

## Significance of the Title Page Image

The image on the title page is a Fibonacci spiral. It is a precise mathematical construct that has intrigued many people in Europe over the centuries—from mathematicians, to architects (e.g. Sir Christopher Wren), to priests, just to name a few. As a result, the Fibonacci spiral has many scientific, artistic, and spiritual associations in historical (and even contemporary) Europe. These historical connections, and the fact that it is a mathematical shape, serve to symbolise that it represents my roots, or where my ancestry and academic development lie. It is where I come from as a Pākehā.

In addition, the spiral also symbolises the way in which much of Pākehā culture evolves, especially scientific culture—round and round a core, ever expanding, and ever growing in knowledge and understanding. Therefore it also represents where I am coming from as a Pākehā. In other words, the Fibonacci spiral is me, the Pākehā, through and through.

However spirals also form an important symbol in much of Māori culture. They are a fundamental building block of many traditional art forms, such as moko or carving, where their presence is both ubiquitous and instantly recognisable. The spiral therefore represents Māori culture as well.

Taken together, the spiral represents the coming together of Māori and Pākehā in one country. It represents our shared history, shared lives, and shared future. And it represents the many individuals in New Zealand today of shared ancestry.

The spiral on the title page also stands as a symbol for the book itself. As is made clear in the introduction, this book is not like most other books. It does not start out with the author knowing everything there is to know about the book before the writing begins. It does not start with a great all-knowing, omnipotent author whose job it is to impart his wisdom to the reader. Such a book is more like a grid, with topics carefully divided and placed into an appropriate box within the grid. At the beginning of this book, the author, i.e. me, knows very little. In the beginning, the book is me and my ignorance. It is the tiny centre of the spiral waiting to grow. As the book progresses, I learn more, and pass this on to the reader. Sometimes I even discover, or stumble across, a significant point in the very process of writing. At the end of the book, my ignorance has been replaced by several layers of understanding. And contextually, I am wandering through the corridors of the United Nations and taking in the world-wide indigenous scene.

This book is therefore one of the journeys to greater knowledge and understanding in the Pākehā mindset alluded to above. It takes the reader on the path to greater understanding by someone on the same stage of the learning process themselves. Round and round it goes, revisiting the same topics. Each time round, though, the understanding is deeper, and the context broader. At all times there is a central core—a central core from which the whole journey began. It is the core called ‘me’, the core called ‘self’. It is hoped that the Pākehā reader will be able to identify with the ‘self’ and substitute their own ‘self’ in the story. For this book is nothing if it is not a plea for Pākehā to look at themselves and consider what part they play as individuals in the overall relationship between Pākehā and Māori, between government and Māori.

The title page image stands for other things as well. One type of spiral used in Māori art is known as the koru. The koru has been taken up in many popular expressions of Māori art, such as necklaces. It is even the symbol used by Air New Zealand on its aircraft worldwide (although this is not necessarily sanctioned by Māori themselves). Part of the reason for this popularity is that the koru is seen by many as a symbol of new life, hope, and growth. This association comes from the theory that spirals in Māori art are inspired by fern fronds—the young, growing, and curled-up leaves of ferns. These plants are a very common sight in New Zealand native bush, growing either in tree form, or directly from the ground.

Taking up this popular symbolism, I have used the Fibonacci spiral to represent my numerous new shoots of understanding that sprout in this book. The majority of these are about Māori issues, but there are also many about subjects I knew very little about prior to starting this book, such as law, politics and sociology. Like fronds, these shoots appear one by one, immature and incomplete, but full of vitality and a will to grow.

I have also used the popular imagery of the koru to symbolise the renaissance of Māori culture in recent years, and the gradual progress in accommodating this culture within New Zealand (however slow). It thus expresses a hope for the future.

Overriding all these symbolisms associated with the title page image is the idea of the Fibonacci spiral in nature. In the natural world such spirals are to be found in the small—such as seashells—and the massive—such as galaxies—with everything in between. In some ways, therefore, the Fibonacci spiral represents the natural order of things, the natural ways of the universe. Thus I have also used the Fibonacci spiral to represent a natural growth, or path, to greater understanding of the world. This understanding will never be complete, yet, beginning from foundations that are indiscernible and too small to quantify, it will always continue to grow. This book, my journey, Māori cultural renaissance, and the development in Pākehā/Māori relations are all just tiny parts of this natural growth.