

‘Art for me is not a hothouse flower’: Hone Tuwhare’s socialist poetics

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With Hone Tuwhare’s recent passing inviting retrospective evaluations of his oeuvre, this article offers a reassessment of Tuwhare’s political poetry, with particular attention to the pervasive influence of Tuwhare’s socialism upon his poetics. It draws, *inter alia*, upon Janet Hunt’s invaluable 1998 biography of Tuwhare, which incorporates a range of his political poetry not included in any of his published anthologies, as well as additional information on Tuwhare’s political views drawn from his private papers and from taped discussions between Hunt and Tuwhare. Aspects of Tuwhare’s literary socialism (such as his friendship with Communist Party comrades and fellow authors R.A.K. Mason and Noel Hilliard, who helped to instigate his career as a poet) are well-documented, but Hunt’s biography draws attention to a lesser-known inspiration behind Tuwhare’s political poetry: the British Marxist writer Christopher Caudwell, whose work is explored in more detail below.

Tuwhare’s political poetry, particularly that which is most overtly Marxist, has often been less well-received than much of his other work, no doubt due in large part to the widespread assumption that political poetry is a lesser form of art which sacrifices aesthetic refinement for bald polemic.ⁱ Tuwhare himself conveyed an ambivalent attitude towards his political poetry over the years, arguing in 1987, for example, that with a couple of exceptions, his political poems ‘never work’ and were not among his ‘favourites’.ⁱⁱ At various other points throughout his career, however, Tuwhare emphasised the centrality of his political beliefs and activities to his poetics, expressing disappointment that his political poems were often considered his ‘worst’, sidelined by anthologists who ‘play it safe’ by selecting ‘flower milk & honey’ poetry instead.ⁱⁱⁱ It is notable that those political poems which have received wider critical and popular acclaim have tended to be those which engage with issues surrounding Māori self-determination (such as ‘Papa-tu-a-nuku’ and other works emerging from Tuwhare’s involvement in the Māori Land March and the Māori Cultural Renaissance), or with anti-nuclear, anti-war and environmentally

conservationist poems (such as the perennially popular ‘No Ordinary Sun’) which express views putatively shared by a large proportion of the New Zealand public (Chamberlain 49). Yet Tuwhare at times expressed frustration at the way in which the political impetus behind even his more popular poetry was sidelined in favour of a focus on the lyric, elegiac qualities for which his work (particularly the early poetry) is often celebrated. During his tour of Northland in 2002, for example, Tuwhare is reported to have objected to a musical rendition of ‘No Ordinary Sun’ as a ‘sad, yearning ballad’, declaring that it was ‘a protest poem, not a “sweet nature study”’, and proceeding to recite the poem ‘almost in a rage, punching the words out as if he was in the front line of a demo’ (Welch).

Where the lyric intensity and natural imagery of ‘No Ordinary Sun’ (which is, after all, redolent to *some* degree of the work of Romantic and Victorian ‘nature’ poets^{iv}) leaves the poem open to such contrasting interpretations, it is notable that many of Tuwhare’s lesser-known political poems – particularly those written during his period as an active member of the Communist Party (1942-56) – are much more overtly (and prosaically) polemical. His poem ‘Song’, for example, which was published in the communist magazine *People’s Voice* in 1950, hammers home its anti-capitalist message in a predominantly demotic, ‘working man’s’ register: in anticipating a proletarian revolution, Tuwhare envisages a mass uprising of workers ‘chant[ing] in unison. / You’re through. You’re done. You’re finished.... Peace, we want, / Bread, we’ll have, / Land, we’ll take!’. Bold political statements are studded with imagery drawn from the nuts-and-bolts milieu of the working class, with the ‘noise of building and construction / The hiss and crackle of the welding rod / laying the foundation of / Socialism / Side by side with the hammer, the saw / and the concrete mixer’ (quoted in Hunt 58). Although Tuwhare never included ‘Song’ in any of his published poetry anthologies, later arguing that he no longer considered this vein of overtly polemical writing successful as art (Hunt 58), its demotic register and industrial imagery lay the foundations for a socialist poetics which remained important in Tuwhare’s work throughout his career.

This aspect of Tuwhare’s writing was profoundly informed by his reading of the work of British Marxist writer Christopher Caudwell (1907-1937), whose 1937 study *Illusion and Reality* – which seeks to develop a Marxist poetics – was introduced to Tuwhare by a Wellington bookseller in the 1950s. As Janet Hunt points out, Caudwell’s book became a lifelong ‘bedside companion’ for Tuwhare: it provided ‘a philosophic and aesthetic framework that coincided with and supported Tuwhare’s literary thinking’, and as he entered the final decade of his life, he reported ‘going back again and again’ to his densely annotated edition of Caudwell’s text (Hunt 59). Apart from Hunt’s brief mention of Caudwell in her biography, the connections between the two writers have remained largely unexplored, yet Tuwhare’s own statements

about his work reveal that his reading of Caudwell – as well as Marx, Engels and other Marxist writers – played a central role in the development of his political vision and poetics.

Although Caudwell and Tuwhare came from differing socio-cultural backgrounds (Caudwell – whose real name was Christopher St. John Sprigg – was born into a middle-class, white British family), there are some notable correspondences between their personal trajectories as Marxists. Like Tuwhare, Caudwell left school at fifteen and became an avid autodidact and communist political activist, joining the Poplar branch of the Communist Party in London and choosing to associate with the urban ‘proletariat’ rather than the Party intelligentsia or the left-wing literary establishment (Sheehan). Like Tuwhare, Caudwell also experimented with writing socialist poetry (though he only published one poem in his lifetime), and he also wrote several Marxist theoretical works: the first of these, *Illusion and Reality*, was in press when Caudwell met an early death while fighting with the republican forces in the Spanish Civil War.

Illusion and Reality offers a Marxist analysis of literary production^v, seeking to develop a socialist aesthetic which will transcend the putative limitations of ‘bourgeois’ British poetry. Caudwell argues that while pre-capitalist poetry ‘derive[d] its value from its collective appearance, from the effect it ha[d] on the hearts of its hearers and the impact, direct and evident, on the life of the tribe’ (110), bourgeois British poetry of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had entered a phase of commodity fetishism or ‘art for art’s sake’ which separated ‘the world of art from the world of reality’ (109). In the age of ‘mechanical reproduction’ (as Walter Benjamin put it), poetry for Caudwell had lost its ‘social character’: the poet, he claims, writes in isolation for ‘men of whose existence he is ignorant’, and there is a ‘continual contradiction between the tremendous social experience embodied in the poem and the individualistic and anti-social attitude of the poet’ (111). Anticipating the demise of capitalism, Caudwell projects a return to a more socially inclusive form of artistic production, predicting the emergence of a ‘communist poetry’ which will effect a ‘revolution of content, as opposed to a mere movement of technique’, and in which ‘the social associations of words will all be re-cast, and the whole subject-matter of poetry will become different, because language itself is now generated in a different society’ (120).

The relevance of these arguments to Tuwhare’s position as a Māori and socialist poet is abundantly evident both in his own statements about his work, and in the ways in which his poetry engaged with various political movements. At a personal level, he has argued that Māori are ‘natural communists’, not only because of ‘the open and communal lifestyle of marae-centred communities’, but also because much of his experience of Māori life involved ‘being among labourers: people who worked with their hands and those

who had little beyond the week's earnings to see them through' (Hunt 40). While such statements may have less relevance to the increasingly urbanised and (in many cases) professionalised Māori society of the post-war era, Tuwhare's involvement in various political and cultural events during and beyond the Māori Renaissance of the 1970s gave rise to a range of poetry which celebrated the renewed sense of communal identity and political purpose that emerged during this period. The increasing concentration of Māori within the cities witnessed the emergence of new supra-tribal affiliations, and the establishment of urban marae allowed many aspects of Māori communal living – including the tradition of *whaikōrero* as a forum for debate and the reinforcement of interpersonal relationships – to be carried forward into a new era. This reinvigorated communalism is widely evident in Tuwhare's poetry, not just at a thematic level (in poems such as 'Maniapoto', a meditation upon Māori hospitality inspired by Tuwhare's involvement in the Māori Land March), but also at the level of stylistics. For example, his enduring fondness for 'conversational' poetry, and his use of dialogue, multivocality and forms of direct address to specific individuals (in poems such as 'Rain-Maker's Song for Whina') are at least in part grounded in Māori *whaikōrero*, as was his lifelong commitment to undertaking poetry tours in which he mesmerised audiences with his oratorical skills. As Tuwhare pointed out in an interview with Bill Manhire, he would often read his poems with the 'jump' rhythms (involving a 'delayed' or syncopated 'beat') characteristic of haka performances, asserting that poetry is 'a spoken art ... not meant just for the eye alone' (Manhire 1988: 275).

But in addition to being rooted in the Māori oral tradition, Tuwhare's poetry-reading tours were also motivated by his Marxist belief in the communal or social function of art. In an interview published in the *Otago Daily Times* 26 June 1969, Tuwhare argued that 'Art for me is not a hothouse flower, it's something to be shared', and revealed that he preferred to test his poetry on his workmates rather than seeking the approval of academics and reviewers (quoted in Hunt 86). His faith in the potential of art to transform social relations was evident in his willingness to read and circulate his poetry at protest demonstrations such as the anti-Vietnam-war rallies of the late 1960s and early 1970s: one of the most memorable of these occasions was a joint appearance (in 1968) with American folk singer Pete Seeger at St Matthew's church in Auckland. Impressed with the rhetorical force of Tuwhare's anti-war poetry, Seeger requested the use of his poem 'The Holy Cities' – which criticised the involvement of US, Australian and New Zealand soldiers in the Vietnam War – for distribution at other peace gatherings (Hunt 87-88). Like 'Song', 'The Holy Cities' never appeared in any of Tuwhare's poetry collections, though it was circulated in an edition of *Socialist Forum*, and also in an A4 broadsheet version published by the left-wing printer Pat Dobbie (Hunt 88). Tuwhare's decision not to anthologise the poem is possibly due again to its raw polemicism, though it is a more aesthetically complex work than 'Song', deploying the biblical rhetoric, accented free verse and

strategic changes of pace that characterise many of his later and better-known works. Deploying heavy irony, Tuwhare characterises the US, Australian and New Zealand capitals as ‘Holy Cities’ in which ‘bluff and dapper men zealously crusade / against the infidels...? Yet blind / selfish dirty acts defile / the self-won tribal unities of mankind’ (quoted in Hunt 88). The spare punctuation in these lines adds a heavy emphasis to Tuwhare’s angry condemnation of war (slowing the pace and forcing the reader to consider each word in isolation)^{vi}, and foregrounds the pause for reflection invited by the (now signature) ellipsis and question mark, which enacts a characteristic interrogation of the terms under which war is instigated by powerful ‘Western’ nations. In particular, the ironic figuration of war as a ‘crusade’ against ‘infidels’ satirises the way in which religious discourse is misused as a justification for racial intolerance, eerily prefiguring the biblical rhetoric with which US President George W. Bush described the international ‘war against terror’ at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

This section of the poem also points towards Tuwhare’s interest in Marxism and, more specifically, the work of Caudwell, with its reference to the ‘selfish’ acts of capitalist warmongers who destroy age-old ‘tribal unities’. Tuwhare’s poetic vision here and in other poems such as ‘Soochow 1973’ (written on the occasion of Tuwhare’s visit to China during his brief return to the Communist Party) is also inflected by Caudwell’s model of communist poetry as a generative and socially inclusive form of labour. ‘Soochow 1973’, for example, draws a direct parallel between the exertions of the ‘worker-artisans’ who have ‘restored the ancient buildings / formerly mis-used’ by the pre-communist Kuomintang, and the ‘painful density of poetry making, spade-tossed, winnowed’ (Tuwhare 103). Here, just as the ‘worker-artisans’ rebuild ancient architecture damaged as a result of political tyranny, so the poet-artisan recaptures a lost (pre-capitalist) social unity through his linguistic craft. In a similar vein, in ‘Traffic Statistic’ (published in the 1987 collection *Mihi*), Tuwhare asserts that ‘a poem / is just as hard to build as a concrete bridge. But they both help people to get across...’ (Tuwhare 162). Notably, the use of ellipsis here provides a ‘concrete’ image of the ‘bridge’ or ‘bridging’ process Tuwhare describes.

Such statements have an intensely personal relevance for Tuwhare, whose labour-intensive method of writing ensured that he often took months to complete a poem to his satisfaction (Manhire 1988: 278). He also rejected the common conceptualisation of poetry as an elitist occupation, emphasising that his poetry was grounded in his practical working experience as a boilermaker, and asserting (as late as 1990) that ‘I do not consider the social function of a creative writer as superior to that of a tradesman boilermaker, a boilermaker’s assistant, or better than that of a menial worker who switches on the tea urn and washes out the lavatories’ (Hunt 110).^{vii}

While this homology between writing and working with one's hands can be interpreted as a direct response to *Illusion and Reality* (in which Caudwell describes the communist poet as an 'artisan' or 'craftsman' who must use his 'technical skill' to re-establish social unity [116]), it is also rooted in Tuwhare's experience as a *Māori* artist. His poem 'On a theme by Hone Taiapa', for example, compares the role of the *Māori* poet to that of the *Māori* carver, who preserves *Māori* history and social unity by 'adz[ing] our ancestors / out of wood' (Tuwhare 87). The poem dwells less on the social function of art than the process of artistic creation (as the 'waste words' of the poet and the discarded 'wood chips' of the carver are figured as invested with elements of the artist's own 'soul'), but Tuwhare has elsewhere elaborated on the relationship between writing and carving as occupations which serve the *Māori* community. In an interview with Bill Manhire, for example, he pointed out that the *whare whakairo* / carved meeting house, populated with *poupou* / carved figures of the ancestors, functions as 'a library, or an art gallery – a library of tribal history' (Manhire 1988: 280). Considered in this context, 'On a Theme by Hone Taiapa' resonates with the work of other *Māori* creative writers such as Patricia Grace, who, in her 1986 novel *Potiki*, also establishes a parallel between the *Māori* writer and the master carver as figures who express a collective cultural identity through their art (Keown 1998, 2005, 2007). Tuwhare worked collaboratively with a number of *Māori* visual artists (such as Ralph Hotere and Shirley Grace) throughout his career, and as Robert Sullivan points out, poems such as 'Wind Song and Rain' and 'We Who Live in Darkness' have a spiralling pattern redolent of the curvilinear designs in *Māori* carving and *moko*, as well as in *Māori* oral narratives (Sullivan 15; 18). Such dynamics point towards Tuwhare's sense of himself as belonging to a *community* of *Māori* (and other) artists, rather than working in isolation. In speaking of his involvement with the first *Māori* Artists' and Writers' conference at Te Kaha marae in 1973, Tuwhare argued: 'I think [*Māori* artists are] one up on Pakeha artists because we're deeply involved in people.... I think it was Selwyn Muru who said that "Art is a good bridge between people." Well, if our role is to kind of knit people together, I think that's a good role for an artist – the best' (Eruera 2; quoted in Hunt 115).

Tuwhare's statements here resonate with the *Māori* proverb 'He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata' (What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people). This philosophy is central to the many poems Tuwhare wrote about human relationships, but it is also relevant to his nature poetry, which is strongly inflected by *Māori* animistic beliefs in the landscape and environment as part of the human realm. This element of his work – as evident in

poems such as ‘Sun O’, ‘Rain’ and ‘No Ordinary Sun’, in which Tuwhare addresses elements of the natural world directly – is often described as anthropomorphism or personification, but as John Huria points out in a review of *Deep River Talk*, such Eurocentric terminology is inappropriate to Māori cosmogony: ‘How can you personify a person?’ (Huria 335).

While acknowledging the centrality of Māori cosmogony to Tuwhare’s nature poetry, I would also argue that his explorations of the relationship between humans and the natural world can be considered in terms of Marxist dialectical materialism, which is taken up in Caudwell’s text in order to contrast the idealism of the bourgeois poet – who becomes increasingly detached from the material (including the social) world under capitalism – with the sensibility of the communist poet, whose socially inclusive vision endorses the materialist view that the world consists of dynamic matter that exists interdependently and is governed by natural laws. Tuwhare’s practical experience as a boilermaker afforded him a unique perspective on the material realities of the capitalist exploitation of natural and human resources, and much of his environmental protest poetry intersects with the ethical precepts of eco-Marxism (also known as eco-socialism), a branch of Marxist theory founded upon Marx and Engels’s explorations of the environmental costs of capitalist production (see Layfield 2008; Pepper 1993; Sarkar 1999). Tuwhare read a variety of Marx and Engels’s work during and beyond his boilermaker’s apprenticeship for the New Zealand Railways, and their writings made him acutely aware of the ethical dilemma he faced while working on large industrial projects, not only in New Zealand, but also in Samoa and Bougainville, where he was troubled by the fact that his wages were much higher than those of local workers, and by the environmental damage caused by the companies for which he worked (Hunt 96-102).

Tuwhare’s unease about the way in which his job subsumed him within the machinery of capitalism is evident in a range of his ‘environmental’ poetry, from ‘The sea, to the mountains, to the river’ (which emerged from his experience working on hydro schemes on the Waikato and Rangitaikī rivers in the 1950s and early 1960s), to ‘White Opossum’, written while Tuwhare was employed with a copper mining company operating in Bougainville in the early 1970s (Hunt 62, 95). ‘The sea, to the mountains, to the river’ juxtaposes the symbiotic rhythms of the natural world with the destructive, ‘alien’ technologies of workmen erecting a ‘skyline of steel crucifixes’ which symbolise the apparent victory of man over nature (Tuwhare 18). ‘White Opossum’ similarly figures the ‘raz[ing]’ of the landscape by men with machines: this time, bulldozers ‘level the forests’ in preparation for the extraction of copper, which is to be transported to ‘black steel ships loll[ing]’ in the harbour (Tuwhare

104-05). The poem charts the destruction of a delicately balanced ecosystem, as the incursions of the mining company not only 'level' the local villages, but also destroy the habitat of native fauna such as the white opossum, whose appearance during hunting expeditions is customarily interpreted by Bougainvilleans as an ill omen, but whose disappearance as a result of the mining activity is projected as a much greater catastrophe. As is the case in other environmental protest poems such as 'No Ordinary Sun', mass-produced human technology is represented as a perversion of natural phenomena: here, a helicopter is described as being 'like an ugly dragon-fly' producing a 'disturbing clacking obscenity' of sound, just as the nuclear explosion in 'No Ordinary Sun' is projected as a horrific variation on natural phenomena such as lightning, wind-gusts or sunbursts (Tuwhare 28, 104).

In 'The super powers rattle their sabres play deadly war games' (another Cold War poem), it is almost as if war technology not only masquerades as the natural but actually *supersedes* it through a process of destructive camouflage. Playing upon the terminology of environmental conservation, as if to expose the hypocrisy of nuclear nations who commit themselves to protecting their own native species while conspiring to destroy those of their military enemies, Tuwhare represents the US as a 'buzzard' dropping 'steel-encased turd[s]' on the Vietnamese, while Russia is figured as a 'brown bear' with a 'missile site hidden up its arsehole' (Tuwhare 163). Significantly, Tuwhare describes the bear as attempting to blend into 'unnatural habitats' such as Vietnam by 'distributing Cuban cigars', thus transposing the language of natural history into the arena of international military tyranny and political subterfuge.

A more subtle philosophical meditation on the ways in which human military activity disturbs the balance of the natural world appears in 'Who is testing today?', another of Tuwhare's anti-nuclear poems which (I would argue) offers a more recognisably Marxist projection of the manner in which the variety and interdependency of the material world is (potentially or actually) negated by nuclear activity. The poem describes an unnatural stillness that troubles the poet in the dead of night: it is as if nuclear testing – or the imagined effects of a nuclear explosion – has created a 'void' in which the minute sounds and movements that characterise the multiplicity of the material world have been silenced and arrested. There is 'no human cry', nor the less perceptible sounds ('cat-spit fish-burp rat-squeal') made by smaller life forms, and material objects lose their distinctiveness and meld together ('The door... has quite effaced itself; / and is at one with the molten glass / and hinge' [Tuwhare 55]). This disturbance to what Marxists would call the *relationality* of the material world is represented as catastrophic, with the 'insidious' silence pointing towards a lack of awareness of the

intricate sensory links between humans and their natural environment. The ways in which the ideologies of war and capitalist individualism exacerbate this insensitivity to the materiality and interdependency of things is made more explicit in poems such as ‘Deliver us...’, which satirises ‘dull excommunicants’ absorbed in increasingly complex technologies and ‘esoteric’ ideologies which blind them to the necessity of living in harmony with other life forms (Tuwhare 54).

Such dynamics, as I have suggested, can be considered as a politicised creative exploration of Marxist dialectical materialism, but I would also argue that an awareness of this branch of Marxist theory can illuminate a wider range of preoccupations across Tuwhare’s oeuvre, such as his delight in the sensory materiality of human experience (with his celebrations of food and sex illustrating Caudwell’s argument that art should be ‘active, with an explosive, energetic content’ [xiv]); his interest in contrasts and complementarity (traceable to the Marxist concept of all matter as a ‘unity of opposites’ and evident in poems such as ‘Haiku (2)’ and ‘cumplings’); and his preference for multivocality (evident in his strategy of code-switching between different speakers / interlocutors, registers, and typefaces^{viii}) over what Bernard Gadd calls the ‘static, ideal oneness’ associated with Romantic poetry (and, by extension, the bourgeois poetry critiqued in Caudwell’s *Illusion and Reality*). Gadd links this aspect of Tuwhare’s work to his Māoritanga rather than his socialism (though he does describe Tuwhare as a ‘working-class’ poet), but in his analysis of ‘Time and the Child’ as exemplar of Tuwhare’s poetics more generally, Gadd uses terminology which resonates with the precepts of dialectical materialism:

Earth and sky, child and old man, perceiving mind and concrete externals, man and nature, renewal and dying, recalled past and future, informal voice and eloquent voice all ‘reel’ together. Each element remains itself, each is explicitly linked with its opposite, each defines, makes distinct, helps interpret its opposite. And each opposing pair ‘converge’ as a unity, one of a pair of contraries similarly counter-posed at a higher level of comprehensiveness – and so successively towards the ultimates of being and non-being. The whole is expressive of the life and the change and the growth of the universe. (Gadd 87)

As I have acknowledged throughout this essay, Tuwhare’s identity as Māori is indeed central to his poetics, but a reading of his political poetry can be enriched through an awareness of the degree to which his writing was also informed by his lifelong engagement with the ethics of socialism. The overtly communist rhetoric found in some of his early work becomes increasingly rare in his later poetry, but as I have attempted to demonstrate, the work of Christopher Caudwell – and of Marx and

Engels – remained a strong influence both on the form and content of his poetry throughout his career. These two strands in his work – his Māoritanga and his socialism – inform a range of his other ‘internationalist’ political poetry not discussed in this essay, such as ‘Making a Fist of It’, which (like ‘Martin Luther King’) celebrates black resistance to white racism (thus establishing an implicit link with the Māori Renaissance), but is also inflected by the Marxist mantra ‘workers of the world, unite!’. Written in part as a condemnation of apartheid (and inspired by the Soweto uprising of 1976), the poem also references the capitalist exploitation of black South Africans in white-owned diamond mines, ending with an image of a ‘black girl-baby’ (whose mother has just been shot by riot police) transformed into a revolutionary, her ‘black work-hardened hands’ grasping a rifle for support as she ‘stand[s] up: beautiful’ (Tuwhare 125). A similar dynamic is implicit in ‘White Opossum’, which is both a critique of capitalist exploitation of (and damage to) natural resources, and a lament for the attendant destruction of an Indigenous cultural system. Such examples point towards the distinctive way in which Tuwhare adapted socialist ideologies to his experience as a working-class Māori, developing a personal poetics committed, in his own words, to ‘underlining proletarian forms and priorities’ (Tuwhare 101).^{ix} E Hone, tēnā rawa atu koe mō tō mahi.

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ⁱ For a recent Marxist critique of this phenomenon, see Terry Eagleton's lively pedagogical study *How to Read a Poem* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007).

ⁱⁱ The quotation appears in Hunt (58), with the source listed as the *Melbourne Age*, 30 October 1987. No title or page reference is given.

ⁱⁱⁱ Quoted on p. 59 of Hunt's biography, these statements appear in letters to Lauris Edmond (dated 12 and 31 January 1980) held in the Turnbull Library. In an interview with Bill Manhire published in 1988, Tuwhare again emphasised the importance of his politics to his poetry, revealing that he was still looking for ways in which to move beyond 'grand statements' and towards a political poetry more securely rooted in his working-class background (Manhire 1988: 271).

^{iv} I have argued elsewhere that Tuwhare's condemnation of human despoliation of the natural world is 'redolent of the work of Romantic poets such as William Wordsworth and William Blake, positing nuclear testing in the Pacific as a disastrous new chapter in the history of industrialization' (2007: 93; see also Arvidson 26). Tuwhare's poem is also reminiscent of Gerard Manley Hopkins's 'Binsey Poplars' (1879), which similarly condemns human ravages to the natural world (in this case, an avenue of poplars).

^v As Robert Currie points out, Caudwell also draws upon Jungian psychology in order to produce an affective theory of art, rendering his work more theoretically complex than it might first appear.

^{vi} Tuwhare has indicated that this is a technique borrowed from fellow socialist poet and personal friend R.A.K. Mason, who '[laid] out his words without any need for full-stops, commas, capital letters. The reader or reciter is supposed to put them in, whatever place they think they're needed. This puts an added strain and challenge for the reader to read the work more thoroughly' (Hunt 79).

^{vii} This final statement appears in a note, dated 1990, from Tuwhare's private papers, to which Hunt had access while writing her biography of Tuwhare.

^{viii} For a more detailed discussion of these strategies in Tuwhare's poetry, see Manhire (1991): 149-52.

^{ix} The quotation appears in 'Kwantung Guest House, Canton'. The poem was inspired by his trip to China in 1973 and celebrates communist Canton as a vibrant 'city of workers'.