

# The Currency of Gottfried Lindauer's Māori Portraits

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## Abstract

This article addresses the relations between painting, photography and settler colonialism in the nineteenth century through the Māori portraits of Gottfried Lindauer. Lindauer paintings are partly notable for the role that photography, via the projective device of the episcopes, played in their production. In the context of the European exoticising of non-western others, and a rapidly expanding market for their images, this intermedial device manifests a gap between painter and sitter, pre-modern and modern, the existing older county of Māori and the new county of New Zealand. The photographic operation of the exotic further includes national and international exhibitions in which Lindauer's portraits were shown, and the collectors, curators and commissioners of Lindauer's work, who I conceive as parasitical intermediaries or, in Kwame Anthony Appiah's phrase, culture brokers. Such figures situate Lindauer's paintings within a metropolitan regime of evaluation which is underpinned by distance and debt. However, the portraits are also vehicles for currency of another kind, which is the *mana motuhake* (independent authority) of Māori. Understood within *Te Ao Māori* (the Māori world) the portraits bridge the perceptual gap of the exotic, and make present, or felt, the historically continuous self-sovereignty of their subjects.

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## Picturing

[1] Gottfried Lindauer's use of photography to produce portraits is well-known, but what kind of difference does working from photographs, as opposed to painting people in front of you, actually make? Prompted by the critical commentary in the publication that accompanied the Gottfried Lindauer exhibition in Berlin's Alte Nationalgalerie in 2014-2015,<sup>1</sup> and by the unfolding of

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<sup>1</sup> *Gottfried Lindauer - Die Māori Portraits*, eds. Udo Kittelmann and Britta Schmitz, exh. cat. Alte Nationalgalerie - Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and Auckland Art Gallery, Cologne

the exhibition itself, I offer some reflections on the relation between painting, photography and settler colonialism. With regard to Lindauer's Māori subjects, sitting for painted portraits already placed them in a physical position that, for them, was novel. Both literal 'sitting' and discursive 'framing' situate the 'subject' of the painting within a picturing operation, which includes a developing market for the distribution of images and an associated language of ethnographic and aesthetic commentary. The picturing operation inserts actual physical distance between painter and sitter, and is underwritten, at the same time, by the commissioner-collector-curator, who instantiates in his person a metropolitan regime of value. Settlers thus insert in a Māori place the very distance they have travelled to settle there, creating a new country, in contradistinction to the old 'mother' country, and making over at the same time an already existing local world.

[2] The arrival of genre painting and setting up of the painter in the new country, in this instance Gottfried Lindauer, helps us to understand the newness of the country itself, which emerges by exotic contradistinction to the old. For the new country to be grasped as 'new' requires its exhibition, a staging of its difference through the technical act of its framing. But the operation of framing itself is not strictly what we see. And this is because European viewers, at least, are consumed by the exoticism of what is shown. The fascinating phenomena of the exotic involves the fetishizing of the imagined distance of other people from themselves (a distance, today, that need not be physical for 'exotic' people in one's midst to be constructed in this way). The difference of the exotic figure to the viewer ensures that the Māori subject is already located in the past of settlement, thanks to the distance, or gap, that the image establishes between the new country and the imagined past of the same place – a difference which the painting's exhibition makes present and real.

[3] While the technical act of painting in the New Zealand context creates a distance between subject and painter, and inserts both within a metropolitan regime of value, the greater number of people who make up the market for exotica could not own a painting, or afford to pay someone to paint one. Mechanically reproduced images greatly increase the number of possible viewers, and cast 'phenomenological doubt' on the real subjects we are looking at.<sup>2</sup> That doubt, or gap in the immediately real, is at once produced and filled by the great amount of images that settlement itself produces. Hence the new country has a virtual aspect; it offers above all a picture, more than local reality, which prospective settlers labour to make real. This prospect is what settlers will

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2014.

<sup>2</sup> Vilém Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*, London 2000 [original title: *Für eine Philosophie der Fotografie*, Göttingen 1983]. Flusser's more nuanced premise is that the photographer is faced with a decision, or doubt, as to how the photo should be taken, and that the options the photographer has are preinscribed or 'programmed' by the camera. The imprint of the technical image is part of an apparatus that produces phenomenological or piecemeal 'gaps' in experience.

have internalised, while, in the process of their 'settling', they greatly enlarge the ethnographic encyclopaedia and settler archive of local phenomena.

[4] Photography, as an apparatus for the production and distribution of images, plays a significant role in the colonial exhibition of the new country. Working off photographic images lent Lindauer's portraits a verisimilitude associated with the new medium, and at the same time 'documented' supposedly disappearing peoples. The reality of this imagined disappearance, which is the 'achievement' of a technical operation, is the very condition of settlement. Local people are not just distanced from the present, but actually disappearing into the past, receding before settlers and the new country that their settlement is making. The prospect, in terms of which settlement unfolds, is necessarily a picturing operation, as arriving settlers initially know very little or nothing of the local world of Māori. The currency of this operation, however, which is to do with the rapidly expanding market in the later nineteenth century for exotic imagery enabled by new photographic technologies, is counter-posed by the currency of Lindauer's portraits among Māori, most particularly, among the descendants of those depicted, which betrays the disappearance of 'old New Zealand' on which the new country is predicated, and makes all too present the continuity and force of the long history of Indigenous inhabitation.

## The Exotic

[5] The distance inserted in the new country setting between the modern or modernising present of its settlers and the 'primitive' and receding past of its Indigenous inhabitants is also a matter of debt. The picturing operation makes the country attractive and alluring to settlers, and thereby makes the settlement of the new country a venture that investors would be willing to underwrite. Distance and debt come together in the form of exotic exhibition, 'coining' a new country by documenting its reality and giving it *currency* in the metropolitan settings of colonial exhibition.<sup>3</sup> The exhibition of the country through portraits of its Indigenous inhabitants enhanced its exotic appeal, its newness and the prospect of its repopulation. After all, the subjects of the paintings were putatively peoples of a passing world. If the exotic is infused with a nostalgia for a passing world that never existed, its picturing, or the operation of picturing, must itself be occluded by the fetishizing of its distance, and the fascination for Europeans of its subjects.

[6] The exotic is a mechanism for ascribing value that is technically constructed by distance and debt. It involves distancing the reality of other peoples and places from the globalising present of colonialism, and, through a proliferation of

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<sup>3</sup> Art historian Leonard Bell notes that Lindauer's patron Henry Partridge says he "was offered 'considerable sums' by 'English, American and European art publishing firms and photographers for publication rights'", and that he could "'fetch' two or three times the price at Christies" of £10,000 offered in 1906 for his Lindauer collection by the New Zealand Government. Leonard Bell, *Colonial Constructs: European Images of the Maori 1840-1914*, Auckland 1992, 196 and 197.

imagery of others, placing 'them' in debt to collectors, settlers and tourists who would pay for the prospect. Underpinned by and serving to consolidate a metropolitan regime of value, the cachet of the exotic takes the form of a burgeoning encyclopaedia or archive, which is the very large and developing image discourse that accumulated images of new countries such as New Zealand – new in the twin sense of unheralded, or never before imagined, and available for settlement and tourism (indeed the very identity of settlers of New Zealand has been constructed in the imagined gaze of the country's tourists). The imagery of New Zealand landscape and Indigenous peoples took the forms of drawings, etchings, lithographs, photographs, ethnographic illustrations, posters, postcards, tourist brochures and *cartes de visites*.<sup>4</sup> If such imagery was exotic and exoticizing for Europeans, it is crucial for the picturing operation that such imagery does not show the difference of Europeans to Māori as Māori understand the visitors to be different from themselves. In other words, the exotic works by creating a perceptual gap, one that is a product of a picturing operation that its fetishized content at the same time obviates (a de-fetishized or non-exotic view of New Zealand is only possible when Māori are taken to be ordinary, or commonplace, and settlers and tourists are taken to be strangers [*tauiwi*]).

[7] In ignorance of local worlds, the fetishism of exotic phenomena constructs an authenticity, or fake spiritualism, that disavows the lived reality of other peoples and places. In his extensive recapitulation of critical commentary on the exotic, Graham Huggan identifies elements of spectacle, fetishism and decontextualisation at work. Given his emphasis on the market for exotica, Huggan is particularly concerned with 'commodity fetishism', which, he remarks, "in the classic Marxian formulation, describes the veiling of the material circumstances under which commodities are produced and consumed".<sup>5</sup> Emphasising, as constitutive of these circumstances, the agency of materials themselves, or material means (painting, props, equipment, studios etc.), I regard the technical operation of the exotic as a matter of imperial *geo-graphy*, a kind of writing, and writing machinery, which inscribes European interests on global space. The exotic is not just a matter of a metropolitan gaze, in terms of which the metropole-colony relation is itself being constructed, but refers to the technical media in and through which others are seen. The technical vehicle of photography, given the role it plays in the construction of a market for exotic images, and given the putative disappearance of the peoples who were the subjects of its imagery, thus inscribes a structural intent that is colonial – an agency which is that of media itself.

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<sup>4</sup> Albumen prints with card backing in the size of a visiting card that were highly popular from the early 1860s to 1880s.

<sup>5</sup> Graham Huggan, *The Postcolonial Exotic: Marketing the Margins*, London and New York 2001, 52.

## Exhibition

[8] In the second half of the nineteenth century, 'New Zealand' was staged in global *and* local exhibitions in Vienna (1873), Philadelphia (1876), Sydney (1879), Melbourne (1880), Wellington (1885), London (1886), Dunedin (1889), Auckland (1899), and Christchurch (1900). Such exhibitions showcased the progress of the new country, including to itself, in terms of its distance from the 'primitive' – the New Zealand, in this case, of 'old-time Māori'. A group of Lindauer's Māori portraits, marshalled by collector and curator Walter Buller, was particularly prominent in the New Zealand section of the 1886 *Colonial and Indian Exhibition* in London. The distance that the exhibit produced between the modern 'now' and the pre-modern 'then' of the new country obscures the difference between the long history of Māori inhabitation and the short or near history of largely Anglo-European settlement. Māori as such are not defined by their significant role in the near history of settlement but by their relative absence from it. The Māori portraits thus reproduce an imagined distance between subject and painter, and at the same time manifest the debt of the colony to the metropole, which provides the matrix of value for the picturing operation. The Māori sitter is made other, or more so, by being pushed further away in time and space, and the exotic effect, as a result of this furthering by remediation, is thereby intensified, and afforded greater value.

[9] The distance-debt relation of the exotic is materialised in Lindauer's portraiture by the *intermedial* work of photography itself in the picturing operation.<sup>6</sup> Roland Barthes says of a photo that it is not 'it' that we see.<sup>7</sup> This 'it' is the intermedial work of the image-machinery, which is what is needed for the subject to be framed and formed. Where painting is highly photographic, or photographic in origin, this argument can be transferred to this medium, and to exhibitions themselves as media: it is not the exhibiting, that we see, but rather its content, which the painting-exhibit frames and stages. The contemporary European viewer does not see the exhibition as a technical operation, but rather marvels at its exotic contents. While painting inserts a distance between painter and sitter, photography inserts Flusser's 'phenomenological doubt', not just a gap between painter and sitter, but a doubt as to whether the painter has even faced the subject of the painting (some subjects of Lindauer's portraits were dead before he painted them from extant photos). Meanwhile, the image-machinery – painting tools, photographic equipment, studios and commissioner – serves to distance the Māori world (*Te Ao Māori*) from the settler present in which the picturing operation is taking place, obscuring at the same time the role that modernising Māori play in shaping that present. From the point of view of a

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<sup>6</sup> Annette Tietenberg, "Gottfried Lindauer's 'Veracious Pictures': On Transfers Between Media and Patterns of Repetition", in: *Gottfried Lindauer: Die Maori Portraits*, eds. Udo Kittelmann and Britta Schmitz, exh. cat., Cologne 2014, 218-223.

<sup>7</sup> Roland Barthes remarks, "a photograph is always invisible: it is not it that we see". Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida, Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard, New York 1981, 4.

developing market in exotic imagery, the operation makes distance and debt all of a piece with the painting object: while Māori are distanced in time and place, as primitive to modern, the value of the image itself reflects the debt of colony to metropole, which supplies a market for the prospect.

[10] Lindauer's paintings cannot be detached from the new country in which he painted them, and the aesthetic economy of their production. The settler relation to the new place, after all, relies upon a metropolitan evaluation of the prospect of that new country for colonisation. The very existence of the new country depends upon a metropolitan belief in the prospects of the place for settlers, and that they should be extended credit to develop it. Booster-ish and touristic imagery is then internalised by settlers themselves, whatever the local reality, as their own *unhomely home*. Aesthetic or ethnographic imagery – the categories are significantly indeterminate in Lindauer's case – plays an important role in the metropolitan construction of this imaginary. Transposed onto a relation between the subjects and painter of the portraits, metropolitan debt is administered, or the credit extended, by the commissioner-collector-curator, Lindauer's main patrons Walter Buller and Henry Partridge. In both the European and local contexts of their exhibition, Lindauer's portraits manifest a regime of evaluation whose currency is the exotic.

## Projection

[11] In Lindauer's case, the image-machinery of his painting operation included more than the photos on which he relied, and relied on more than the photographic equipment, studios and props which enabled those photos to be taken in the first instance: Lindauer used an episcopes (also epidiascopes or epidioscopes), which enabled the projection of photographic images of his would-be subjects onto canvas.<sup>8</sup>



Episcopes, late 1800s (photograph: Wikipedia [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/))

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<sup>8</sup> Tietenberg, "Gottfried Lindauer's 'Veracious Pictures'", 220.

The episcopes provide the intermedial interface for the framing and exhibiting of the exotic subject. This device can be understood as a black box, an apparatus into which images flow and as a result of which Lindauer's glowing portraits emerged within a regime of value that saw his pictures reach impressive prices.<sup>9</sup> The projective device of the episcopes enables the Māori sitter, and his or her relation to present and past community, to be resituated within a metropolitan regime of value and the currency of its commodification. For the sitter, there is undoubtedly a good deal more going on, but I wish to pursue for the moment the 'work' of the episcopes.

[12] The black box or apparatus of the camera-episcopes is a third element, an intermedial 'it' or thing, that is inserted between the 'I' and 'Thou' of an Indigenous Māori human-nature,<sup>10</sup> and that constitutes the material presence of an ethnographic encyclopaedia or settler archive, growing all the time as a result of the interest in exotica. Photography plays a decisive role in this proliferating image-discourse, and after 1876, as Tietenberg notes, in Lindauer's painting.<sup>11</sup> Again it is not 'it', the material agency of the episcopes that we see, though its function enables the production of the picture through a projection of an image of the painting's subject. A sense of this projection requires looking at the picture from behind itself, taking the episcopes to be a para-site. In view of the episcopes, the subject is actually absent. In situ, as a person of the place (*tangata whenua*), the Māori subject exists ordinarily in a world to which the settler is strange – a world established by the longer history of Māori inhabitation. This world is pictorially made over by the projective means of intermediation. Thus contemporary historian James Cowan described the Partridge collection of Lindauer's paintings, located in the Lindauer Art Gallery above Henry Partridge's tobacconist's shop in Auckland, in a way that captures and telescopes the longer history of Māori inhabitation in terms of the near or shorter history of Anglo-European invasion and settlement: for Cowan the collection was "practically a pictorial history of the colony since its earliest days".<sup>12</sup> If the oft-remarked static or frozen aspect of Lindauer's paintings gives them a documentary, object-like or 'it'-like quality, the estranged intimacy of his Māori portraits is patently doing more than recollect Anglo-European settlement.

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<sup>9</sup> Leonard Bell discusses the impressive prices reached by Lindauer's work in his chapter on Lindauer. See Leonard Bell, *Colonial Constructs: European Images of the Maori 1840-1914*, Auckland 1992, 196-197.

<sup>10</sup> Poet and writer Robert Sullivan draws on these terms of Martin Buber. Where the effective force of *mana* is associated by Buber, somewhat primitivistically, as Sullivan notes, with natural elements, the relationship to them, "expressed through multiple gods representing and animating the natural world, Tangaroa Ocean, Tāne Mahuta Forests, Tāwhirimātea Winds, Papatūānuku Earth, Ranginui Sky, hence represents an 'I' relationship to a 'Thou' or animated world, rather than an 'I' relation to an 'It' or object world." Robert Sullivan, *Wayfinding and Five Indigenous Poets*, Auckland 2015, 24-25.

<sup>11</sup> Tietenberg, "Gottfried Lindauer's 'Veracious Pictures'", 219.

<sup>12</sup> Bell, *Colonial Constructs*, 198.

[13] The dark shadow out of which the figures emerge on canvas can be construed as a longer and deeper history that transcends and encompasses the shorter occupation of the country by settlers. So the burgeoning settler archive is also a “voracious optical encyclopedism”, says Alexandra Karentzos, quoting the filmmaker and theorist Allan Sekula, “[...] purporting to offer comprehensive, universal and systematically ordered knowledge [...]”.<sup>13</sup> Through its image-discourse a local world becomes known in terms of a new projection, which imposes upon and displaces that world understood in its own terms. Photography plays a crucial role in the development of the burgeoning archive of imagery through its apparent exactitude or verisimilitude, affording Lindauer portraits an ethnographic value for many observers rather than a purely artistic one. Cowan remarked in 1910 that the paintings were “photographic in their meticulous fidelity to life”.<sup>14</sup> For leading art and book collector Alexander Turnbull, Lindauer’s paintings “[...] were really coloured photographs, and of little, if any, artistic value [...]”.<sup>15</sup> Attending to the machinery of their production, in particular the role played by the episcopes in Lindauer’s portraits, makes both the ‘history of the colony’ and the disappearance of peoples on which it is predicated, appear a projection.

## Exposure

[14] The phenomenalism of the ethnographic encyclopaedia and settler archive is both objectifying and object-making, or *entitative*.<sup>16</sup> Mis-taking relations for things, entities or ‘it’-objects, cuts up the relational continuum of the local Māori world of *iwi* and *hapu*, and multiple entwined histories, which include and supersede the shorter history of Anglo-European settlement. Indeed, there is no copula ‘to be’ in the Māori language (*te reo Māori*) where ‘things’ are conceived in terms of relational networks of human and non-humans, each with its own life-force (*mauri*). So pictorial or photographic images of Māori ‘sit’ quite differently in tribal settings, where they are apprehended within *whakapapa* (genealogical) networks of local relations. In a painting such as *The Māori at Home*, whose large size (nearly 3 by 2 metres), as Rebecca Price remarks, made it central to the New Zealand section in the Māori Court of the *Colonial and Indian Exhibition*,<sup>17</sup> the Ngāti Whatuiapiti chief of Ngāti Kahungunu, Harawira Mahikai, and his third wife

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<sup>13</sup> Alexandra Karentzos, “Images of the Exotic. Gottfried Lindauer in the Context of European Portraiture”, in: *Gottfried Lindauer: Die Maori Portraits*, eds. Udo Kittelmann and Britta Schmitz, exh. cat., Cologne 2014, 231-236, here 232.

<sup>14</sup> Leonard Bell, “Pilsen, New Zealand, Berlin – The Travels of Gottfried Lindauer”, in: *Gottfried Lindauer – Die Maori Portraits*, eds. Udo Kittelmann and Britta Schmitz, exh. cat., Cologne 2014, 244-247, here 200.

<sup>15</sup> Roger Blackley, “Gottfried Lindauer – A Career in New Zealand”, in: *Gottfried Lindauer – Die Maori Portraits*, eds. Udo Kittelmann and Britta Schmitz, exh. cat., Cologne 2014, 213-117, here 216.

<sup>16</sup> Anne Salmond, “Ontological Quarrels: Indigeneity, Exclusion and Citizenship in a Relational World”, in: *Anthropological Theory* 12 (2012), 115-141.



are pictured standing in front of a meeting house (*whare rūnanga*), a scene that works to 'phenomenalise' the Māori subjects, situating them in a local world that excludes the very existence of the painter, his props and equipment. Again, it is not the picturing operation – the painter, painting or photographic studio – that we see, but an image whose signifying elements constitute a world apart. Similarly, in Lindauer's portraits a local world is 'exposed' through the mediation of photography in the picturing operation. The time-lapse of a technical operation exacerbates the distance between the painter and his 'old-time' subject, underwritten by the credit that the painter has been extended by a commissioner to produce just such pictures.

[15] The mediation of photography thus removes the subject from a face-to-face relation, and, in view of the perceptual gap between the European imagining of Māori, and Māori views of Europeans, might make us doubt its local reality. The image is not one of the painter's relation to the sitter, but one of 'the Maori' 'at home'. Reflecting on the mediation of photography in Lindauer's portraits, however, exposes the distancing effect of his painting as a mechanical operation. Lindauer's portraits are not so much true to the living sitter, as true-to-photographs (quite another truth, referent or real, I will suggest below, is at stake). The immediate referent of the painting is a mechanically reproduced image. Painting, too, is a mechanical process, but the time it takes is not mechanised. By contrast, or extension, the time-lapse of photography, which I have associated with the distancing of the subject from the present of his or her painting, involves the stutter of the camera's operation. Light is let in and shut out, and a negative created. In that stuttering of light, a 'thing' is frozen, captured, cut away or exposed – say, 'The Maori at home' – and, as a result, becomes the object of an exposition (whether or not photography was used by Lindauer in the case of *The Maori at Home*, the availability of this technology, and its impact on painting practice, means that the effect is the same). A human figure emerges that is also a cultural imaginary, which is the indigene at home in another time and place. Photographic mediation thus enacts the distance of the subject, who is literally removed and replaced by the photograph from the present of the painter who is painting. That same operation interposes a metropolitan regime of value, which is the value of pictures of this kind to collectors, and makes real to settlers the people and place of metropolitan imagining, an exotic local world they will internalise as their very own.

[16] While Māori subjects in European clothing appeared unhomey to European viewers of Lindauer's portraits – the individual is no less Māori for that – what is truly unhomey, I suggest, is the exotic place of the Anglo-European imaginary, for instance the Palm House or the Māori Court in the 1886 *Colonial and Indian exhibition*.<sup>18</sup> In the same way that the episcopo *projected* the figures which

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<sup>17</sup> Rebecca Price, "Lindauer's Māori Art at Home and Abroad", in: *Gottfried Lindauer – Die Maori Portraits*, eds. Udo Kittelmann and Britta Schmitz, exh. cat., Cologne 2014, 237-240, here 238.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Karentzos, "Images of the Exotic", here 231-232.

Lindauer painted, constructions of other places in the London exhibition are mobilised by a parasitical intermediary, producing New Zealand as a para-site – a place dislocated and reconstructed within a metropolitan imaginary. The exhibition in the Māori Court of three waxwork figures – a traditionally dressed Māori chief and woman standing beside a storehouse (*pātaka*), in which another woman is gathering food – offers an example of such intermedial work. The montage presented a phenomenalised object, or exposition, again ‘the Māori at home’, through which another culture is apprehended, while its distance from the progressive modern culture of New Zealand is shown up by the same exhibition.<sup>19</sup> The uncanny technical operation of the intermediary, whether that of waxwork or photographic emulsion, enables us to see who is truly not at home. The ‘third man’ of Lindauer’s portraits, which Michel Serres associates with the means of communication – the noise of a technical operation – is the parasitical intermediary itself.<sup>20</sup> And this, in Lindauer’s case, is the photographic device of the episcopo.

[17] In the case of Lindauer’s portraits, the intermediary device also splits, and mediates between, First and later peoples in the New Zealand context. Focusing on the means of the picturing operation enables us to grasp the second-comer, who is the settler, as a guest in another’s house. The parasitical intermediary, and vehicle for the picturing operation, is also a person – an invader and settler. Through the transposition of a metropolitan imaginary, the settler has parasitically confused the host-guest relation by re-enacting New Zealand, through the exhibit or exposition of Māori, as his or her own unhomey home.

### Commissioner, Collector and Curator

[18] The parasitical intermediary is not simply the episcopo of Lindauer’s painting operation, although this device serves as a technical synecdoche for the operation in toto. Following Annette Tietenberg, I have argued that ‘Lindauer’ himself must be conceived in terms of the props of his painting operation, that is, as a human-technical amalgam,<sup>21</sup> which is both the painter and episcopo (and by extension the photographic studios and sites in which the photographs that the episcopo projects were themselves produced). Again, the parasite is a person as much as a mechanical operation or intermediary. A settler, in the New Zealand context, is a human-technical amalgam whose disruptive entry into another

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<sup>19</sup> Bell remarks that however sympathetic Lindauer’s portraits of individual subjects might be, such as that of Harawira Mahikai and his wife, “the London exhibition catalogue spelt out clearly how ‘old-time’ Māori life and culture stood in relation to European. Pre-European settlement Māori were characterised as ‘cannibals ... almost wholly ignorant of the mechanical arts, practising a rude kind of agriculture, devoid of religious belief ... and addicted to savage intertribal warfare’”; Bell, *Colonial Constructs*, 221.

<sup>20</sup> Michel Serres, *The Parasite*, transl. Lawrence R. Schehr, Baltimore 1989.

<sup>21</sup> As Tietenberg remarks, Lindauer “[...] relied on the interaction between his eye, the mechanical apparatus and his hand [...]”; Tietenberg, “Gottfried Lindauer’s ‘Veracious Pictures’”, 220.

peoples' country creates *noise*. Phenomenalised as the ethnographic encyclopaedia and settler archive, this noise can be considered the 'black box' of settlement (settlers pour into a place of Māori peoples, and through the production of an extensive image-discourse of it, a new country is generated as output). The relation of distance and debt traced by the movement and inscribed by the imagining of settlers also displaces Māori peoples, de-contextualised, reconstructed and re-located as an exhibit or a display of a new country. Thus the New Zealand collection makes New Zealand a *para*-site – a place in which long Māori history, via the Māori Court, is telescoped by the short, near history of Anglo-European settlement. A crucial figure in this operation, and a parasitical intermediary who cannot be thought independently of Lindauer's operation, is the collector of his pictures. Graham Huggan cites Kwame Anthony Appiah's term when he says that the global trade in "culturally othered goods" requires "*culture brokers*".<sup>22</sup>

[19] Collecting Lindauer's paintings gave Lindauer's leading patron, Henry Partridge, a palpable sense of possession. He described his collection in 1906 as "the labour of love and the all engrossing aims of its possessor".<sup>23</sup> The commissioner and collector, in the case of Walter Buller, too, is a curator, who helped to construct the Maori Court at the London exhibition, which included objects of his own collecting. The curator, however, merely dramatises in the form of an exhibition the regime of evaluation that motivates the commissioner and collector. The picturing operation, or expose-ition, produces the place and a public of a metropolitan gaze – in the case of the New Zealand presentation in the London exhibition a modern country, distanced from 'old-time' New Zealand, and its already remote and disappearing native inhabitants. Buller was an artful opportunist who profitted from the dealings of the native Land Court with which Māori were forced to engage, who took a cut of Lindauer's portraits for a fee, and who effectively purchased a knighthood – the first person born in New Zealand to achieve one – through exposing 'New Zealand' to a London-based metropolitan audience. What ties together the actions of this complex figure, at once lawyer, art connoisseur and ornithologist, is the currency of the exotic as the basis of a regime of value, and the relation of debt and distance that this currency imposes on local transactions between Māori and Pākehā-tauīwi.

[20] The local sites in which Lindauer's paintings were shown in Auckland, at Partridge's gallery above his tobacco shop, and in shop windows in Thames, Cambridge and Wellington, extends the aesthetic economy of larger metropolitan exhibitions. The commissioning, collecting and curating of Lindauer's paintings through the intermediate figures of Partridge and Buller thus consolidate the currency of the exotic. The growing image-archive to which the paintings more largely contribute make the new country an episcopic projection of the debt relation, involving the transposition of its peoples and goods within a metropolitan regime of value. Lindauer's portraits of creditable local people –

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<sup>22</sup> Huggan, *The Postcolonial Exotic*, 65.

<sup>23</sup> Bell, *Colonial Constructs*, 198.

Māori and Pākehā – highlights the axis of this metropolitan-colonial relation (indeed, New Zealand-based artists have long struggled with this regime of evaluation and its distanced metropolitan gaze). If the black box of settlement, however, mobilises a metropolitan frame and gaze, its transmission is not just one way. After all, the black box lets into the photos it projects the light of a local world – *Te Ao Māori*. Māori were quick to appreciate and enter into the new currency of the exotic, and infused it with a currency of another kind.

## Light

[21] Lindauer himself was not quite ‘at home’ in the way that I have described the internalising of the exotic by European settlers and its imposition as a regime of value. His own origins, the unsettled nature of his movements in New Zealand, and his twice return to Europe help to explain the estranged intimacy of his portraits. Lindauer disliked being mistaken for German in New Zealand, moved nomadically and lived marginally in provincial parts of the country, and was little exhibited in urban art circles. The work of this non-Anglo ‘settler’, born in Pilsen (Plzeň), also suggests, in the later-nineteenth-century context of insipient nationalisms,<sup>24</sup> a minoritarian feel for the identity and dignity of local peoples. Fluent in the Māori language (*Te Reo*), Lindauer’s responsiveness to the Māori he painted, even more than an effect of the portrait genre and his own training in Vienna at the Academy of Fine Arts, is true to status, if not always true-to-life or living sitters, and suggests an incipient sympathy for the multiple peoples of *iwi* and *hapu*. This sensibility, despite episcopic mediation, is evident in the personality of his portraits, whose figures were made all the more present, as Blackley notes, by contemporary Māori responses.<sup>25</sup> Blackley cites an account of the electrifying effect that the display of Lindauer’s portraits in a Thames shop window had on local people, who responded to the portrait’s figure as if living by dance, song, greetings and even pressing noses (*haka, waiata, mihi, even hongī*).<sup>26</sup> In such instances, distance and debt is bridged by the currency of kinship, and the sitter made absent by photographic mediation is returned to a face-to-face relation (*kanohi ki te kanohi*) of the present. The remoteness of the exotic is vanquished, and the perceptual gap of the settler imaginary is

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<sup>24</sup> Bell, whose work I am drawing on in this account, suggests that leading nineteenth-century Czech nationalist painter Josef Mánes offers a parallel for Lindauer’s painting in New Zealand; Bell, *Colonial Constructs*, 209.

<sup>25</sup> Blackley (2014) cites a contemporary report from *The New Zealand Herald* in 1882. “Deploying his traditional technique of street-front display, Lindauer’s exhibition of the Wi Tako portrait in the window of Hughes chemist shop had immediate impact: ‘The natives assembled *en masse* in front of the shop to offer their greeting and to sing a *waiata* [song] composed years ago in honour of this chief. The portrait of Wi Tako is so realistic that when first exhibited here old Hakariwhi, of the Ngatihaua, could not resist the temptation to rub noses with the picture, giving expression at the same time to the usual *mihi* [greeting].’” Blackley, “Gottfried Lindauer – A Career in New Zealand”, 214.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Blackley, “Gottfried Lindauer – A Career in New Zealand”, 214.

overturned through the assertion of Māori continuity and identity by the portrayed figure's relations.

[22] The import of Lindauer's portraits for relatives or descendants of those shown in them suggests, in the words of Sir Apirana Ngata when he visited the Lindauer gallery, a 'shadow carving'.<sup>27</sup> Etched and emerging within the short and near history of settlement, pencilled *moko* can be seen under the paint, closely drawn via episcopes. Following Rawinia Higgins, the writing of *tā moko* (the application of tattoo) has to be *read*, just as the visitor's book in the Lindauer Gallery has to be read to understand the currency of the portraits for the descendants of the figures shown in them.<sup>28</sup> The transactions of the visitor book, needless to say, overcome the perceptual gap of the European imaginary that I remarked on above, and the interposition of distance and debt that underpin the currency of the exotic.

[23] The deep writing of *tā moko* (the application of tattoo), according to Mark Kopua, is related to the volcanic and earthquake movements of the unborn ancestor Ruamoko, who remained within the womb of mother-earth (*Papatūānuku*) after her parents (*Papatūānuku* and *Ranginui*) had separated, and binds Māori self-understanding to the land. In Kopua's view, cited by Higgins, Ruamoko is 'the Trembling Current that Scars the Earth'.<sup>29</sup> The import or currency of *moko* is earthbound, expressing in this translation the force of the land and its movements. Thus the intricate grooves of fleshly *moko*, distinctive to Māori *moko*, and often evened out by European artists, manifest the "deep uneven grooves left within the surface terrain of their primal parent".<sup>30</sup> The self-constitution of this deep writing contrasts with and may be counter-posed to the self-constitution of the settler within the ethnographic encyclopaedia and settler archive. *Moko* patterns have also been connected to the fern frond (*koru*) – Higgins further cites historian Michael King – while the deeper currency that its pattern unfurls is that of Māori *mana* (effective power or authority), manifest in land, people and political community through Māori lineage (*whakapapa*), which

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<sup>27</sup> In *The Materials and Techniques of Gottfried Lindauer*, Sarah Hilary cites Sir Apirana Ngata's comment in 1901 in the Māori Visitors' Book at the Lindauer Art Gallery: "I am of the Ngati-Porou tribe. I have come here to lament over the great men of other days, the people before us coloured as if they were living. Pleasing to the eye is the shadow-carving of the European artist – it is as if they had all risen from the dead. Thankful are we to the man who has preserved these pictures of our elders, our old chiefs, as a treasure for the years to come [italics mine]" (trans. James Cowan, *Pictures of Old New Zealand: The Partridge Collection of Maori Paintings by Gottfried Lindauer, described by James Cowan*, Auckland 1930, 204); cf. <http://www.lindaueronline.co.nz/artist/the-materials-and-techniques-of-gottfried-lindauer> (accessed 22 April 2016).

<sup>28</sup> Rawinia Higgins, "Tā Moko – From Practice to Expression", in: *Gottfried Lindauer: Die Maori Portraits*, eds. Udo Kittelmann and Britta Schmitz, exh. cat., Cologne 2014, 241-244.

<sup>29</sup> Higgins, "Tā Moko – From Practice to Expression", 243.

<sup>30</sup> Higgins, "Tā Moko – From Practice to Expression", 241.

incorporates long-standing relations to ancestor gods (*atua*). Energised through *whakapapa*, the ‘canvas’ of Lindauer’s painting and *moko* alike participate in what Higgins calls a ‘continuum’<sup>31</sup> that extends from the originary void (*Te Kore*) and following darkness (*Te Po*) – the very condition of luminosity – to the world of light, reality and understanding (*Te Ao-marama*).<sup>32</sup>

[24] If pre-digital photos suggest an ‘emanation’ or persistence of the referent,<sup>33</sup> that referent or real of Lindauer’s portraits is something more than a figure or person, who Lindauer may not have actually faced. Considered a relation – more than an ‘it’-object or material painting – that is experienced and enacted in community by the descendants of the figures depicted by Lindauer, the portraits are animated by the power and presence of a Māori continuum. This is a currency, or potency, which exists both within and beyond a metropolitan regime of the painting’s evaluation. As against the episcopic projection of the exotic, Māori responses to Lindauer’s paintings express a continuity, identity and authority that I associate with the *First law*<sup>34</sup> of the lands of Indigenous peoples. The glazed translucency of Lindauer’s application of oil to photographic image is the backdrop or backlight to the settler imaginary. Distance and debt are bridged and countered by currency of deeper import. In the same way, a metropolitan-colonial axis is redrawn, and distance itself traversed, by the delegation that accompanied the Lindauer paintings to their exhibition in the Berlin Alte Nationalgalerie in 2014, to ensure, through appropriate ceremony, the blessing of such treasures (*taonga*).<sup>35</sup> In this instance, Māori owned the exposition. The ‘currency’ of Lindauer’s paintings with Māori guardians, like the interplay of *moko* and fern frond patterns and the very force of the land’s movement, enables a revision of a constitution or ‘settlement’ based in the ethnographic encyclopaedia and settler archive. True possession is not that of the commissioner, collector and curator, for the paintings have other, older and still-present properties. In the events surrounding the unfolding of the Berlin exhibition, eloquently described in its impressive catalogue,<sup>36</sup> and in the

<sup>31</sup> Higgins, “Tā Moko – From Practice to Expression”, 244.

<sup>32</sup> Higgins describes different categories of *mana*, namely *mana atua* (the power of the gods), *mana whenua* (power of the land), *mana tangata* (power of the people), and *mana motuhake* (specific political power); cf. Higgins, “Tā Moko – From Practice to Expression”, 241.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Tietenberg, “Gottfried Lindauer’s ‘Veracious Pictures’”, 219, who cites Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*.

<sup>34</sup> This phrase of local currency is prominently used, for instance, by Barry Barclay in *Mana Tūturu: Māori Treasures and Intellectual Property Rights*, Auckland 2005, and Ani Mikaere in *Colonising Myths – Māori Realities: He Rukuruku Whakaaro*, Wellington 2011.

<sup>35</sup> *Gottfried Lindauer – Die Māori Portraits*, an exhibition of the Alte Nationalgalerie – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin in collaboration with Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, ran from 11/20/2014 to 4/12/2015.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Udo Kittelmann, “Foreword”; Elizabeth Ellis, “Te Kawenga Māori – He H aerenga Wairua Māori”; and Rhana Devenport, “Gottfried Lindauer’s Paintings Visiting the Alte

exhibition itself, which juxtaposed Lindauer's Māori portraits with extant photographs, I sense the potency and power of long history in the near history of the ethnographic archive, the disowning of metropolitan debt and de-fetishizing of the exotic, and the self-constituting force of indigenous Māori identities.

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