zealand society. The most heartening cultural aspect has been the mending of relations between the Maori and the Pakeha. In 1985 the Treaty of Waitangi was overhauled, leading to financial reparations to a number of Maori tribes whose land had been unjustly confiscated. However, a recent clumsy attempt by the New Zealand government to offer financial reparations has resulted in an upsurge in militant Maori protests. This disharmony has shocked New Zealanders and placed national reconciliation at the top of the political agenda.

Hundreds of years ago the Maori developed New Zealand's first and most individual arts. Their carefully detailed woodcarvings and poetic legends created a tradition that is still current among the Maori. The Maori composed, memorised and per-

formed laments, love poems, war chants and prayers. They also developed a mythology to explain and record their own past and the legends of their gods and tribal heroes. As settlement developed through the 19th century, Europeans collected many of these poems and stories, copying them into their native language. In every aspect of the Maori oral tradition, the texts, which in pre-European times survived by being memorised, were inseparable from gestures and music. Until the 1970s there was almost no connection between the classical Maori tradition, preserved largely as historical record, and the development of the post-colonial English language literature of New Zealand.

It is not surprising that the most notable 19th century writing is found not in poetry and fiction but in letters, journals and factual accounts, such as Samuel Butler's *A First Year in Canterbury Settlement* (1863) and, perhaps most notably, F.E. Maning's *Old New Zealand* (1863).

The best of the 19th century poets include Alfred Domett, whose *Ranolf and Amohia* (1872) was an attempt to discover epic material in the new land, and William Pember Reeves, who was born in New Zealand, rose to be a government minister and then retired to Britain, where he wrote nostalgic poems in the voice of a colonist. They were competent versifiers and rhymers, interesting for what they record. But none of the poets stand out until the 20th century, the first being Blanche Baughan (*Reuben and Other Poems*, 1903).

New Zealand literature was making a slow and respectable appearance, but already the whole historical process had been pre-empted by one brief life – that of Katherine Mansfield (born Kathleen Beauchamp), who died in 1923 at the age of 34, having laid the foundations for a reputation that has gone on to grow and influence the development of New Zealand literature ever since. Impatient with the limitations of colonial life, she relocated to London in 1908, publishing her first book of short stories (*In a German Pension*, 1911) at the age of 22. For the 12 years remaining to her, she lived a life whose complicated threads have, since her death, seen her reappearing in the biographies, letters and journals of people as famous as Virginia Woolf and D.H. Lawrence. Two additional books published in her lifetime (*Bliss and Other Stories*, 1920, and *The Garden Party and Other Stories*, 1922) were followed by stories published posthumously, collections of poems, literary criticism, letters and journals. For a time she was a major figure, then faded for two decades, to be rediscovered in the 1970s by feminists and scholars. It seemed, from every perspective, that Mansfield remained a New Zealand writer whose best work was that in which she recreated the country and the family she grew up in. She made the short story respectable, established it as a form sufficient in itself for a writer's reputation to rest on, and made it a staple of New Zealand writing. She never completed a novel.

The first important New Zealand novels came from two writers who used northern New Zealand as their backdrop: William Satchell (*The Land of the Lost*, 1902, *The Toll of the Bush*, 1905, *The Greenstone Door*, 1914) and Jane Mander (*The Story of a New Zealand River*, 1920). They were followed by John A. Lee, whose *Children of the Poor* (1934), mixing fiction and oratory, was drawn from his own experience of childhood poverty in the South Island, and John Mulgan, whose *Man Alone* (1934) held in

balance both the colonial romanticism of the solitary figure in an empty landscape and the leftist romanticism of a group of men moving together to change the world.

New Zealand literature first gained widespread international recognition in the mid 20th century. The most important writers of the mid and late 20th century included the novelists Sylvia Ashton Warner, Janet Frame and Keri Hulme, the poets James K. Baxter and A.R.D. Fairburn, and the academic, poet, dramatist and short story writer Vincent O'Sullivan. The 1960s were dominated by the poetry and charismatic presence of James K. Baxter, a very public and prolific writer whose *Collected Poems*, when it appeared after his death in 1972 at the age of 46, contained more than 600 pages; it was said that possibly three times as many additional poems remained in unpublished manuscript. Another notable literary figure active since that period is Vincent O'Sullivan. One of his best plays, *Shuriken* (1985), uses a riot by Japanese soldiers in a New Zealand prison camp to illustrate how understanding and sympathy fail to cross cultural boundaries. Drama, the last of the major literary genres to get started in New Zealand, developed rapidly.

Janet Frame's works show a deep understanding of the minds of mentally disturbed people. She is best known for her autobiographical trilogy *To the Is-Land* (1983), *An Angel at my Table* (1984) and *The Envoy from Mirror City* (1985). Sylvia Ashton-Warner wrote an international bestseller, *Spinster* (1958), a success unmatched by her later novels. But her fine autobiography *I Passed This Way* (1979) is a personal record of her life both as writer and teacher.

Keri Hulme became a full-time writer after several years of working in a variety of occupations. She wrote the award-winning novel *The Bone People* (1985). Ngaio Marsh rose to become one of the world's best-known writers of detective stories.

In summary, New Zealand literature represents a synthesis of Maori and Pakeha influences, independent from English or European literary traditions and with its own characteristics.

Although independent for little more than a decade, Slovenia nonetheless has a literary tradition reaching back nearly 500 years. New Zealand, which has been in "historical" existence for about 200 years, has in this relatively short period developed a literary tradition as prolific as Slovenia's, yet one must bear in mind that there was no need in New Zealand for colonists to develop a literary language since English had already established itself as such. Thus, in a sense, colonial writers were merely continuing the English literary tradition, creating a firm foundation for nearly all sorts of literary creativity in New Zealand. Apart from descriptions of the life of the pioneers in their new homeland, literary works from New Zealand often deal with the life of the Maori and Maori culture. Many New Zealand writers considered their new homeland to be a sort of exile, far from the large bustling centres of culture, and decided to return to England, bringing back from New Zealand several new literary motifs and themes.

Though they are very small countries situated far from each other, Slovenia and New Zealand both possess a rich cultural heritage, and they have both tried to establish cultural, economic and political links with countries near and far from their borders. While searching for cultural, economic and political contacts, both countries have ventured far beyond their national borders, and – especially nowadays, within the process of "globalisation", with information transfer becoming faster and faster – the

question arises as to whether there have been any links established between New Zealand and Slovenia in different areas and at different levels of life.

By exploring newspaper articles from the past acquired from the archives of some of the most outstanding and prominent Slovene newspapers, most notably *Delo* and *Večer*, one can gain a great deal of extremely useful information about the political contacts between Slovenia and New Zealand that came to be established between 1924 and 2000. The first attempts to establish some form of political and economic cooperation between the two countries can be traced back to the period before 1991, when Slovenia was still part of Yugoslavia. There were indeed some links between Wellington and Belgrade, where the Slovene politicians of that time did not have much of a say. In 1973 Džemal Bijedič, the then president of the Yugoslav federal government, paid an official visit to Wellington, with New Zealand Prime Minister Wallace Rowling visiting Yugoslavia in the course of a European tour two years later. These state visits were supposed to establish close political and economic cooperation between New Zealand and Yugoslavia – a goal that was never fully achieved.

Upon gaining independence in 1991, Slovenia, a newborn country and, as such, still quite unrecognised and unknown, tried extremely hard to consolidate its position and reputation, attract the attention of the rest of the world and establish productive economic and political links with other countries. So it was in 1992 that Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel visited New Zealand, with both sides agreeing to establish diplomatic contacts and strengthen ties. Upon his return to Ljubljana, Rupel announced the establishment of wide-ranging economic cooperation between the two countries – cooperation that has never come into being.

Six years later Slovene Prime Minister Janez Drnovšek visited New Zealand in an attempt to consolidate links. Though New Zealand had been one of the first countries to recognise Slovenia as a sovereign nation and break with Belgrade, Slovenia at the time of Drnovšek's visit was still virtually unknown to New Zealanders. The economic cooperation that has arisen between the two countries since Drnovšek's visit is, however, barely worth a mention, due basically to the great geographical distances separating the two countries, as well as to the size of both countries and the financial difficulties that plague them – factors that could hardly ever encourage successful economic cooperation between two countries at opposite ends of the planet.

The same can be said of cultural cooperation between Slovenia and New Zealand. Tours by artists from one to the other country have always proved to be extremely expensive. Slovene audiences have only had one opportunity to see New Zealand artists on stage; this came in 1989 when Cankarjev Dom, the national cultural centre in Ljubljana, hosted the New Zealand Royal Ballet. In 1995 Danijel Černe and Boštjan Gombač, two Slovene creators of popular music, visited New Zealand, where they managed, during their three-month stay there, to revolutionise the music scene with their computer-assisted musical performances.

Palpable interest in the New Zealand film industry and in New Zealand films arose in 1990 in Slovenia when *An Angel at My Table*, a film by Jane Campion based on Janet Frame's autobiographical trilogy, enjoyed huge success at the Venice film festival. Soon afterwards the film played in cinemas throughout Slovenia, with reviews in the press focusing on the film as well as on Janet Frame as a writer. This was

followed by the showing of some of the most outstanding contemporary Australian and New Zealand films at the Ljubljana film festival in November 1994. In tandem with this event, Vesna Rojko, a journalist, wrote four articles about the New Zealand film industry entitled 'Film v Novi Zelandiji' (Film Industry in New Zealand); these were published in the *Republika* newspaper. Rojko highlighted four well-known award-winning New Zealand movies of international reputation: *An Angel at My Table* and *Piano* by Jane Campion, *Heavenly Creatures* by Peter Jackson, and *Once Were Warriors* by Lee Tamahori. Though the films presented at the Ljubljana festival were among the best of their kind, no other notes, reviews or commentaries appeared in any other Slovene publication, nor was there any information about whether New Zealand audiences had ever become acquainted with Slovene films.

Many Slovenes have visited New Zealand since 1924. Here one must emphasise the importance of those travel writers and travellers who have journeyed to New Zealand and whose travelogues provide a precious insight into the country and its culture.

Alma Karlin is the most famous of them. After World War I this erudite lady, whose travelogue *Samotno potovanje* (Solitary Journey, 1924) marks the start of contact between Slovenes and New Zealanders, set out on a trip around the world, setting foot in New Zealand along the way. Her observations on this faraway country are very interesting because she provides extremely colourful descriptions of the country, its people, and its flora and fauna.

During her trip through New Zealand, Karlin made numerous contacts with white settlers and Maori, whom she respected a great deal in spite of their civilisation being very different from that of the Pakeha; she would never judge people by their race but by their human qualities and virtues. She travelled around the country with her eyes open, always making her own critical judgements of the impact of the white settlers and their culture upon the Maori. She even criticised New Zealand missionaries, upon whose hospitality she often depended during her trips through the South Pacific, and it is precisely this unbiased critical note, always present in her judgements of the characters of the people she encountered during her travels, which gives her writing a particular and very special flavour, and makes it particularly valuable for those still not acquainted with New Zealand and its culture.

Karlin dedicated 14 chapters of *Samotno potovanje* to a description of her travels in New Zealand, a country she called "the farthest point" she travelled to in the course of her journey around the world (*Samotno potovanje*, 315–342).

She arrived in Wellington harbour in 1924 and there her problems began. Since an official of the shipping company had failed to provide correct information concerning her nationality in her registration forms, she had to hand all her money over to the suspicious customs officers, who only allowed her to keep a letter of credit for 300 yen, which turned out to be useless since no bank was willing to pay her the money stated in the document. A large strike then prevented her from travelling to Auckland. She then turned for help to two ladies working in the editorial office of the *Dominion Paper* and *Evening Post* newspapers. It was only thanks to their intervention that the banks were finally willing to pay Karlin the sum stated in her letter of credit. She was finally provided for and given shelter in a Quaker dormitory.

Karlin provides an accurate description of New Zealanders, whom she also compares frequently to Australians, finally coming to the conclusion that the people who settled in New Zealand came from higher social classes than those who had settled in Australia: in her opinion one could discern from the characteristics encountered among New Zealanders – elevated speech, graceful manners, views on life, the way they fitted out their living quarters – that they surpassed those of Australians. In her opinion Australians wanted to sever any links that might connect them with Britain, at the same time making fun of the British and the Oxford accent and considering themselves superior to the British, whereas New Zealand was “... England’s baby still in its nappies, lying far away from its mother’s breast, thus being spoiled a little bit, but hanging upon its mother with blind love that is touching, yet unpleasant sometimes” (*Samotno potovanje*, 318, 319). She was sad to leave Wellington, not only because of the open-heartedness and kindness of the city’s residents but also because, as she puts it, Wellington is one of those places on Earth that keeps smiling at its visitors, filling their hearts with joy.

Karlin also provides descriptions of the landscape and the flora and fauna of New Zealand. She finds the South Island very cold, similar in its appearance to the Alpine countryside of Slovenia. She is very enthusiastic about the snow-capped New Zealand mountains looming up above the sea, as well as the eerie precipices and the woods full of unusual trees, with herds of sheep grazing on the lower slopes of the hills. She describes stick insects and various species of bird, among them the moa, and provides short descriptions of the kiwi bird and of a reptile known as tuatara, the only member of the ancient group of reptiles from the age of the dinosaurs still extant, and thus, as she puts it, the oldest surviving living creature on Earth (*Samotno potovanje*, 320). She regards New Zealand flora and fauna as the top attraction of the island, which once upon a time, according to the well-known Maori legend, had been dredged out of the sea by a god named Maui and had thus been called “The Fish of Maui” by Maori ever since. Thus Karlin combines the sublime uniqueness of the flora and fauna of New Zealand with the Maori myth of the origins of the country. She also describes her trip through the land of the Maori as very pleasant, due to the magnificent landscape and its mountains – some of them with a conical shape, some of them rugged and others round.

When she arrived in Auckland it was extraordinarily cold. However, she strolled along all the city’s major streets and roads, admired the architecture of some of the public buildings and the wide bridge linking the two halves of the city. The typically verdant New Zealand vegetation drew her attention. Later on she gives a vivid description of everyday life in the catholic dormitory where, for the first time in her life, she encountered a self-service restaurant, which she found a little weird and ineconomical. Auckland proved to be quite an expensive place. She found out that many of the local residents were forced to live extremely modestly and that the children in colonies became independent at a very early age, since they had to earn money themselves in order to sustain their families.

Karlin wrote to a very well-known Auckland botanist, whom she refers to as “Mr P”, imploring him to introduce her to New Zealand flora, unaware of this gentleman’s position as the Mayor of Auckland. Mr P proved to be a proper gentleman and

was willing to find enough time in the course of the following four months to explain to her the particular characteristics of New Zealand plant life. They became true friends, since they found out that they held similar views on the world and world affairs, as well as on a number of other issues. So for four months Karlin absorbed with great enthusiasm huge quantities of information about New Zealand flora and the very beginnings of the islands of New Zealand and their history. She advocates in her travelogue the theory that three million years before, New Zealand, initially part of an enormous equatorial continent, did not crumble during its split from this continent (for some reason still unknown) and that it therefore only gradually lost its tropical climate, which thus allowed its plants to adapt gradually to the climatic changes. This meant that even the palms adjusted to the cold climate and the evergreen shrubs became resistant to the typically mild New Zealand winters (*Samotno potovanje*, 323). She describes araucaria trees, which she believes can only be found in New Zealand, Australia and South America and which appeared for the first time in the Jurassic period.

During her stay in Auckland, Karlin also became acquainted with an erudite Anglican priest, Reverend Coates, and his wife; they soon offered her temporary lodging. Their amiability, as well as the quiet surroundings of their home, suited the writer very much and, for some time at least, she was spared the privations of lack of proper food and money usually suffered during her travels. Other well-educated priests would pay frequent visits to the house and they often became immersed in long discussions about the Christian faith – discussions where there was no air of intolerance but where statements were advanced on the basis of fact and with enthusiasm on the part of all the participants (*Samotno potovanje*, 325). It is this passage in Karlin's account of her adventures where her high level of tolerance towards people whose beliefs and opinions were different from her own shows itself, and where one can also see her ability to respect other people's arguments and opinions.

Alma Karlin's life in New Zealand became increasingly dynamic, since various newspapers showed an interest in her adventures and therefore invited her to give lectures on her trips, as did a number of priests. She also undertook various study trips throughout the country. As a determined opponent of any sort of violence, she spoke about the ideals she had always been trying to follow and that everybody should strive for.

Karlin notes that many Yugoslav immigrants were living around the town of Henderson at that time, people who had moved there in search of money and in order to make a living as gum-tappers. However, she did not visit any of them, since she did not know which nationality they belonged to and she was not sure whether they would be pleased to receive her. She also writes that it had only been in Sydney and nowhere else that she was able to find a Yugoslav embassy, which in her opinion was also the reason for the occasional problems she had with various authorities throughout the world (*Samotno potovanje*, 330).

Karlin also describes the native people of New Zealand. She writes that in Auckland and Wellington one encounters only individual natives here and there, of mixed (i.e. European-Maori) origin. To those who might be interested in seeing the real Maori, as they were, in their houses called *whares*, Karlin recommended entering the bush of

rimu and kahitea trees and searching for them there (*Samotno potovanje*, 331). She also mentions that European settlers had adopted a great deal of the Maori mentality, and that the close contacts made between the European settlers and the Maori, in a land where the boundary separating people of different skin colours was not as strict as elsewhere, had given the white settlers certain mystical traits. She quotes as examples some of the superstitious beliefs held by both the Maori and the European settlers. She also mentions the Maori folktale about a woman who, upon sneaking into *te reinga* (the world of the dead), steals fire away from the guards, who then pursue her until she finally throws the torch up into the sky, where it gets stuck and stays there ever after (*Samotno potovanje*, 332). In her opinion the Maori language is similar in its melodiousness to the Hawaiian language, containing many very fine metaphors, of which she gives some examples. She also notes that the Maori know many wise proverbs and sayings. She pays a great deal of interest to the Maori oral tradition, which she holds in very high esteem. She does not treat the Maori as primitive people but as a nation equal in every respect to Europeans.

She describes her journey through that part of New Zealand known for its profusion of geysers. She travelled to Rotorua following an invitation from a priest there asking her to come and give lectures on world peace, as well as on her own travels. She travelled by train, and although the journey lasted a very long time (the distances involved were enormous) she was entranced by the picturesque countryside (*Samotno potovanje*, 333). We learn from her descriptions that the geyser country lies at an altitude of 1,000 metres above sea level. Karlin visited this area in July (winter in the southern hemisphere), with frost gathering in the cracks and covering the ground, though it never snows in Rotorua. The people she met there were usually very kind to her, often offering to take her to some of the remoter places in the surrounding area. She took a car journey past both lakes to Rotomahana Valley, from where the company of travellers hiked across hills and through a gorge to Lake Tarawera. At this point Karlin provides a vivid description of the magnificent white and pink limestone terraces which used to descend all the way to the lakeshore until they were destroyed by a tremendous earthquake in the second half of the 19th century (*Samotno potovanje*, 334). She greatly enjoyed her stroll to the shore, in particular because of the scenery surrounding her and the several unusual phenomena on display, such as the shrouds of steam rising from the shore and the numerous boiling hot rivulets flowing into the lake. Finally she reports on a geyser they found on top of a hill. She adds that one need not necessarily stand by the biggest geyser in order to pay reverence to the work of underground spirits, since even some of the smaller geysers, as well as the bubbling and seething mud holes and brooks, evoke the due respect of the visitors. She also mentions a legend linked to the lake and its surroundings; it tells of an evil spirit dwelling on top of Mount Tarawera, feared to such an extent that nobody dares climb the mountain (*Samotno potovanje*, 335).

During her journey through New Zealand, Karlin also visited Whakarewarewaio, a typical Maori model village, where people lived the way they had since time immemorial, as well as several Maori homes, where she saw during her discussions with the natives that they still believed in spirits as well as the events and spells connected with these, although the Maori, at least officially, considered themselves Christians (*Samotno*

potovanje, 336). She finds the Maori very sensual. Despite all the curiosities she passed in the Maori model village, whose characteristics had already been adjusted to suit the needs of the tourist industry, Karlin was much more strongly impressed and enchanted by one other small village near Rotorua, where there were hot springs, hot streams and basins everywhere. In one of them an exhausted naked little girl was trying to escape the cold, children were cavorting in the many pools of hot water, women were washing clothes, and in some of the narrow holes full of bubbling and seething water she noticed cooking pots full of meat mixed with vegetables, cooking slowly in the water issuing from the hot springs. Yet the most beautiful and most touching experience was the reception given to her as a guest by a company of old carpet weavers who bid her welcome by performing an old dance in which they surrounded her and danced around her. At the request of some of the visitors, the Maori performed the *haka*, a tribal war dance; it made a strong impression on Karlin and she provides a vivid description of the dance itself in her travelogue (*Samotno potovanje*, 338). She also describes how she took baths in some of the hot thermal pools, and gives a short account of the water and its properties, as well of her encounters with a number of Jews who, for some reason unknown to her, were surprisingly kind to her – one of them, a merchant, even gave her some money.

In the last chapter on her travels in New Zealand, Karlin writes about the small community of Whangaroa, which she labels “the gateway to the north”. It lies in a magnificent landscape, surrounded by tremendous forests of kauri trees, where the climate is slightly warmer than elsewhere in New Zealand. Her New Zealand friends keep giving her advice for her further travels and one of the ladies even gives her twenty pounds that she would have to pay in Fiji – the place she was going to visit next – in order to be allowed to disembark there.

Miran Ogrin, another well-known Slovene travel writer who also had the opportunity to become acquainted with New Zealand, its landscape and its culture, provides a description of the country in his travelogue *Na jugu sveta* (In the Southern Part of the World, 1969), establishing a tight link between his personal experience and his extensive and broad knowledge about the country.

Ogrin starts by taking a ship from Sydney to Auckland. The descriptions of his adventures are full of personal views and judgements, which he blends with the broad knowledge he has acquired by reading travel guides and other written resources about the places he initially intends to visit. He seems to be putting all these pieces of information acquired by reading to the test, while constantly questioning them and checking their validity and authenticity during his travels in the places described in the books.

He goes on to provide a number of historical facts about New Zealand, as well as a picture of Europe as it was at the time the Maori started arriving in New Zealand. He concludes that the Europe of that time was a savage, largely uninhabited area in the midst of the dark Middle Ages, where nobody dared venture out onto the open sea, with the exception of the Arabs, who had established a lively maritime trade and who traded goods across the seas known at that time. In Ogrin’s opinion the achievements of the Vikings or the medieval Portuguese explorers and sailors were nothing compared to the achievements of the Maori sailors as far as sea travel is concerned, since

the latter were able to sail all over the Pacific Ocean as skilfully as the Venetians were able to do in the Mediterranean hundreds of years later; the Maori settled on nearly all the islands of the Pacific, finding their way with the help of the stars, since they had no navigation instruments. Ogrin notes that the New Zealand Maori population is increasing in size by 3.6 per cent a year and that the Maori enjoy all human and civil rights, since New Zealand has successfully solved all its racial problems.

When Ogrin landed in Auckland, he was disappointed with the city, which he found silent and dreary, its streets empty. But upon ascending Mt Eden he was able to observe many bays and sailing boats, countless houses with swimming pools and gardens, and numerous sports grounds, tennis courts and bowling greens. The lush green gardens, the red roofs of the houses and the white flowers enchanted him. Ogrin then gives an enthusiastic description of the bays and islands of Auckland, of the Maori and their totems, of the sunny, rather humid climate, and of the 150-kilometre-long beaches that adorn the North Island (*Na jugu sveta*, 178). He was surprised by the vibrant nightlife. He also describes the sporting activities, social life and customs of the people of Auckland.

Ogrin continued his journey with a trip to a volcanic area strewn with geysers. The closer he got to the geysers, the mistier the area became, with the smell of sulphuric acid becoming more prominent. On his way through the area, he suddenly noticed a totem – a huge carved wooden sculpture of a Maori staring towards the north. Wherever he looked, he saw totems – wooden effigies of Maori gods – staring into the distance with their hollow eyes and, as Ogrin puts it, maybe thinking of times long ago when the Maori were the only rulers of New Zealand (*Na jugu sveta*, 179). And it is finally here that the author probes this very painful part of New Zealand history – the wars between the Maori and the Pakeha.

During his stay in the national park, Ogrin also visited the “model Maori village”. Visitors can enter this village by passing a huge red gate covered with ancient traditional Polynesian motifs. The gate itself is made of wood and carved in a way the author finds similar to that of old Gothic cathedrals. Ogrin is not only an accurate observer; he also analyses everything he sees, searches for its inner meaning and links it to some phenomena of the same kind elsewhere in the world and its historical development, forging everything into an interesting story.

In the land of geysers he often came across groups of Maori children playing among the totems; from time to time he also saw an elderly Maori sunbathing, observing the tourists sulkily, and he could hear radios blaring out of some of the Maori houses. Modern appliances had already sneaked into this model village. The traditional war dance, the *haka*, was performed exclusively for tourists. Young Maori women and girls danced in bars in some of the large New Zealand cities. During his journey the author gradually became aware of the reality of the position and status of the Maori in New Zealand society. He also mentions that the skin of the Maori had become adapted in the course of the centuries to the slightly colder climate of New Zealand, becoming slightly paler than that of the Samoans and Hawaiians. Ogrin also remarks that the names of nearly all the lakes, rivers and mountains had been derived from the Maori designations of these places. He also mentions the Moriori, the people who had inhabited New Zealand before the Maori arrived; the Maori gradually exter-

minated them in the years that followed their arrival. The last representative of this ancient tribe supposedly died in 1933 on Chatham Island, 1,000 kilometres east of New Zealand. He points out that it is the Maori who have given New Zealand its colour, its music and its folklore, as well as the sense of decoration displayed by New Zealanders as a whole.

Ogrin also visited the Waurakei Geothermal Project, a system of geothermal power plants where engineers harnessed geothermal steam to generate electricity. The author was deeply impressed by this technical solution, making a comparison between some of the primitive ways of deploying hot water used by the Maori (e.g. cooking) and this modern way of exploiting such resources – in the form of power plants.

Writing about his visit to Lake Taupo, the author gives the reader some geographical information about the lake and provides a description of the tourist hurly-burly on the shores. His trip through the landscape surrounding the lake was also interesting, since it kept changing as he was travelling through it, being now similar to the Southern Alps, yet suddenly changing its face and reminding him of Norway, with dark green woods all around.

The author also reflects on the New Zealand way of life. He describes the traffic in New Zealand as less frenetic and more peaceful than elsewhere in the world. In his opinion, life in New Zealand is not pitched at the deadly pace found in other developed countries; people in New Zealand live at a more steady pace, following their own rhythm (*Na jugu sveta*, 187). The country reminds him of Switzerland, but whenever he tries to make parallels between New Zealand and Switzerland, he has to conclude that New Zealand is unique since, apart from all the characteristics it shares with Switzerland (lakes, mountains, glaciers), it has something more – the sea, the South Sea, which is home to numerous cultures and nations (*Na jugu sveta*, 188).

During his journey across New Zealand, Ogrin came to know the nature of the people. He writes that New Zealanders resemble the English most, sharing language and culture with them; however, he believes the New Zealanders are even more conservative and even greater individualists, living mostly in their own private houses. The English and the New Zealanders also differ in their views on sport. Whereas the English regard sport in terms of competition, the New Zealanders regard sport rather in terms of pastime activities enjoyed in the countryside. Ogrin refers to New Zealand as a technologically highly developed but conservative nation where they talk very little about socialism, although they have managed to turn New Zealand into a country of welfare and progress as advocated by the major proponents of socialism. The author mentions that every single New Zealand family has a car, which does not, however, serve as a status symbol. They do not hanker after the newest models but usually drive older ones, since it is most important to them that a car serves its purpose. He therefore depicts New Zealanders as extremely modest, rejecting any kind of boasting and appreciating virtues such as practicality and functionality.

Ogrin provides a vivid description of his further travels in New Zealand, where he describes how he travelled from Lake Taupo to Tongariro National Park eager to see the volcanic landscapes. Upon providing a short description of the park itself, he explains that New Zealand forms part of the so-called Pacific Volcanic Belt, a mountain chain consisting of volcanoes which stretches in the form of an enormous cres-

cent along the southern boundary of the Pacific Ocean, embracing it by its whole length. The author portrays the landscape in the park as dreary, with the gloomy brown slopes of the volcanoes being so much different from the verdant landscape that surrounds Lake Taupo.

Turning to Wellington, New Zealand's capital city, Ogrin observes that it could just as well be situated in Scandinavia, surrounded as it is by high mountains, a steep seashore and long, deeply carved bays, just like some town in Norway. He enjoyed the views of the city from the top of Mt Victoria, where he also came across a memorial dedicated to Admiral Byrd, a well-known explorer of the Pacific Ocean, and he reflected (at the site of the memorial) on the achievements of the explorers who, centuries ago, explored the unknown parts of the world by using very modest and simple instruments and equipment and whose achievements nowadays, in an era of helicopters, airplanes and rockets, no longer seem so important. The author offers a description of the layout of the capital, from which we learn that the city sprawls over numerous small hills, that wide streets can only be seen in the city centre, and that the city has a certain provincial air – for, as he says, "... New Zealand's cities are so young, they still don't have any historical or cultural tradition" (*Na jugu sveta*, 197). The author mentions that New Zealanders are very proud of their independence and that they regard with suspicion and a great deal of disapproval any newcomers, i.e. immigrants, as well as anything new that might change their way of life. They loathe Americans and do not pay much attention to them.

After his visit to Wellington, Ogrin crossed the Cook Strait by ferry, landing in Picton and continuing his journey straight to the town of Christchurch, whose history and appearance he briefly describes. Due to the residents' ambition to preserve in this part of New Zealand a piece of Victorian England, there are no skyscrapers or high-rise office blocks. Ogrin observes that everything in Christchurch, its cathedral, its parks and its houses, remind one of England; the largest of the city's parks even goes by the name of Hyde Park. The author then mentions the university and emphasises that students in New Zealand enjoy very good working conditions. During his stroll through the city, Ogrin also came across a monument to Robert Falcon Scott, the explorer who started his famous expedition to the South Pole in Christchurch. Ogrin notes that even nowadays Christchurch serves as the jumping-off place for many expeditions to Antarctica. He also mentions the vast plain that stretches to the north and south of the city – Canterbury Plain, New Zealand's chief grain-growing region.

Ogrin describes his journeys along the 45th parallel, through the territory on the South Island that lies halfway between the equator and the South Pole, with vegetation that is slightly different from that seen on the North Island and weather that is very changeable, due to the winds blowing all the way from Antarctica. As far as he could see, there were only birds there, and mountains which reminded him of Scotland as it was in the 19th century.

Dunedin, which is also called the "Edinburgh of New Zealand", was founded by Scottish colonists in 1848. It is full of greenery, with castles and Gothic church spires, all built in a typical Scottish style, jutting out of it. He adds that the residents of Dunedin walk in such an energetic way, as if they were all born athletes; in his opinion this is due to the strong winds that drag the pedestrians along. Dunedin is actually the

fourth largest city in New Zealand, with 100,000 residents, all of them of Scottish origin, whereas Christchurch is home to 200,000 residents – all of them of English origin. Dunedin was the first town in New Zealand to get a university, seven years after the city was founded; until 1965 it had the only medical school in New Zealand.

The author also mentions the southernmost part of the South Island called Fiordland, and gives a short description of this part of New Zealand, a country where, as he puts it, there is extraordinary peace everywhere and where even the dogs don't bark.

During his journey across New Zealand, Ogrin tried to figure out the number of Slovene immigrants living in New Zealand. From the information he obtained he was able to draw the conclusion that the Slovene community in New Zealand numbered less than a hundred and that they were not connected and probably did not even know one another.

Tomo Križnar, the third figure in our group of Slovene travel writers, uncovers the soul of New Zealand and its peoples with great sensitivity in his travelogue *Samotne sledi* (Solitary Trails, 1993), combining description with his own philosophical views. *Samotne sledi* consists of 31 chapters, the last 16 of which make up the bulk of the narrative of the author's travels in New Zealand.

During his flight from Australia to New Zealand, Križnar was able to observe the waves of the Pacific Ocean, till they came in sight of New Zealand.

He decided to travel through the country by bicycle; according to his estimates this would take him two to three months. He therefore planned to obtain some additional equipment and as much information as possible, since he was well aware of the fact that the New Zealand countryside was sparsely populated, with some areas still unspoiled by human contact; he knew that he would have to make do during his journey with what he could take with him on his bicycle. He spent the week making preparations in the company of some Slovene acquaintances of his who had moved to New Zealand some months before, and during his stay there he had a good look at Auckland. He also gives an account of the city's atmosphere. He took a stroll along the well-known Piha Beach, where he spent some of the time observing some typical New Zealand plants – unusual grasses, trees and ferns – as well as birds nesting in the cliffs. He states that Auckland is gradually becoming the largest Polynesian city in the world, attracting immigrants from almost the entire Pacific region, a process which white New Zealanders in particular do not approve of at all (*Samotne sledi*, 129). The author points out that he came to New Zealand mostly because of his interest in the descendants of the ancient tribes who, for unknown reasons, left the legendary archipelago called Hawaiki a thousand years ago and set out on a risky and dangerous journey to their new homeland. Like Miran Ogrin, Križnar too acclaims their voyage across the wide Pacific Ocean as an extraordinary achievement. He then provides a brief history of the Maori and their culture, and gives an account of two Maori legends – one about the legendary sailor Kupe who, on his own audacious visit to this new land, persuaded his tribe to join him and come to what is now New Zealand, and one about the first great migration of the Maori to New Zealand approximately a thousand years ago. Križnar wanted to contact some of the Maori in order to get some first-hand information about their own opinion of their position in modern New Zealand society. He

soon found out, however, that his otherwise successful and efficient ways of making contact with people in Africa and elsewhere in the world proved ineffective with some of the local Maori. He soon had the strange feeling that there was a certain invisible psychological barrier separating him from the person he was trying to speak to. None of the Maori would answer his questions but would simply grumble something to themselves and frown at him; they undoubtedly identified him as a representative of the race which had forced them into their unequal and disadvantageous social position. His first impression of the Maori was that they did not feel much more secure in their own country than the Aborigines did in Australia, but since the Maori looked stronger and more aggressive than the Australian Aborigines, he feared them a little.

Upon leaving Auckland he made his way through the nearby hills, where he came in sight of his first flock of sheep. The landscape he crossed on his bike seemed as neat as a Christmas crib – clean and orderly, with things in their proper places, picturesquely trimmed and full of paddocks. The fruit stalls he frequently encountered, each of which was fitted out with an “honesty box” (a little box for money), testified in Križnar’s opinion to the honesty and reliability of the New Zealanders. The local people he met were very kind, polite and trusting (*Samotne sledi*, 132); one finds similar remarks in Karlin’s and Ogrin’s descriptions of the country. While cycling on some of the side roads, Križnar would often come across various war memorials commemorating the husbands, fathers and sons killed in the two World Wars. He points out that New Zealand lost a higher percentage of its male population than all countries involved in the two World Wars. The fact that New Zealand soldiers always fought on the winning side seemed very significant to Križnar.

When the author stopped at a petrol station at the end of the second day of his trip, an elderly local kindly invited the exhausted traveller to his house as a guest. Križnar portrays the members of his host’s family, paying particular attention to the grandfather who, sitting by the window and keeping watch over his huge herds of cows, sheep and horses, told him the story of his family, whose roots went back to the 19th century, when his ancestors came to this area and started turning it into farmland, which now brought them a great deal of money. He also recounted a number of facts about the Maori wars, speaking with respect of the Maori warriors and saying how it had only been possible to fight them with tenfold strength and with the help of modern weapons. He stated that the British had made wide use of Maori warrior tactics in the two World Wars; they were even assisted in these endeavours by those Maori who had joined the British army and fought alongside British troops, and the Maori were known and feared by the enemies of the British as the fiercest and cruellest warriors. Nevertheless, the farmer and his wife expressed negative attitudes towards the Maori, who were greedy enough to demand the right to have their own radio station and to get certain fishing districts for themselves.

On the wall of a small grocery store in a remote village, Tomo Križnar found a poem by James Baxter warning travellers, especially foreigners, that they should allow themselves to be guided by the country and its nature, that they should overcome their own negative feelings and try to live in tune with nature, which runs the world according to its own laws. Križnar states that these verses reflect the typical mentality of New Zealand and its way of life.

Križnar writes that the Bay of Plenty was the first landing place for the Maori ancestors arriving from Hawaiki, as well as the site of Captain Cook's second landing in New Zealand. He says that this strip of coastline is still very rich and is the horticultural centre of New Zealand, with extensive kiwi fruit plantations, which nowadays bring the country even more money than the livestock bred throughout the country. While staying with the Pearsons, another host family, he was told about the economic crisis that had hit the country hard ever since Great Britain – New Zealand's major export market for meat and cheese – had become a member of the European Union. Their opinion constituted a New Zealand farmer's protest against the new situation and new relations in the world, which could endanger the otherwise peaceful and secure life of New Zealand. The Pearsons also displayed very negative attitudes towards the Maori, stating that the Maori views on land and life did not match colonial views, that the Maori multiplied like rabbits due to the social security offered to them and that there were already too many of them – especially the aggressive ones. The majority of white New Zealanders would never socialise with the Maori, since it involved too much effort. If the Maori had the land given back to them, the author was told, they would neglect it and transform it into an unproductive wilderness, which would turn New Zealand into a Third World country, forsaken and forgotten down under in the middle of the Pacific Ocean (*Samotne sledi*, 140).

On his journey Križnar often noticed several villages and townships with typically Maori names hiding in lush vegetation, yet on the other side of the bay he could see shrouds of smoke rising from the volcanoes of the White Island. His attention was also constantly being drawn by the unusual red houses he saw from time to time, adorned with numerous carved wildly grimacing faces with their tongues sticking out, with depictions of naked male figures painted on the walls. The author explains that these are Maori sanctuaries (temples) and that the most impressive of them is that commemorating a massacre of 600 Maori by colonial troops during the Maori wars.

While cycling around the Bay, with the wind blowing against him, a Maori driver named Steven kindly invited Križnar to put the bicycle on his truck and come home with him. He took the author to his home, a white house on a white strip of seashore, and introduced him to his wife Ann. There Križnar encountered a Maori whose character and lifestyle differed greatly from that of the mistrustful, growling, grunting representatives of the Maori race, hostile to Europeans, whom the author had met in Auckland. A strange feeling suddenly seized him – it was as though he had known these friendly and hospitable people for ages. They started talking about their adventures and the discussion grew so loud that the neighbours heard them and came over and joined them. Some of them even brought their musical instruments, and soon they all started singing and dancing. The author learned that Steven was a Maori protestant priest and that all the other men made their living as fishermen. In order to honour the author, they organised a traditional Maori fishing expedition that very evening, and spent the rest of the evening making fires, roasting fish and partying on the seashore. Their generosity and open-heartedness initially made the author wonder whether these natives had already forgotten their conflicts with white New Zealanders and the injustices the latter had visited upon them. While discussing the issue with Steven and Ann, the author learned about the Maori view of the conflict between the two major races of

New Zealand. In Steven's opinion the British colonisation of the two New Zealand islands was actually one of the most brutal invasions upon a weaker nation ever seen in the history of the human race. When asked about the harsh treatment of the Maori and the massacre of the indigenous Moriori, who had inhabited the country before the Maori arrived there, Steven and Ann stated that there was proof that the indigenous Moriori and the Maori actually adopted each other's rites and that, by way of intermarriage, the Moriori gradually became integrated into the Maori race, whereas the European settlers, who came later on, brought much harm to the Maori race, first by bringing the weapons with which the warring Maori tribes nearly exterminated one another, thus becoming too weak to resist the colonists, and second by bringing disease, against which the Maori were initially not immune, thus falling prey to several epidemics. Steven and Ann proved to be very well-educated and wise, and Križnar was able to talk to them about all aspects of Maori life, and about Maori myths, the Maori oral tradition, the major events in the history of the race, and the more recent changes undergone by the Maori religion. Steven and Ann were always able to provide well-founded and reasonable answers to Križnar's often provocative questions. In this part of his travelogue Križnar keeps thinking intensively about the Treaty of Waitangi and the ambiguities in its interpretation. He wonders why the Maori chieftains of that time did not discard the Treaty as a fraud and expel the British, whom they still outnumbered. Here he draws the conclusion that, as has always been the case when "civilisation" interfered with an indigenous native people and their culture, the Maori had been cheated, their tribes weakened by being pitted against one another by the British, and finally massacred and expelled from their land. Križnar puts himself firmly on the side of the Maori. He also quotes some of the statements made by Jack Brockfield, a well-known professor of public law at Auckland University, who advocates the idea that the New Zealand government is obliged to make up for the past injustices done to the Maori. The author also agrees with Ann's optimistic statement that things will change for the better as far as the Maori and their social and economic ambitions and desires are concerned. Discussing the Maori arts, especially the totems and various paintings, Steven and Ann told him that all these things were living subjects that passed the nation's soul on to younger generations, along with qualities such as strength and respect for the authority of ancestors and deities. The Maori arts contain a certain spirituality which white people are quite unable to understand due to their materialistic view of the world, which is totally at odds with that of the Maori. Totems do not serve only as elements of decoration but represent centres of life energy and a sort of bond connecting man with the invisible forces that surround him in his everyday life, symbolising his concepts, ambitions, visions and motivation and making it possible for the nation's spirit to survive. They also showed Križnar their collection of old Maori works of art, explaining to him the spiritual meaning of each of them. Before Križnar left their house, Steven explained to him the meaning of the Maori greeting "Kia ora", which means: "Have the life!"

Križnar introduces his readers to Rotorua, the famous tourist resort on the banks of the lake of the same name, famous for its geysers and hot springs. First he gives a detailed description of Rotorua's history and its geothermal springs. He proceeds by mentioning the numerous majestic hotels, their intrusive modern architecture out of

place in this once typically Maori district. He notes that neither of the Maori folklore shows performed in the village by the local Maori have anything to do with the original Maori way of living, Maori traditions or Maori rituals but are merely part of the tourist industry (*Samotne sledi*, 154).

East Cape is still the most isolated part of the North Island. It is a wild and not easily accessible region with very few natural harbours and even fewer areas of fertile soil. Squeezed into the narrow bays are sparse village communities populated mostly by Maori; like their Auckland brethren, perhaps even more, they hate white New Zealanders. Even Križnar had to feel their hatred, bordering on racism, when he encountered a dangerous gang of motorcyclists known as "Black Power"; he was so in fear of them that he spent the night near a larger group of Maori. At dawn the next day he was awakened by the oldest member of the group, who motioned him to follow. The man took him deep into the nearby wood until they came to an enormous tree, 80 metres high and with a trunk almost three metres in diameter, its branches spreading out to form a majestic crown. With his eyes full of tears the Maori elder referred to the tree as *Tane Mahuta* – the god of the woods. Very sadly and with a great deal of nostalgia, the old man told Križnar that trees like the one in front of them, sacred to the Maori, had been destroyed by British colonists, who prized the wood and paid no attention at all to Maori feelings about these huge trees, which the Maori themselves would fell only after performing a series of very long and complex rites.

Križnar describes his journey around the East Cape as magnificent, thanks to the fact that the natural beauties of nature were still intact, and he adds that he even felt a little uneasy when he arrived in the town of Gisborne, where life was, again, regulated by the rules of modern technology and civilisation. He had an interesting experience here, too, when, during his visit to a *marae* – a traditional place where Maori gather to discuss issues of greater importance – the headmaster of the nearby Maori school invited him to give a short lecture about his country and his travels for the teachers and students, which Križnar did. He spoke from his rich experience, mostly about the position of small nations – including the Maori – whose existence was threatened by the domination of economic and military force. He also told his audience that Slovenes were familiar with the Maori and their fate; finally he congratulated the students on the fact that they could once again learn their mother tongue. The teachers introduced him to a simple-looking man whom they said that, while being a street sweeper in the world of white New Zealanders, he was considered by Maori the best orator and the best poet in New Zealand (unfortunately, Križnar never mentions his name). While discussing the issue of white colonisation, the poet explained his views of the relations between the two races:

We – the Maori and the Pakeha – both emigrated to this place. We both moved here and made these islands our home. The Pakeha think that the land belongs to them. We, the Maori, think that we belong to the land. Europeans want to develop the land and make the most profit out of it. We Maori, however, want to protect it and explore its resources. This is the basic difference. But none of us has the right to say what is right or what is wrong. It is good, in a way, that the pragmatism of environmental

protection on the one hand is in conflict with the inhumanity of famine on the other. (*Samotne sledi*, 162)

The school headmaster also had his own views on the conservation of nature. He rejected the theory devised by some white historians that the Maori had burned down woods in order to drive out the moas. In his opinion it was the European settlers who destroyed the woods and shrubs and burned huge tracts of grassland. The Maori cultivated their land by making terraces in order to prevent erosion, and the first European settlers would not have survived at all in the harsh conditions of the islands had the Maori not come to their aid. Later on the white settlers gave up the Maori way of cultivating the land, finding it primitive, and introduced some new animal and plant species, which proved highly detrimental to the indigenous plants and animals, destroying the natural balance and changing the landscape drastically.

Križnar took a ferry from Wellington to the South Island. He gives a description of the voyage past Melborough Sound and past fiords, islands, mountain slopes and patches of lush pastureland (*Samotne sledi*, 167). He recounts the history of Picton, a town situated at the head of the fiord, and of Nelson, another town nearby, where Križnar describes how the town was founded by the New Zealand Company, which had managed to acquire a great chunk of territory from the Maori in exchange for a single gun. The island then gradually became a paradise for the onrushing settlers, who gradually became wealthy shepherds.

Križnar travelled from Nelson towards the inner districts of the South Island, choosing the remotest side roads. Before ascending the mountain route rising just ahead of him, he spent a night in a stable, whose owner woke him up early the next morning with a gun in his hands – he had mistaken him for a thief. Upon clearing up the misunderstanding, the owner, a local farmer, took Križnar to his house, where they met a group of other farmers and soon began an interesting conversation, where the author learned many interesting facts about the farmers and their life. He was also told that the Maori had been expelled from the area, which they had initially used as hunting grounds. The farmers referred to the Maori as if the latter were some extinct species of dinosaur.

The author continued his journey along the Wairau Valley, bound for the mountains ahead of him. As he made his way higher and higher, the landscape around him kept changing. He finally found himself surrounded by a wild and rocky landscape, abundant with torrents and waterfalls. He spent a night in a small neglected chalet, where he met two other cyclists – an elderly New Zealand couple travelling in the opposite direction. In Križnar's opinion the man – while being over 80 – looked 70. They seemed to Križnar to be typical healthy New Zealanders, and he writes at this point about New Zealanders:

New Zealanders are fond of describing themselves as tough, strong, courageous, persevering and susceptible to robust humour and beer. I had the honour of enjoying a great deal of hospitality on the part of New Zealanders. I realised that New Zealanders hardly bear any sort of European criticism, as though they wanted to say: We are now here and you are there – in the old Europe; leave us alone so we may be like we are,

even if we are different from you. Yet the Kiwis often seemed to me to be as unsure about the identity of their country in the Antipodes as Adam was unsure about his Paradise. (*Samotne sledi*, 179–180).

His descriptions of New Zealanders are largely based on his own feelings and perceptions; his portrayals of New Zealanders therefore cannot serve as a uniform picture of the entire nation. Križnar often makes use of phrases like “it seems to me...”, “it seemed to me...”, or “I find it...”; these show the reader clearly that his personal opinions, made while in contact with these people, greatly influence his descriptions. The author is an extraordinarily accurate observer and attentive listener who is skilled at making conversation and who succeeds in coaxing individuals or groups of people to tell him their own personal opinions and express their own prejudices and dilemmas; he is able to do this thanks to his broad general knowledge of historical facts and of social relations throughout the world. It is his attitude towards people and the natural world, however, which is primarily reflected in his portrayal of his adventures and travels.

On his way from the chalet he soon reached the mountain pass, from which he descended through one of the numerous valleys to Lake Tennyson. He reached the town of Hanmer Springs two days later.

During his ride to Christchurch he came across an unusual building similar to a medieval fortress, bearing the notice “Camp David – The Kingdom of God, The Palatinate of Canaan”, and he realised that he had come to the headquarters of the community, whose members had decided to dedicate their lives to God and to an intensive reading of the Bible. He also remembered a friend of his who had become a member of this religious community some years earlier and from whom he had received numerous invitations to visit. He spent a week with these people, and he enjoyed his stay in the community very much, with his old friend being in charge of his spiritual life, the kitchen staff of his body, the community brethren of his heart and the Bible of his intellect.

In the little harbour town of Littleton, an elderly couple invited him to their home and offered him some leftovers from their Christmas dinner. It turned out that they had already been to Bled and that they knew Slovenia quite well.

While riding through the nearby valley, the author was enchanted by the magnificent view of the Isle of Banks from the road that ran along the very rim of the crater of an extinct volcano, half of which was sunk in the sea. At the bottom of the crater, on the seashore, he could see Akaroa, a village originally founded by the French. In Akaroa he was able to enjoy New Zealand hospitality once again, though he also witnessed the cruel treatment of a young Maori by police on New Year's Eve.

Križnar says that his journey through the Canterbury Plains was “a journey through boring plains but full of encounters with interesting people”. While he was copying some old inscriptions from gravestones in a Maori graveyard, a woman called Jenny started to talk to him. She took him to her house, introduced him to her husband and they had lunch together. He spent the night in Rakaia Gorge, where he was awakened the next morning by a group of young Maori who invited him to join them on a rafting expedition.

During his journey the author would often knock on the door of a house to ask for help or a small favour. He would deliberately choose different houses, those of the rich and those of the poor, but people were always willing to help him. When the spokes of his wheel broke shortly before reaching the town of Twizeln, two elderly retired brothers, whom he occasionally ran across, entertained him the whole weekend with choice foods, recounting stories from pioneer times. Finally, they took him to the local pub and told the locals gathered there about his difficulties with the bike; a mere two days later a hydrofoil brought the spare parts required and the repairs were done by the guys from the local cyclists' club.

On his travels Križnar met a young Maori woman, who was, as he describes her, young and as beautiful as a film star and with whom he spent a long time discussing the arts, philosophy, and fear of death and of love. Križnar remarks that this young Maori woman helped him overcome his fear of love.

In the last five chapters Križnar gives a description of the rest of his travels in New Zealand and his encounters with other interesting people on his way to Milford Sound, where his travelogue on New Zealand ends with a portrayal of an elderly Maori elaborating on the discrepancies between white people's understanding of the world on the one hand and that of the Maori on the other, drawing conclusions similar to those of several other Maori the author had encountered on his travels.

Among those who have travelled to New Zealand and written about the country, we must mention Professor Bogomil Ferfila and his rather touristy travelogue, which contains descriptions of some of his "adventures" there.

Several articles about New Zealand have been published in various Slovene scientific and educational magazines as well. Among the authors that have published articles, one must mention Professor Anton Gosar, a prominent lecturer in the Department of Geography at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana (Professor Gosar teaches now at the university of Koper, in Slovenia). While he was as a guest lecturer at Wellington University, he wrote a series of extremely interesting articles dealing with New Zealand's culture and way of life.

By reading literary works by New Zealand authors in translation, Slovene readers can now become acquainted with the life and culture of the country. The most outstanding New Zealand writer of all time is undoubtedly Katherine Mansfield, an unusual writer who dedicated her life to artistic creation. She deliberately renounced the wealth and opulent lifestyle of her parents, living in poverty and becoming seriously ill in the process. She was responsible for several great collections of the most deeply touching short stories. Her first collection, *In a German Pension*, was published in 1911. She followed this with several further short stories, inspired by her life in Europe as well as in New Zealand. She often used herself and members of her family as models for the main characters. In 1920 her second collection, *Bliss and Other Stories*, was published, followed in 1927 by *The Garden Party and Other Stories*. But from 1911 she was already suffering from tuberculosis and spent much of her life, especially the last five years, in hospitals and sanatoriums. After her death a further two collections were published: *The Dove's Nest* (1923) and *Something Childish and Other Stories* (1924). Posthumously published stories, poems, literary criticism, letters and journals followed. She became for a time a major figure, before her reputa-

tion faded for two decades. She was rediscovered in the 1970s by feminists and scholars. Written interest in Katherine Mansfield in Slovenia goes back to 1939, when a short article entitled 'Nežna ženska' (Tender Woman) by an anonymous reviewer named simply N.K. appeared in the *Življenje in svet* magazine. However, it was not until 1963 that her work began to seriously interest Slovene translators and critics. It was in that year that the Slovene poet and writer Jože Udovič translated 28 of her stories into Slovene, adding a commentary on Katherine Mansfield, and published them in a book entitled *Družba v vrtu* (*The Garden Party*). The stories were chosen not only from *The Garden Party* but from the other collections as well, *In a German Pension* being an exception (none of the stories from this collection have ever been translated into Slovene). Udovič not only did a good job as a translator but also managed to introduce the writer to Slovene readers. Mansfield was popular in Slovenia for a while but, as time passed, her popularity faded and she fell into obscurity once again, with very few translations or critical reviews being published. However, in 1988 'Ura petja', a translation by Katarina Mahnič of 'The Singing Lesson', was published to mark the 100th anniversary of Mansfield's birth.

A number of works by other New Zealand writers – novels, short stories and extracts from novels – have been translated into Slovene. Interestingly, nearly all of them are by women writers.

The novel *The Way of All Flesh* by Samuel Butler, published in Slovene translation as *Pot vsega živega*, is the only exception in this group. Escaping from the confines of Victorian England, Butler went to New Zealand, successfully adapting to the lifestyle of the pioneers and creating several outstanding literary works. Though he composed *The Way of All Flesh* while still in New Zealand, it mostly deals with English Victorian society. The novel was translated into Slovene by Herbert Grün and published in 1960, with an excellent introduction by Božidar Borko that deals with the most important circumstances that influenced Butler's writing and helps the reader to understand his ideas.

The group of literary works translated into Slovene also includes four novels by Dorothy Eden: *Speak to Me of Love* (*Govori mi o ljubezni*), *A Lamb to the Slaughter* (*Žrtveno jagnje*, 1984), *Sleep in the Woods* (*Brezdomka*, 1984) and *The American Heiress* (*Zamenjana nevesta*, 1984); three of them were published in a collection entitled *Za lahko noč* (which translates as "a pleasant evening's reading for a good night's sleep"). The very title of the collection, as well as the remark that these novels make good examples of "reading for women", may make one wonder about the quality and importance of these novels.

It is through the novel *Plemičeva smrt* that Slovene readers became acquainted with Ngaio Marsh, a well-known writer of detective stories. This novel is the translation of her *Death of a Peer*.

Janet Frame, another outstanding New Zealand writer known for her unusual life story, is a master short story writer and novelist. Only one of her short stories, 'You Are Now Entering the Human Heart' (translated as 'Zdaj vstopate v človeško srce'), and an extract from her novel *Carpathians* (*Karpati* in Slovene) have been translated into Slovene.

'The Glass Whittler' is the only short story by Stephanie Johnson, another promising young New Zealand woman writer, to have been translated into Slovene. It was published under the title 'Rezbarka stekla'.

One of Keri Hulme's stories, 'A Knife and a Stone', has been published in Slovene (as 'Nož in kamen').

If we examine the statistics and other available information, we can see that Slovenia has made several attempts to establish political, cultural and economic ties with New Zealand. However, these links have never been particularly successful, either economically or politically, because Slovenia is too small and too far away to be of any particular interest to New Zealand. The majority of contacts have been made in the field of culture (some films and music, but mostly literature and literary creations), but here one can speak mostly of a one-way flow of information about the country's culture, society and geographical characteristics. Although Slovenes have to a fairly large extent become acquainted with New Zealand and various elements of its culture, social structure, economy and lifestyle, Slovenia has, in contrast, remained a mystery to the great majority of New Zealanders.

WORKS CITED

- Alpers, Anthony. *The Life of Katherine Mansfield*. Auckland: OUP, 1980.
- Atlas svetovne zgodovine. Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba. Državna založba Slovenije, 1989.
- Butler, Samuel. *The Way of All Flesh*. <http://jollyroger.com.library>.
- _____. *Pot vsega živega*. Prev. Herbert Grün. Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1960.
- Eden, Dorothy. *Brezdomka*. Prev. Alenka Stanič. Ljubljana: Prešernova družba, 1987.
- _____. *Govori mi o ljubezni*. Prev. Ksenija Dolinar. Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1977.
- _____. *Zamenjana nevesta*. Prev. Breda Konte. Ljubljana: Založništvo tržaškega tiska, 1984.
- _____. *Žrtveno jagnje*. Prev. Breda Lipovšek. Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1984.
- _____. *The American Heiress*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1980.
- _____. *Lamb to the Slaughter*. Auckland: Hodder and Stoughton, 1975.
- _____. *Sleep in the Woods*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1960.
- Frame, Janet. »Sedaj vstopate v človeško srce«. Prev. Nataša Hrastnik. *Mentor* 1991: 67.
- _____. *Karpati*. Odlomek. Prev. Miriam Drev. *Delo* (02.7.1998): 29.
- Gosar, Anton. »Aerogram iz Aotearoe«. *Geomix* 2 (1999): 19, 20.
- _____. »Družba odprtih vrat: pismo iz Aotearoe – Dežele dolgega belega oblaka«. *Vestnik Univerze v Ljubljani* 5 (1999): 20 – 21.
- _____. »Pismo iz Nove Zelandije: Lesene kuhalnice, reciklirane plastične vrečke in rugby«. *Delo* (3. 7. 1999): 42.
- _____. »Pismo iz Nove Zelandije: Kivi na sto in en način«. *Delo* (10.7.1999): 42.
- Hrastnik, Nataša. »Stephanie Johnson«. Članek. *Mentor* 7/8 (1991): 78.
- Hulme, Keri. »Nož in kamen«. Prev. Jure Potokar. *Razgledi* 22 (1993): 34-35.
- Johnson, Stephanie. »Rezbarka stekla«. Prev. Nataša Hrastnik. *Mentor* 7/8 (1991): 78.
- Karlin, Alma. *Samotno potovanje*. Prev. Meta Sever. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1969.
- Križnar, Tomo. *Samotne sledi*. Ljubljana: samozaložba, 1993.
- Mansfield, Katherine. *The Stories of Katherine Mansfield*. Auckland: OUP, 1989.
- _____. *New Zealand Stories*. 1974. Auckland: OUP, 1988.
- _____. *Družba v vrtu*. Prev. Jože Udovič. Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1963.
- _____. »Ura petja«. Prev. Katarina Mahnič. *Primorska srečanja* 211 (1998): 37.
- Marsh, Ngaio. *Plemičeva smrt*. Prev. Maja Kraigher. Ljubljana: Prešernova družba, 1995.

- _____. *Surfeith of Lampreys*. London: Colins, 1941.
- N., K. »Nežna ženska«. *Življenje in svet* 1-2 (1939):28.
- Ogrin, Miran. *Na jugu sveta*. Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 1969.
- O'Sullivan, Vincent. *The Oxford Book of New Zealand Short Story*. Wellington: OUP, 1994
- Podbrežnik, Andrej: *Katherine Mansfield pri Slovencih*. Magistrsko delo (neobjavljeno). Ljubljana, 2000.
- _____. *Kulturni stiki med Slovenijo in Novo Zelandijo (1929 – 2000)*. Doktorska disertacija (neobjavljeno) Ljubljana, 2003.
- Potokar, Jure. »Keri Hulme«. *Razgledi* (26.11.1993): 34.
- Rojko, Vesna. »Film v Novi Zelandiji«. *Republika* (15. 11. 1994): 26.
- _____. »Film v Novi Zelandiji«. *Republika* (16.11.1994): 26.
- _____. »Film v Novi Zelandiji«. *Republika* (17.11.1994): 27.
- _____. »Film v Novi Zelandiji«. *Republika* (18.11.1994): 31.
- Stanonik, Janez. »Alma Maximiliana Karlin«. *Australian Papers*. Ed. Mirko Jurak. Ljubljana: Filozofska fakulteta, 1983, 41 – 48.
- S., Š. »Katherine Mansfield: Družba v vrtu«. *Ljubljanski dnevnik* (07. 3. 1964):
- Sturm, Terry. *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English*. Auckland: OUP New Zealand, 1989.
- Šuklje, Rapa. »Novele Katherine Mansfield«. *Sodobnost* 2 (1964): 75.
- Tauber, Andreja. »Imeniten ansambel solistov«. *Delo* (01.4.1989): 12.
- Zgonik, Alenka. »Skozi film v širni svet: Marginalci kot neke vrste avtoričina izvoljena večina«.
- Note: the article is based on the author's doctoral thesis, which was supervised by Professor Mirko Jurak.