

## MARSDEN FUND TE PŪTEA RANGAHAU A MARSDEN

### **First Encounters : The Colonisation of Murihiku**

Murihiku, a region south of the Waitaki River, was incorporated into Australian, British and trans-Pacific trading networks from the late eighteenth century. As a result, the distinctive traditions of local Maori and Europeans came into contact for the first time, and the indigenous people of the region, Kai Tahu Whanui, encountered a European world of Christianity, commerce and science, discovering the power of Bibles, money and maps.

To examine this encounter and its effects, a Marsden grant has been awarded to a research team led by Dr Tony Ballantyne from the Department of History at the University of Otago.

Dr Ballantyne's team, which includes historians from the University of Otago and Kai Tahu researchers, will explore the cross-cultural engagements that occurred during the early encounters between Maori and Europeans at Murihiku. They will examine the changing ways in which Maori and Pakeha understood the landscapes, resources, communities and histories of the region. Most importantly, they will trace the role of knowledge production in securing and reinforcing Pakeha dominance as the colonisation of Murihiku proceeded.

In reconstructing the development of 'colonial knowledge' between 1769 and 1914, the research team will assess the transformation of Kai Tahu world-views, Kai Tahu's engagement with European patterns of education and scientific knowledge, and the key features of Pakeha intellectual life in the region.

This project will generate new understandings of cross-cultural encounters in early New Zealand and will provide fresh insights into the nature of settler colonialism, enriching both international scholarship and New Zealanders' understandings of the colonial past.

Total Funding: \$475,000 over 3 years

Researcher: Dr Tony Ballantyne  
Department of History, University of Otago  
Work: 03-479 8061 Home: 03-453 3239  
[tony.ballantyne@stonebow.otago.ac.nz](mailto:tony.ballantyne@stonebow.otago.ac.nz)

Associates: Professor Erik Olssen and Dr John Stenhouse  
Department of History, University of Otago

RSNZ contact: Lynley Hargreaves  
Communications – Royal Society of New Zealand  
04-470 5770 [lynley.hargreaves@rsnz.org](mailto:lynley.hargreaves@rsnz.org)

For further information, contact the Manager of the Marsden Fund, Dr Don Smith ([don.smith@rsnz.org](mailto:don.smith@rsnz.org)) 04-470 5776, 021-984 873, or the Deputy Manager, Dr Peter Gilbert ([peter.gilberd@rsnz.org](mailto:peter.gilberd@rsnz.org)) 04-470 5778, 025-614 1416

Full details of all Marsden grants: [www.rsnz.org/funding/](http://www.rsnz.org/funding/)