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**Te Karanga Tūturu o Maieke:
Ngāti Kuri Women's Taiao Geographies**

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy in Geography
at
The University of Waikato
by
Sandi Ringham



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

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This thesis is dedicated to:

*Awaroa Tipene Waitai, Emere Hamo, Caroline Hempel-Ringham and Savana
Watkin*

*Great grandmother, grandmother and mother, you are the roots of the tree that
is my life, and daughter, you are my seed and my gift to the world.*

HE TOHU O NGĀTI KURI

Ruri (lullaby) Composer: Bethany Matai Edmunds

Ko te pūpū kōrari, he taonga tuku iho
Ko te pūpū kōrari, he karanga ki te iwi
Ko te pūpū kōrari, kei raro i a Maungapiko
Ko te pūpū kōrari, he tohu o Ngāti Kuri

Te Kuaka, he manu taketake
Te kuaka, rere atu rere mai
Te kuaka, no Te Kokotā ki Kapowairua
Te kuaka, he tohu o Ngāti Kuri

Ko te Pīngao, no Tangaroa e
Ko te Pīngao, he kete, he tukutuku
Ko te Pīngao, maino Te Kokota kei Parengarenga
Ko te Pīngao, he tohu o Ngāti Kuri
Ko te pūpū kōrari

Ko te pupu kōrari, te Kuaka, ko te pīngao e
Mai tāwhiti ki te ao hurihuri
He tohu o Ngāti Kuri e.....

Abstract

This research examines the relationships, identities and sense of belonging of Māori women of within the Ngāti Kuri iwi (tribe) and te taiao (the natural world, environment, nature, country) in Te Hiku o te Ika, Far North, Aotearoa New Zealand. It shows how Ngāti Kuri women and te taiao are embedded in - yet also resist - colonial and patriarchal discourses.

The Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine theoretical framework decolonises and transforms the ways in which Māori women have been represented and marginalised. Pūrākau (storywork) as a theory and methodology ensures Ngāti Kuri women's stories are told by them and for them. Indigenous relational geography is woven into the theoretical framework to further understand Indigenous relationships to place and diverse feelings of belonging and responsibility.

Whakawhiti kōrero (research conversations), wānanga (workshops) and tipi haere (mobile wānanga) were carried out with 19 Ngāti Kuri women. Approximately 40 people from the iwi and / or scientific communities contribute to the thesis through the initiatives of the Ngāti Kuri Relationship Working Group (NKRWG), the Auckland War Memorial Museum and other research partners and as conservationists.

Findings are organised around three themes: identities; relationships; and a sense of belonging. The first theme introduces Ngāti Kuri women's identities as leaders and drivers of change, disrupting and dismantling the intersection of patriarchal and colonial discourse. The pūrākau of Maieke, a founding ancestress of Ngāti Kuri, brings to light the reclamation and transformation of Māori women's identities and geographies, as defined by participants. Pre-colonisation Ngāti Kuri women had the capacity and authority to become a governing force in the daily lives of the iwi. The second theme highlights colonial and patriarchal naming of our world. Ngāti Kuri women are reconfiguring relationships and representation through the scientific naming of taonga (culturally valuable objects and species). Values and principles of kaitiakitanga (inherited guardianship) and whakawhanaugatanga (relating well to others) guide the naming process. The third theme focuses on participants' reflections and understandings of the ways in which they sense place and feelings of belonging. Participants' engagement with te taiao - through singing, storying and sensing place - highlights the way te taiao re-centres and transforms Ngāti Kuri women's relationships and experiences of belonging to iwi homelands.

Importantly, the thesis concludes with a discussion of the challenges, successes and actions of Ngāti Kuri women as they continue to strive for tino rangatiratanga (self-determination), social and environmental well-being. I conceptualise new geographies that account for, and celebrate, uniquely Ngāti Kuri understandings of identities, relationships and feelings of belonging. Finally, a short creative story ends the thesis in order to show the transformative power of Ngāti Kuri women's te taiao experiences.

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List of acronyms

DOC - Department of Conservation

NKRWG - Ngāti Kuri Relationship Working Group

NZPCN - New Zealand Plant Conservation Network

NGO - Non-Government Organisation

NIWA - National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research

LINZ - Land Information New Zealand

DSIR - Department of Science and Industry Research

UNDRIP - United Nations Declaration of Rights for Indigenous People

MARC - Mt Albert Research Centre

ACCORD - Auckland Committee on Racism and Discrimination

Glossary

Te Reo Māori is an official language of Aotearoa New Zealand. Te Aka Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary and Index (Morefield 2003 - 2022) has been used to provide a translation of Māori words used in this thesis. Translation is dependent on the context in which any of these words are used. The English language fails to capture the full depth and meaning of Te Reo Māori.

Ahi kā – home people who tend the fires of occupation, continuous occupation securing title to land

Āhuatanga Maori – Māori tradition

Ako – shared learning

Ariki – paramount chief, high chief

Atua – deity, gods

Hapū – subtribe, pregnant

Haerenga – journey, trip

Hau - vitality of a person, ceremonial offering of food to an atua, wind, breeze, breath, prestige in relation to kaitiaki.

Haukāinga - Home, home people, people of marae

Hikoi - to step, walk, stride

Hinengaro - mind, thought, intellect, consciousness, awareness

Hurihanga – to turn, corner, bend

Ihi – an essence of potency, excitement, passion, thrill, power to inspire others, charm, personal magnetism - psychic force as opposed to spiritual power. A psychic force that induces passion, excitement and enthusiasm in others rather than a spiritual power.

Iwi – tribe

Kaiao katoa – all living creatures, native and endemic flora and fauna of cultural significance to Māori, members of an environmental family

Kairaranga – weaver

Kaitiaki – Trustee, minder, guard, custodian, guardian, caregiver, keeper, steward

Kaitiakitanga – Inherited guardianship

Kanohi Ki te Kanohi – face to face

Karakia - ritual chants, prayer, incantations

Karanga - ceremonial call, welcome call

Kaumātua – Adult, elder, elderly man, elderly woman, a person of status within the whānau.

Kaumātua kaunihera - Elder council

Kaupapa – topic, matter for discussion, agenda, subject, programme, theme, issue, initiative

Kawa – protocols and customs

Kete – basket

Kōrero hinengaro – telepathy

Kōiwi – the remains of ancestors

Kuia – grandmother, elder woman

Kupu – Word

Mahi – work

Mahi wairua – spiritual work

Mahinga kai – Sites where resources are cultivated and collected, food gathering sites

Mana - prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma

Mana motuhake - distinct power and sovereignty derived from the gods

Mana tuku - the gift of prestige, authority

Mana whenua – territorial rights, power from the land, authority of land or territory

Manaakitanga – hospitality, kindness, generosity, support, the process of showing respect, and care for others

Manuhiri – visitor

Manu taketake – ancient and native bird

Marae - the open area in front of the meeting house, a place where formal greetings and discussions take place

Mātauranga Māori – Māori knowledges and sciences

Mātauranga o Ngāti Kuri – Ngāti Kuri knowledges

Mātauranga – knowledge

Maunga - mountain

Moe – sleep, dream, wed, to have sex, to die, to beget, born

Mokopuna – grandchild/children

Mōteatea - lament, traditional chant

Oro – frequency

Paepae – orator’s bench

Pahī moana – Large ocean-going vessel

Pākehā – English, foreign, European, exotic, introduced from or originating in a foreign country

Papakāinga - original home, home base, village, settlement

Papatūānuku – earth mother

Pepeha – tribal expression of ancestral relationships to people and place, saying of the ancestors

Pūpūkōrari (Plactostylus ambagiosus) – Flax snail in relation to traditional flax weaving. Other names used are pūpūwhakarongotaua, pūpūharakeke or the New Zealand Flax Snail

Pūpūwhakarongotaua (*Plactostylus ambagiosus*) – The snail that listens to war parties. Flax snail. Other names used are pūpūkōrari, pūpūharakeke or the New Zealand Flax Snail

Pūrākau – Storywork, stories that record Māori histories and experiences

Rangatira – iwi, hapū and whanau leaders, chief male or female

Rangatiratanga – right to exercise authority, autonomy, authority, leadership in a social group

Raranga – to weave

Rohe – tribal territory, district, region, area

Rōpū - group, party of people, company, association, entourage, committee, organisation, category

Ruri – lullaby

Ta moko - traditional Māori tattoo

Takeke – piper, garfish

Tamahine – daughter, girl

Tamariki – children

Tamanuiterā – Sun god, personification and sacred name of the sun

Tangata whenua – people of the land

Taonga - treasure, anything prized - applied to anything considered to be of value including socially or culturally valuable objects, resources, phenomenon, ideas and techniques

Taonga species – flora and fauna significant to Māori

Taonga tuku iho - Cultural and intellectual properties and heritage including lands, waters and resources

Tapu - be sacred, prohibited, restricted, set apart, forbidden, under atua protection

Tapuwae – ritual chant to ensure speed, footprint

Taumata - congress

Te Ao Marama – relating to wisdom and understanding of the natural world of life and light.

Te Kupenga tūpuna – ancestral network

Te Reo Māori – The Māori language

Te Reo Ngāti Kuri – Ngāti Kuri dialect

Te taiao – Environmental family, natural world, environment, nature, country. Te taiao encapsulates entire ecosystems: land, fresh and ocean bodies of water. Māori are not separate from te taiao but a part of the ecosystem.

Tikanga – customary systems, protocols, Māori law and lore

Tinana – body

Tino rangatiratanga – self-determination, autonomy, exercise of absolute mana or authority

Tipi harae – mobile workshop, to roam about, call in at places

Tohorā – whale

Tohu - signals, advise, messages, guide, direct, instruct

Tohunga ahurewa –expert, healer, advisor, chosen by atua and tribe because of early signs of natural aptitude in a particular field. Tohunga ahurewa mediated between atua, te taiao and the tribe and advised on a number of topics. They were experts in karakia, sacred lore, spiritual beliefs, traditions and whakapapa

Tuku - gift

Tupuna/Tūpuna – ancestor/s with continuing influence

Tūpuna wāhine - ancestress with continuing influence, great grandmothers

Turangawaewae - a place where one has the right to stand – a place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship and whakapapa, homelands

Tūturu - permanent, real, true, actual, authentic, original

Uri - offspring, descendant, relative, kin, progeny, blood connection, successor

Urupā – burial ground

Wahapū – harbour

Wāhi tapu - sacred place, sacred site - a place subject to long-term ritual restrictions on access or use, e.g. a burial ground, a battle site or a place where tapu objects were placed.

Wahine/wāhine – woman/women

Wāhine – women

Waiata – song

Wairua – spirit, soul - spirit of a person which exists beyond the physical body and death

Waka – canoe

Whai rawa – prosperity

Wānanga – workshops, to meet and discuss, deliberate, consider

Whai kōrero – public statement/discussion

Whakapapa – a layering of ancestry to lands, mountains, waterways and deity, genealogy, lineage.

Whakataukī - Māori proverbs and wisdoms, proverbs, significant sayings

Whakawhanaungatanga – establishing relationships and relating well to other in a Maori context

Whakawhiti kōrero – research conversations

Whanau – family, extended family

Whanaunga – relative/s, family members

Whanaungatanga - relationship, kinship, sense of family connection

Whawhai – conflict, quarrel

Whenua – land, placenta

Chapter one: Ngāti Kuri women and Te Taiao

This thesis contributes to Māori and Indigenous geographies by exploring the experiences, relationships and identities of Ngāti Kuri wāhine (women) alongside te taiao (environmental family, natural world, environment, nature, country) in Te Hiku o te Ika, Far North, Aotearoa New Zealand. Ngāti Kuri is Aotearoa's most northern iwi (tribe) and te taiao is regarded as an environmental family that includes Ngāti Kuri people and more-than-human relations linked through whakapapa (a layering of ancestry to lands, mountains, waterways and deity, genealogy, lineage). Te taiao is a layering of familial relationships with the human and natural world and ecosystems with complex physical, cultural, spiritual and political meanings. Considering these layers allows for an examination of the ways in which Māori women, iwi and other institutions inform and negotiate place, relationships and power.

Despite colonisation and marginalisation, Ngāti Kuri women (past, present and future) continue to shape te taiao and their relationships within Te Hiku o te Ika. Ngāti Kuri are connected holistically by bloodlines, by place and by time. This thesis honours and respects this and brings to the fore the role of wāhine as kaitiaki (guardians) in an ever-changing environmental context.

The thesis centres Ngāti Kuri women, past, present and future, in order to scrutinise not only the ways in which te taiao are gendered, politicised and commodified, but to also better understand how some Ngāti Kuri women create and maintain whanaungatanga (relationship, kinship, sense of family connection) with te taiao. The research is concerned with Ngāti Kuri's geographies and their agency to participate in the conservation of the te taiao in Te Hiku o te Ika. Aotearoa's te taiao are layered with political, colonial and patriarchal discourses of power which shape notions of 'conservation' and 'science'. Ngāti Kuri lands, islands, waterways and coastlines hold unique ecosystems, some of which cannot be found

elsewhere in Aotearoa nor the rest of the world. Exploring the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women negotiate power and their relationships within te taiao, iwi, scientific and governance institutions requires a critique of colonial, gendered power plays while giving voice to the women of Ngāti Kuri.

Indigenous, and in particular, Indigenous women's geographies, have received very little academic attention in regard to conservation of te taiao (Radcliffe 2022, Simmonds 2014). As a consequence, there is a knowledge gap pertaining to the way these spaces are negotiated, imagined and known (Coombs, Johnson and Howitt 2014, Greensill 2005 Simmonds 2014, Sioui 2021, Simpson 2014). Geography has a long and dubious relationship with colonisation that is crucial to acknowledge and unpack (Coombs et al. 2014, Johnson 2012, Murphy 2019, Parsons, Nalau and Fisher 2017, Radcliffe 2022, Simmonds 2014). Information collected under the lens of geography across the globe has constructed a racialised view of Indigenous knowledge about environment, relationships, identities and societies (Sioui 2021). Geographical theories and knowledges remain bound up in Eurocentric, patriarchal, colonial and capitalistic values, principles, dichotomies and scrutiny that sought to justify and 'sell' colonisation en masse (Radcliffe 2022). Knowledge created through science and geography convinced both settlers and Indigenous that colonisation was supposedly: beneficial; necessary; unavoidable; natural; and a divine 'right' to invade Indigenous lands (Radcliffe 2022).

There are few accounts of the ways in which key relationships within Māori women's geographies emerge at specific sites. The overall aim of this thesis is to examine how Indigenous women's subjectivities are, at times, precast by colonial, political and masculine concepts. Moreover, I explore ways in which Māori women reconfigure discourses, places

and spaces through building on traditional and contemporary relationships, engagement and Māori women's autonomy.

The research asks three questions:

1. In what ways do ancestral women influence the identities, taiao relationships, sense of belonging of Ngāti Kuri women?
2. How and where are Ngāti Kuri women resisting and transforming colonial and patriarchal conservation knowledge?
3. How and in what ways are environmental tohu re-centering Ngāti Kuri women within tribal homelands?

Despite colonial imaginings of Māori society as being ruled and governed by men, I argue that Ngāti Kuri women have and continue to hold leadership roles. Bringing the stories of Ngāti Kuri tūpuna wāhine (ancestresses with continuing influence, great grandmothers) to the fore disrupts colonial assumptions about Māori women and that Māori society has always been patriarchal. The above questions allow the research to delve into the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women are represented in the creation of conservation knowledge but ultimately looks at the current work Ngāti Kuri women participate in to transform and decolonise collaboration processes and ways of working.

The theoretical framework of the research is guided by Kaupapa Māori, Mana Wahine, pūrākau (storywork), Māori and Indigenous relational geographies. These theories guide the analysis and approach to the research topic and participants, including te taiao and tūpuna wāhine. Through Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine applied in this research, the ways in which Māori women are represented are decolonised and transformed. Pūrākau as both a theory and methodology is utilised to ensure participant narratives and voices are central to the thesis. The theoretical framework brings these theories together in order to develop a

unique Ngāti Kuri women's lens that contributes to the interpretation and representation of Māori and Indigenous women's geographies.

This thesis is interested in te taiao and taonga species (treasured flora and fauna, native and endemic flora and fauna of cultural significance to Māori, members of an environmental family) as active participants in the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women understand and form their identities, relationships, and a sense of belonging to homelands and turangawaewae (a place where one has the right to stand – a place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship). Indigenous relational geography is a theoretical framework from which to explore and investigate Indigenous relationships to place and more-than-human beings (Sioui 2021). This is an approach to geography that focuses on 'place-as-relationships' offering an effective viewpoint for understanding interactions, feelings of belonging and responsibility that are developed with and in Indigenous lands and communities (Johnson 2012, Kaana'iaupuni and Malone 2006, Sioui 2022). In this research te taiao is understood as more than just a site where a sense of attachment to place is created. Rather, te taiao is an active and 'self-intelligent' member of the extended family constantly negotiating and evolving relationships and identities (Sioui 2021).

Methods were designed to explore the possibilities of guidance from te taiao and tūpuna wāhine. A range of methods were used to gather information. The methods used combined: Whakawhiti kōrero (research conversations); wānanga (workshops, to meet and discuss, deliberate, consider) and tipi haere (mobile workshop, to roam about, call in at places). Eighteen Ngāti Kuri women and 2 Ngāti Kuri men were directly involved in the above methods, however, approximately 40 people from the iwi and/or the scientific community have in some way contributed to this thesis. All methods were delivered within the rohe

(tribal territory, district, region, area) of Ngāti Kuri. This ensured whakapapa, tūpuna wāhine and a Ngāti Kuri environmental family was present at all stages of data collection.

Pūrākau and Mana Wahine provided a methodological lens from which to consider and honour Ngāti Kuri women and the more-than-human participants in this research. alongside Mana Wahine also brings forth Māori women's voices and stories as told by them. This untangles the marginalisation of Māori women's identities, roles and relationships from colonial and patriarchal discourses and representations. Participants contributed to the development of Mana Wahine and pūrākau methodologies employed in this research. The result – a Ngāti Kuri women's methodological approach to information collection and analysis.

Tūpuna wāhine, taiao and taonga species were invoked and involved through pūrākau. Participants considered pūrākau in this research to be 'living documents' where our grandmothers and taonga species come to life telling their stories shaping, forming and informing identities, relationships and knowledge. The pūrākau that unfold within this thesis have been gathered through the above methods and given creative freedom through my imagination. Pūrākau in this research enabled a passage back and forth through tangible and intangible worlds where human and more-than-human participants and the research engaged and communicated through place-based relationships. Conservation knowledge creation in Aotearoa is informed by Western values, principles and systems that are constructed through discourses of colonialism and patriarchy (Coombs and Hill 2005, Greensill 2005). This is, however, changing as Indigenous peoples utilise and promote their environmental knowledges, rights and responsibilities (Radcliff 2022). While Ngāti Kuri women's roles and positions within te taiao have been dictated through colonial and masculine concepts of

gender and ethnicity, there lives a dynamic legacy of engagement and rejuvenation for the well-being of our natural environments that has been driven by Ngāti Kuri women.

Environments, ecosystems and taonga species are intelligent and active agents in shaping Ngāti Kuri women's identities and relationships. The sensory geographies of Ngāti Kuri women as they engage with te taiao, an environmental family, are investigated. There are three research findings that showcase the mutual construction of the environment, our identities, our relationships with each other, and our experiences. Findings also illustrate the agency of te taiao is crucial in shaping the lives of some Ngāti Kuri women.

First the research found that the ancestral women of Ngāti Kuri and te taiao influence the lives of Ngāti Kuri women, young and old. Through engaging with pūrākau, Ngāti Kuri women activate transformation and decolonisation. Hearing, reading and telling, just knowing these stories, strengthened my participants' connection to, not only, their tribal lands but also made them more aware of the traditional governance roles Ngāti Kuri women once held. Participants were inspired to re-think who Ngāti Kuri women have been, who they are and who they might be in the future. Participants felt empowered to reimagine their identities, roles and responsibilities beyond patriarchal and colonial narratives (de Leeuw and Hunt 2018).

Secondly the research found that colonization is experienced as intergenerational trauma which has cut many of us from the land and each other. At the crux of this experience are the gendered spaces of colonisation, science, governance, knowledge and practice. While this is not new and nor are we in a state of post-colonization findings identify the nuanced ways in which Ngāti Kuri women are not only excluded from the creation of conservation knowledge but also highlights the ways in which they reclaim, reconfigure and rejuvenate their rangatiratanga (right to exercise authority, autonomy) and whakawhanaungatanga (building

relationships in a Māori context). Focusing on the experiences and efforts of Ngāti Kuri women, past and present, findings fill a research gap pertaining to Māori women's geographies while also providing Indigenous women across the globe with examples and insights into the ways in which relationships and leadership within te taiao might be (re)activated.

The third finding reveals that a sense of belonging is informed by environmental tohu which, for some Ngāti Kuri women can strengthen and inform their turangawaewae and their sense of belonging in and with homelands. Through a reading of sensory exchanges in and with place, findings reveal the ways participants' sense of belonging is negotiated, lived and embodied. More-than-human beings play an active and intelligent role in forming a sense of belonging, knowing and being that is unique to place.

Ko wai au?

Examining my positionality underlines the importance of reflexive practice and awareness of power within the research (Faria and Mollet 2016). The reflexive practice safeguards against creating a generalised single story of the participants (Mahuika 2008). My position within this research is complex and permeated with relationships of power. While I am, at all times, a daughter, mother, sister and a tribal member of Ngāti Kuri, I am also a team member in the Ngāti Kuri Relationship Working Group (NKRWG) and a University lecturer and researcher. To fully understand the power relationships within the research I must reflect on my positionality by critiquing my own colonisation and institutionalisation (Mahuika 2008).

My life has been influenced not only by my past and present experiences but also the experiences of those who came before me. My mother is a lead character in my narrative. In this thesis I tell her story as best I can. I hope to honour her and help heal the trauma and loss she suffered through colonisation. Through bringing my mother's story to the foreground,

processes of healing can take place, acknowledging her experiences is a holistic step towards transformation and wholeness (Pihama et al. 2014). Included in the thesis is my pepeha, my ancestral connections and relationships to place and people. I write back to my own experience in this thesis and how the intergenerational impacts of colonisation that has shaped my identity, geographies, and ways of being. In doing so, I reach for hope and transformation. Sharing this “enables the creation of space for further identifying pathways, factors and conditions which lead to intergenerational recovery and healing for our people” (Pihama et al. 2014 259).

Most of my adult life has been spent working for minimum wage. I have cleaned motels and toilets, worked in a factory, orchard work, scaffolding, worked in pubs and bars, been a caregiver for the disabled and a dance instructor. I worked hard and partied even harder. The last job I had outside of the academy was as a teacher aide and career advisor at Raglan Area School. It was this work that pushed me towards a higher education. I worked at the school for six years with boys with behavioural challenges and as the Gateway administrator. The Gateway Programme was developed to transition students into the work force. Students would take courses outside of the school and spend time in work experience. I enjoyed this work immensely and had undertaken study to better my position while working at the school. I received a Diploma in Career Guidance in 2008 and applied for a pay raise. This was rejected. After six years of work, professional development and taking on the responsibilities of teacher - taking classes, managing rebellious students, marking, doing the budget, recording student results, liaison between parents and employers - I was still only valued as a minimum wage worker. I was earning less than the cleaners. Angered and hurt, I quit my job and enrolled at the University of Waikato in a Bachelor of Social Science. I was 45 years old and have not looked back, I have found my niche, and for the first time in my working life I feel valued.

During an internship in Te Hiku o te Ika in 2015 I was introduced to Ngāti Kuri Trust Board member Sheridan Waitai. We made our whānau (family, extended family) connections and she invited me to join the NKRWG. It was through this meeting and ongoing discussions that the research topic grew. Our group works alongside the Auckland War Memorial Museum, Manaaki Whenua, NIWA (National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research) and a number of other research institutions collaborating to build positive working relationships between the iwi and researcher institutions (see Chapter Two).

For the first time in my life, I feel empowered through education and supported to continue to search and connect with my whakapapa, iwi and homelands within the academic and iwi spaces. From the ‘half-caste’ girl who couldn’t pass school certificate, the cleaner, factory worker or the solo mum with children to two different men destined to a life as a beneficiary, I have evolved. While I still experience feelings of not belonging. In many ways I have internalised the structural inequalities of sexism, racism and classism that exist in the world I live in. I can change that, I am in control of the way I view myself and where I belong in this world. I know who I am and where my homelands are. I know where I belong and I am making my way home as best I can.

Chapter outline

In this chapter I introduce the research topic, questions, aims and an overview of the theoretical framework and methods. This chapter signposts what is to come in the following chapters. Chapter Two introduces Ngāti Kuri women, their histories and their taiao. Giving context, this chapter visits the whakapapa, whenua (land, placenta) and grandmothers of Ngāti Kuri. The information shared is but a snippet of diverse and colourful histories held within the lands and whakapapa of Ngāti Kuri. This chapter maps the research and Ngāti Kuri women’s sites of significance. Key events discussed in Chapter two relate to the Ngāti Kuri

women and taiao. The chapter reveals the injustices forced upon Ngāti Kuri through colonisation and the tireless work of Ngāti Kuri women to remain resilient regardless.

The third chapter 'He tohu o Ngāti Kuri: Guiding the research' is a literature review of the theories that guide the research and Indigenous geographies. Also reviewed in this chapter is literature pertaining the impacts of colonisation of Indigenous lands, identities and relationships through science and conservation. The research is grounded in a Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine ensuring that the research ethics, theories and methodologies allow for a unique Ngāti Kuri women's theoretical framework to be developed and utilised. Pūrākau is an important addition to this thesis. Pūrākau of tūpuna wāhine (ancestral women, grandmothers), te taiao, taonga species are centralised throughout the thesis. Māori and Indigenous relational geographies are woven into the theoretical framework in order to equip the analysis with a means to further decolonise and transform Ngāti Kuri women's relationships and responsibilities to te taiao and their diverse feelings of belonging.

'Tipi haere talk: Approaching method and analysis' is the fourth chapter. This chapter discusses the methodologies and methods of this thesis. The methodological framework draws from the roots of Kaupapa Māori, Mana Wahine and pūrākau. The methodologies were designed to respect and give honour Ngāti Kuri women, tūpuna wāhine and te taiao. Moreover, Ngāti Kuri knowledges sit front and centre of the methodologies, information gathering and analysis. The research was an evolving process where participants and I were consciously framing a set of principles, arguments, ethics and analysis in which to cloak the thesis (Smith 2009). This galvanised the values and autonomy of Ngāti Kuri women deep within the intergenerational experiences of participants as they engage and activate their responsibilities within an environmental family.

Chapter five: ‘Because our grandmothers said so: Re-storying Ngāti Kuri women’s identities, relationships and sense of belonging’ is the first empirical chapter and is an exploration of Ngāti Kuri women’s identities and the way in which they are understood and shaped by human and more-than human participants (Thomas 2015). The pūrākau of Maieke, co-founder of the iwi of Ngāti Kuri is at the front of this chapter to emphasise the leadership of Māori women pre-colonial invasion (Pihama 2021). Pūrākau, both traditional and contemporary, are powerful narratives in the reclamation and transformation Māori women’s identities (Lee-Morgan 2009, Murphy 2019, Pihama 2015, Simmonds 2014).

Through the writing, speaking and listening to our grandmothers pūrākau, colonised landscapes are reclaimed through re-storying by and for participants. Participants reveal the ways in which some Ngāti Kuri women have experience colonisation and how they reclaim and reshape their identities through Maieke’s pūrākau. In this chapter I argue that Ngāti Kuri women’s identities are transformed when the story of Maieke is articulated in a number of diverse spaces (Campbell 2019, Pihama 2015, Seed-Pihama 2017, Smith 2013). Moreover, the research examines the mutual construction of women’s subjectivities and geographies. Questions of who, how and where Ngāti Kuri women’s identities are created, represented, maintained and positioned are examined. The research finds that while Ngāti Kuri women’s identities have been oppressed and marginalised through the intergenerational trauma that is colonisation exploration and articulation of pūrākau around our tūpuna wāhine has the power to rejuvenate and reinstate our roles as important and influential members of tribal life.

Chapter six ‘Moehau Tohunga Ahurewa: Representing Ngāti Kuri Women’ looks to the representation of Ngāti Kuri women in the creation of conservation knowledge. The chapter deliberates on the experiences of Ngāti Kuri women as they impart Ngāti Kuri tino rangatiratanga and knowledge alongside taonga species. The research critically examines the

representation and power at work in the creation of conservation knowledge to better understand the experiences of Ngāti Kuri women and the transformation that takes place through naming taonga species.

In this chapter the pūrākau of Moehau is brought to life to introduce a discussion on kaitiakitanga (inherited guardianship). Moehau's pūrākau tells of a Ngāti Kuri woman, tohunga ahurewa (expert, healer, advisor, chosen by atua and tribe because of early signs of natural aptitude in a particular field). A tohunga ahurewa is person that mediates between atua (deities, gods) and iwi receiving and passing environmental, social and spiritual advice on to the people. In telling Moehau's pūrākau I provide evidence that Ngāti Kuri women were responsible for governing many aspects of tribal life pre-colonisation. Moehau's name was gifted to a rare species of rātā known as Bartlett's rātā. This was a tree not discovered by the scientific community until 1975. Both the scientific and conservation community in Aotearoa are interested in promoting the rātā as worthy of protection. Media releases and articles are critiqued in this chapter to unravel the power to represent, restrict and resist Ngāti Kuri women's identities and relationships attached to the name Rātā Moehau. Through the work of Ngāti Kuri in naming taonga species I argue that Indigenous narratives, translation and interpretation of Indigenous naming are vital. Without Indigenous involvement the translation and interpretation are often meaningless and wrong.

The chapter goes on to showcase the effects and transformation that takes place when partnerships between Indigenous peoples and scientists are created through whakawhanaungatanga. The research provides examples of the mutual benefits of working together. The gains reach across both tribal and non-tribal institutions developing high trust relationships, co-authorship of new knowledges. Evaluating past and present relationships provides a model for co-authorship and building working partnerships. Ultimately, this

chapter explores not only resistance and allegiance but also the transformation of both Māori and non-Māori relationships.

‘The fire whispers to our blood and bones: Sensing home’ is the final empirical chapter of the thesis. The chapter focuses on participants’ experiences and understanding of the ways in which they sense place. The sensory geographies of participants are considered alongside participants’ experiences and feelings at home. Home is understood as a tribal landscape in which the whakapapa and turangawaewae of Ngāti Kuri is founded. The discussion in this chapter highlights the ways in which participants engage and embody homelands and te taiao through the senses and memory (Kearney 2009, Ormond and Ormond 2018).

Concentrating on the conceptualisation and articulation of homelands and turangawaewae in this chapter offers a view into the ways in which te taiao, an environmental family is understood and sensed. Participant kōrero, a ruri (lullaby) and poem provide evidence of the intimate relationships Ngāti Kuri women have and foster within te taiao. Unpacking these with care and respect reveals the complex ways in which the senses are felt and understood. The environment and taonga species are presented as active and intelligent agents (Sioui 2021) in the healing, transformation and re-centring of Ngāti Kuri women and their relationships in and with place. In this chapter findings reveal the intimate connections some Ngāti Kuri women have and maintain with te taiao and homelands while also highlighting the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women are striving to reconnect with and establish our turangawaewae.

The final chapter is a summary of the thesis and findings. Each chapter is condensed and revisited to outline the research questions and argument. An epilogue follows the conclusion. This is a creative piece of writing that links to the overall aim of the thesis. Writing the story helped me to work through the challenges of working across tribal and colonial institutions,

sometimes at the same time, and an ever-changing COVID-19 world where the future is uncertain.

Chapter two: Te Ao Ngāti Kuri: Context, events and Ngāti Kuri women

This chapter offers context pertaining to the histories and geographies of Ngāti Kuri women. I locate Ngāti Kuri's rohe and significant sites for Ngāti Kuri women. Ngāti Kuri have a rich history prior to European arrival. The chapter introduces the way in which the Ngāti Kuri tribe was established and some of the tumultuous experiences as the British Empire invaded Aotearoa New Zealand. Experiences of colonisation are intergenerational and ongoing. The chapter captures and untangles key events that not only marginalised Ngāti Kuri women but also highlight events of resistance and Ngāti Kuri women's tino rangatiratanga and resilience. Within this chapter I present evidence that helps to rationalise why this research is important.

First, I present Ngāti Kuri rohe in the section 'Locating the research'. This section connects the research questions and methods alongside the cultural, political, physical and metaphysical geographies of Ngāti Kuri. The research is mapped in Figure 2.1. locations presented in the map are some spaces and places that shape the identities, relationships, responses and resilience of Ngāti Kuri women.

The second section 'Maieke is the source of our mana whenua' focuses on Ngāti Kuri and significant people, places and events in the tribe's history. This section offers foundational context to understanding the identities and geographies of Ngāti Kuri women. While Ngāti Kuri men's stories have received some attention in the recording of Ngāti Kuri histories - women's stories have been marginalised. This section centralises Maieke as a significant ancestress of Ngāti Kuri while also honouring other tūpuna.

Following that, in the section 'Ngāti Kuri and the Crown' colonisation is unpacked to further investigate the geographies of Ngāti Kuri women. The research is interested in homelands as an active agent in the construction of identities and relationships to place. I offer historical

examples of the social and environmental injustice that occurs when a people are evicted from homelands or turangawaewae.

The final section ‘Ngāti Kuri women’s ihi: Responses, strengthen and resilience reviews the responses of previous generations of Ngāti Kuri women. Discussed in this section are the initiatives and identities of Ngāti Kuri grandmothers. This offers context into the contemporary identities, relationships and responses of Ngāti Kuri women as they fight against colonisation and the marginalisation of the tino rangatiratanga. In this section the Māori Women’s Welfare league, Waitangi Tribunal Claim 262¹ (Wai262) and the Ngāti Kuri Relationship Group are discussed. Ngāti Kuri women’s identities are brought to the centre of information presented to make known their responses to colonial interruption of Māori women’s access to autonomy, land and taonga species. This section introduces the work and efforts of the women who came before us, creating the platform for the work that continues by a new generation of Ngāti Kuri women.

Locating the research

Ngāti Kuri is Aotearoa’s most northern tribe, and our territory stretches across one million square kilometres of territory. We are coastal people and most of our territory is ocean with land mass estimated at about 33 000 hectares. Ngāti Kuri tribal territory contains a number of ecological hotspots that contain volcanic landscapes, white silica sand beaches of the Kokota Sand Spit to the extensive sand dunes and dune lakes, tiny micro forests, unique taonga species and pristine oceanscapes.

¹ Wai262 is a treaty claim submitted to the Waitangi Tribunal that attends to the New Zealand Government’s breaches of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi signed in 1840. The Wai262 claim focuses on the New Zealand Government’s policies and legislation that oppressed and therefore failed to protect, acknowledge and allow for Māori to have control over their intellectual property, flora and fauna, cultural and artistic expressions as promised in Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The following map (Figure 2.1) was created for this research to illustrate Ngāti Kuri women's geographies and the research locations. The map is designed to be easily read by an international audience (using standard 'western' cartographic representation) while also providing a counter-map that decolonising and displacing colonial access, naming and claiming (Louis et al 2012, Pearce and Hornsby 2020, Rose-Redwood et al 2020). In line with Pou Taiao, Ngāti Kuri's Environmental Management Plan:

locations should not be regarded as simply 'a place once or currently occupied'. Instead, the locations must be regarded as places where natural resources are present, such as kai, spiritual relevance or water etc., and are resources still utilised today, whether locations are occupied or not. They are important for the ongoing cultural, social, environmental and economic sustainability of Ngāti Kuri' (Sanson and Nathen-Clarke 2018 86).

The map offers an indigenised view of Ngāti Kuri tribal lands (Pearce and Hornsby 2020). To many the map may appear to be upside down. Representing Aotearoa this way is in line with Te Ao Māori – a Māori world view of Aotearoa as the land is approached from the north. Mapping Aotearoa was, traditionally, practiced through oral methods that represented the spatial realities of Māori (Rangiwai 2018). Places, landmarks and significant sites were recorded orally through pūrākau, mōteatea (lament, traditional chant), pepeha (tribal expression of ancestral relationships to people and place) and whakataukī (Māori proverbs and wisdoms). Māori navigated and explored the Pacific Ocean extensively and discovered Aotearoa to the south of their traditional homelands. Geographical knowledge was stored in oral traditions.

Representing Aotearoa in the map above articulates a Māori world view it is also an intentional act of decolonisation. This calls "attention to the power of decolonial movements to transform the map through direct action and the power of mapping to imagine decolonial worlds-in-the-making" (Rose-Redwood et al 2020 152). Missing from the map are roads,

colonial place names (see Appendix 1) and boundaries from the mainland of Aotearoa (Pearce and Hornsby 2020). There are, however, colonial place names included for the individual islands in Rangitāhua (Kermadec Islands) and Manawātahi (Three Kings Islands). The European names included in the map are in the process of being changed. The Ngāti Kuri Trust Board are in the process of researching and discussing Ngāti Kuri appropriate names for the individual islands through wānanga and will be working with Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) to make these changes in the future. What is represented within the map are sites of significance to Ngāti Kuri women, the places our ancestral women exist and research locations.

It is worth pausing on two names given in one area of the map – Kapowairua and Piwhane. The oral histories of Ngāti Kuri record the area now known as Kapowairua was first named Piwhane by Maieke and Pōhurihanga. Maieke was born in Aotearoa and Pōhurihanga was the captain of the Kurahaupō. The union of these two powerful leaders required a new Papakāinga (original home, home base, village, settlement). Maieke, Pōhurihanga and a small group of people from the tribes Te Kare and Ngāti Khauroa made the move. Naming the area was important to establish Whenua taunaha (claiming land through naming). Whane was and still is the name of the little island situated in the tidal stream. Here, iwi would tie their waka (canoe) before heading up Maungapiko, a sacred mountain and burial site, and Pi was the name of Pōhurihanga's companion upon the Kurahaupō. Piwhane was the name given to the new papakāinga of Maieke and Pōhurihanga, acknowledging an important landmark and the establishment of the new papakāinga for Maieke's people and the crew of the Kurahaupō.

Piwhane was given a new name when Tohe - a significant tupuna (ancestor with continuing influence) for Ngāti Kuri and the other Muriwhenua tribes - set off in search of his daughter Raninikura who moved further south in union with a rangatira (iwi, and hapū leaders, chief

male or female) from another iwi. He missed his daughter greatly and wanted to see her one last time. Tohe knew he may not return from this journey. He asked of the haukāinga (home people, people of marae, home) “Inā mate ahau kapohia wairua.” He was asking his people to reach up and catch his spirit if it passed through Piwhane should he die. Once the haukāinga heard of his death they renamed Piwhane calling it Kapowairua (Taonui 2005).

Figure 2.1: Mapping the research



Source: Max Oulton, 2022

The tribal territory of Ngāti Kuri extends from Houhora just south of Ngātaki, to Te Rerenga Wairua in north, includes east, west and northern coastlines and then extends out to the

offshore islands of Manawatāwhi 55 km to the north west and Rangitāhua approximately 900km in the north east.

The map locates only some of Ngāti Kuri's significant sites, such as: marae (the open area in front of the meeting house, a place where formal greetings and discussions take place); mountains; oceans; and taonga tuku iho (cultural and intellectual properties and heritage including lands, waters and resources). Locations presented here are discussed in the empirical chapters of this thesis and some locations were visited with participants during the gathering and sharing of information and pūrākau.

Maieke is the source of our mana whenua

Stories of creation highlight perspectives from which to understand the lives of men and women and offer insights into cultural understandings, value and expectations of genders (Brookes 2016). In some Māori creation stories, it was a woman, Hineahuone, who was the first human created by Tane. It is from these two, deity and human, that humanity evolved. Brookes 2016 10) states that "Māori women of different hapū contributed to the material well-being and social significance of their communities in which whakapapa (genealogy), rather than gender, determined influence". Te Reo Māori is permeated with examples that reveal the way in which gender is understood. Māori women are at the foundations of life. This is revealed in the following kupu: 'whenua' translated to both land and placenta, both sources of nourishment: 'whare tangata' the womb, uterus and the house of humanity: 'hapū' is to be pregnant and subtribe; 'whanau' meaning to give birth but also extended family. Connection to land and the grouping of people is held by women and the processes of childbirth. Māori women are fundamental to the social significance of their communities (Brookes 2016).

Ngāti Kuri is an ancient tribe, therefore, it is judicious to honour and remember those iwi that came before us. Much of what is recorded here is gathered from iwi archives and Ngāti Kuri Waitangi Tribunal Deed of Settlement of Historical Claims.² Before Ngāti Kuri was established, there were several notable iwi and hapū already living in Te Hiku o Te Ika. The iwi Te Ngake were direct descendants of Ngake (a tupuna) who travelled on the pahī moana (large ocean-going vessel) Tahirirangi when Māori first discovered Aotearoa (Waitangi Tribunal 1988). There are two versions as to the naming of Te Ngake, one is in relation to Ngake (Waitangi Tribunal 1988) and the other is the naming of the people with regard to the skill of tilling the soil. This was discussed by Sheridan Waitai (key information) when I returned my findings to participants during a wānanga, 2 July 2022. Much history is contained in the oral traditions of Māori and referencing these narratives is often difficult. There were thirteen hapū connected to Te Ngake.

During a Ngāti Kuri Wānanga, in 1996, it was discussed that Te Kari were also living in the area. Again, there are varying accounts of this ancient tribal grouping. At times, Te Kari is noted as an iwi in and of itself and at other times they are identified as a hapū of Te Ngake. Regardless, these tribes held mana motuhake (distinct power, sovereignty governance derived from the gods) over the most northern lands of Aotearoa. The tribe Ngāti Kuri are uri (descendants) of both tribes.

Twenty-six generations after Te Ngake landed on the shores of Aotearoa a chiefly woman called Maieke was born at Takapaukura. Some records report that Maieke was a tribal member of Te Ngake (Cloher 2013, Waitangi Tribunal 1988), however, there is evidence

² Waitangi tribunal deed of Settlement Claim documents a full and comprehensive record of the Aotearoa New Zealand Government's breaches of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The deed documents claimants' (iwi and/or hapu) historical grievances against the the New Zealand Government. The claim is negotiated, then acknowledged and documented in the Deed of Settlement. These documents hold iwi histories, experiences and relationships with the New Zealand Government since the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

within iwi archives that claim she was a tribal member of the tribe Te Kari (Ngāti Kuri wānanga 1996). Little is known about these two-ancient iwi, however, it is clear that Maieke held a chiefly role and responsibilities at the Tomokanga Pā (a pā is a fortified village) and surrounding area.

During her chieftainship other pahī moana were migrating to Aotearoa. The 14th century was a time when a planned migration of people from Polynesia occurred (Walter et al. 2017). Many pahī moana were navigating across the Pacific Ocean to Aotearoa and the research is interested in one in particular, the Kurahaupō. The Kurahaupō was originally captained by Moungaroa. The Kurahaupō was taking in water and needed repair, as they came across a group of volcanic islands, Maungaroa, the then captain of the Kurahaupō, named the islands Rangitāhua. Maungaroa continued the journey to Aotearoa on the pahī moana Takitimu leaving Pō to captain the Kurahaupō and to oversee the repairs. From this event came the tribe Ngāti Kaha (Waitangi Tribunal 2013).

Ngāti Kaha is an ancient name and relates to the name of a header rope on a seal net, Kaharua. Kaharua and seal skins were used to mend the weakened hull of the Kurahaupō. It was Kaharua, the header rope that ensured the journey was completed. This was of great significance and Pō and his crew named themselves Ngāti Kaha to commemorate Kaharua (Waitangi Tribunal 2013). The iwi name Ngāti Kaha continued to be used into the 1890s.

Once repaired the Kurahaupō, Pō and Ngāti Kaha continued the journey to Aotearoa. The Kurahaupō overshot Aotearoa and had to turn around not far off Murimotu. This incident resulted in a name change for Pō. From that event he became known as Pōhūhūhanga. To hūhūhanga is to turn around. The new name records the event and arrival of Pō. This name change is unique to Ngāti Kuri. Other iwi who have connections to him refer to him as Pō. The Kurahaupō landed at Takapuakura and were helped by Maieke and her people to bring

the pahī ashore. Through this meeting, a union between Maieke and Pōhurihanga was formed and the whakapapa layers of Te Ngake, Te Kari and Ngāti Kaha were brought together. Both Maieke and Pōhurihanga are the founding ariki (paramount chief, high chief) of Ngāti Kuri and the other four tribes of Muriwhenua. Te Rarawa, Ngai Takoto, Ngāti Kahu and Te Aupouri all share a whakapapa connection back to Maieke and Pōhurihanga.

Other notable rangatira of Ngāti Kuri are Tōhē, Toroa, Tiawhenua, Te Tahora, Niho, Mangakauiti, Ihutara, Taihaupapa, Mokohōrea, Te Raukarora, Murupaenga, Hongi Keepa, and Rewiri Hongi. The stories of men are often told and dominate the histories and identities of Ngāti Kuri. Less told are the stories of our ariki wahine. This is due to colonisation and the Christianisation of our world (Klink 2019). Maieke, her daughter Muriwhenua, Amongariki, Tihe, Kohine, Raninikura, Uru Te Kawa, Tangirere and Whakarua are among the many ariki wahine of Ngāti Kuri.

Colonisation unravelled

Colonisation has had – and continues to have - a devastating impact on Indigenous cultures around the globe (Radcliffe 2022). This section considers He Whakaputanga o Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī 1835 (The Declaration of Independence of United Tribes of New Zealand) and the impacts after the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Both documents are a formal declaration of mana (prestige, authority, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma) and rangatiratanga that articulates the sovereignty of iwi from the Far North of Aotearoa to the south of Waikato and across to the eastern coast (Anderson et al 2015, Mutu 2020).

He Whakaputanga o Rangatiratanga was a response to the demand for resources that intensified trading relationships between Māori and settlers in Aotearoa (Anderson et al 2015). At the time of signing of He Whakaputanga settlers conducted commercial activities

alongside Māori entrepreneurs under the protection of rangatira (Anderson et al 2015). Aotearoa became a place where two worlds intersected and as settler numbers increased so did incidents of dubious land deals and behaviour resulted in a rise in conflict (Mutu 2020). Lawless British subjects became a major concern for rangatira (Anderson et al 2015, Mutu 2020). The intent of He Whakaputanga was to declare mana motuhake and ensure that the power to define laws would remain solely in the hands of the Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī (United Tribes of New Zealand). He Whakaputanga was sent to and then acknowledged by the British Crown and continues to be regarded as the founding constitutional document of Aotearoa by many northern iwi.

Irrespective of the Crown's acknowledgement and empty promises to control their people settlers continued their debauchery across the country. Within five years of signing, He Whakaputanga o Rangatiratanga, corruption and disorder had reached an all-time high (Mutu 2020). A new document was drafted – Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This document confirmed He Whakaputanga o Rangatiratanga and the sovereignty of iwi and hapū while transferring governance of British immigrants and their land to the Queen of England (Mutu 2020). Te Tiriti o Waitangi was supposed to be a 'treaty of peace and friendship' yet the Crown never held up the agreement and failed to protect Māori, their rights and freedoms (Mutu 2020 274).

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a treaty signed on the 6 February 1840 by Māori rangatira who lead iwi and hapū and the British Crown. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a legal document binding the government of New Zealand to honour and participation of two sovereign states - tangata whenua (people of the land) of Aotearoa and the British Crown (Mutu 2018). Written in both Te Reo Māori (Māori language) and English there are inconsistencies and similarities in the two versions dependent on translation and interpretation (Jackson 1994). The similarities are

clear - that Māori would retain their autonomy to govern their own people, land and resources and that they would have the rights of any British subject - the inconsistencies are glaringly visible. The English version claims Māori cede sovereignty to the British Crown and the Te Reo Māori version confirms tangata whenua rights to retain rangatiratanga. The role as rangatira was something that could not be ceded. As Moana Jackson (1994 119) states: "That the idea mana or rangatiratanga could be ceded was impossible, illegal in fact, because it was culturally incomprehensible." Of the 540 rangatira, 13 of whom were women, only 39 signed the English version. Only the English version suggests sovereignty was ceded.

The thesis does not have the space to discuss Te Tiriti o Waitangi in any great depth, except to say that the New Zealand Government breached the agreement within five years of signing. Land wars and policy making forced by the Crown saw Māori land ownership and tenure systems suffer violent deconstruction and theft of lands (Ens et al 2021, Jackson 1994, Mutu 2020, Smith 2012). Consistent with Indigenous experiences across the globe, the colonisation of Aotearoa and Māori was driven by greed and notions of supremacy, consistent in method: war; legislation; theft of lands and resources; destruction and criminalisation of Māori social systems, culture, health and land management; detribalisation; marginalisation; diaspora; and, patriarchy (Ens et al 2021, Jackson 1994, Pihama 2015, Mutu 2018, Smith 2012). For reasons unknown, Ngāti Kuri did not sign Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Colonial tools of destruction: The Ngāti Kuri experience

In this section I bring to light the devastating impacts of colonial legislation had on Ngāti Kuri. I focus on the spatial removal of the iwi from traditional homelands. Information in this section is crucial in that this thesis is interested in the conceptualisation of turangawaewae and the ways in which conservation in Aotearoa has rendered Ngāti Kuri fenced out of traditional lands and mahinga kai (sites where resources are cultivated and collected, food

gathering sites). This section also discusses the movement of Ngāti Kuri people from the traditional papakāinga at Kapowairua to Te Hāpua.

Native schools and the move to Te Hāpua

Compulsory schooling was first introduced by the New Zealand Government through the Education Act 1877 (Calman 2012). As a response, Ngāti Kuri rangatira Hongi Keepa requested a school at Kapowairua in 1882 (Ngāti Kuri Deed of Settlement 2013). Kapowairua was a principal kāinga (home, village, settlement) of Ngāti Kuri. In 1882 there were forty school aged children living in the area. Takapoukura (Tom Bowline Bay) was also well populated with many school aged children who could travel to Kapowairua for schooling. The location offered food, freshwater and shelter for local children (Ngāti Kuri Deed of Settlement 2013).

The Crown denied the request reasoning that getting a teacher and supplies to the area was too difficult. Access to Kapowairua was difficult but not impossible. The hapū living there used the inlet off Kapowairua beach to launch and land small vessels that would transport produce to and from Kapowairua. Ngāti Kuri rangatira continued to petition the Crown's decision. Rangatira valued knowledge and felt a school in Kapowairua would provide an opportunity for the children to widen their learning across many knowledges, sciences and technologies.

The Crown continued to deny the request and established a school at Te Hāpua in 1896. Te Hāpua was the chosen location for the school because a small port could be constructed to accommodate larger vessels. The wetlands in the surrounding area was also an extensive gum digging field. The migration of Ngāti Kuri to Te Hāpua was driven by complex social and economic factors. While Ngāti Kuri had not signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi they were still

required to navigate the laws and policies of colonial government that had taken political power following 1840 (Stokes 1997).

Te Hāpua was once the location of Lake Ōpua an extensive tidal body of water and wetlands with no fresh water suitable for consumption. Eventually the lake was drained to establish an area large enough for Ngāti Kuri to build a new papakāinga and the first Native School was constructed. Many Ngāti Kuri moved to Te Hāpua while regularly travelling the arduous journey back to their kainga in Kapowairua to work in the gardens that provided both physical and economic sustenance for the people. Other families chose to stay at Kapowairua and Takapoukura, the children in those families would travel to Te Hāpua to attend school.

The Crown decision to establish the school at Te Hāpua has been noted as a disservice to Ngāti Kuri (Stokes 1997). While it was more convenient for the Crown to have the school at Te Hāpua it caused many health, social and economic issues for the Ngāti Kuri. Te Hāpua, before the draining of Lake Ōpua, contained large wetlands and was prone to flooding, meaning people were living in damp living conditions. Te Hāpua's soil quality was poor due to the area's proximity to Pārengarenga harbour. While Kapowairua had a freshwater spring Te Hāpua did not. Challenges with access to healthy food and clean water affected the health of the community. This had devastating impacts on the health and well-being of Ngāti Kuri.

This was noticed by the iwi and school teachers. The Crown was regularly informed of the ill-health of school children at Te Hāpua through teachers' letters and reports written to the Ministry of Education (Waitangi Tribunal 2014). In 1903 it was reported that children in the area suffered terribly from coughs, fevers and convulsions. By 1903, 100 children were unwell and 9 died in that year alone.

Crown purchasing of Ngāti Kuri lands

Ngāti Kuri had, for a number of years, appealed to the New Zealand Government for assistance in buying privately owned land at Kapowairua, Whangakea, Mokaikai, Te Paki and Murimotu. This was rejected and instead the government brought these lands between 1964 and 1984 and used the lands for farming, conservation and tourism (Waitangi Tribunal 2014). This further alienated Ngāti Kuri from more of their ancestral lands through the restriction of access to some of these areas. Private owners in the past had permitted iwi members to continue using the land for grazing stock and for the gathering of traditional foods, medicines and resources (Waitangi Tribunal 2014). These lands were important spiritually, culturally and physically. The New Zealand Government enforced reserve regulations and policed access through local rangers. Being cut off from these lands meant that Ngāti Kuri were also cut off from the resources that sustained healthy lives, language and culture (Waitangi Tribunal 2013).

Kapowairua continued to be an important papakāinga for Ngāti Kuri. Non-Māori landowners were well aware of the significance of the area for Ngāti Kuri and had ensured Ngāti Kuri had 'undisturbed possession' until the government purchased the land in the late 1960s (Waitangi Tribunal 2014 27). The New Zealand Government had the lands earmarked for a public camping ground for all New Zealand citizens (Ngāti Kuri Deed of Settlement 2013). Haukāinga were forced to leave their homes, fences were erected and locked by government employees, barricading Ngāti Kuri out of homelands, cultural and economic resources and denied access and the right to take spring water from the Waitanoni Spring (Waitangi Tribunal 2014). Waitanoni Spring is taonga tuku iho for Ngāti Kuri, a spring of spiritual well-being for Ngāti Kuri.

Ngāti Kuri continued to return to Kapowairua to live and visit the land of the ancestors and in 1974 Ngāti Kuri petitioned the government against the theft of Kapowairua. This was rejected and the land remained a public camping ground, however, since the signing of the Ngāti Kuri Deed of Settlement in 2014 governance of the land has been returned to the iwi and is co-managed alongside the Department of Conservation (DOC).

Ngāti Kuri did not sit quietly while the New Zealand Government attempted to sever them from their tribal lands. Ngāti Kuri petitioned and protested, they erected gates in the fences the government erected in the 1980s so they had access to Kapowairua. The gate was removed by government officials and thrown into a ditch. The iwi reinstalled the gate. The kuia (elder women) of Ngāti Kuri protested for access and set up a vigil to protect the gate. Many nannies sat at the gate for hours so their people had access to their kainga. Eventually the gate was destroyed by government officials again. In 1983 several iwi members cut holes in the government's fence, willing to go to prison to ensure future iwi access to Kapowairua. Ngāti Kuri women continued to make a stand on the inequalities forced by the colonial government.

Te Rōpū Wahine Māori Toko i te Ora

Te Rōpū Wahine Māori Toko i te Ora (Māori Women's Welfare League) was an initiative for Māori women to gather, discuss and strategise for better outcomes for Māori women.

Including a section about Te Rōpū Wahine Māori Toko I te Ora in this thesis highlights the political movements Ngāti Kuri women were involved with and leading. Te Rōpū Wahine Māori was first founded in 1950 and by 1951 there were 2,500 members. The first president, Dame Whina Cooper, was from the iwi Te Rarawa, one of the five tribes of Muriwhenua. Ngāti Kuri women recognised Te Rōpū Wahine Māori as a space where transformation could take place.

Dame Miraka Szászy was also an active member, holding presidency from 1973 – 1977. Dame Miraka Szászy’s contribution to improving Māori women’s lives rests on her contribution and leadership in rejuvenating Te Reo Māori and education, earning her an honorary doctorate in law From Victoria University. She sat on a number of advisory boards that ranged from broadcasting and radio, race relations, citizens’ rights, social welfare and Māori development. The establishment of The Mira Szászy Research Centre and a Māori Alumni Award at the University of Auckland recognises her achievements and contribution to Māori education and development (Williams 2018). Her contribution is a response to the injustices she witnessed. Other active members of Te Rōpū Wahine Māori were Tukiri Noho, Neta Wai Brown, and Nina Subritzky. From the inception of Te Rōpū Wahine Māori in the Far North, Ngāti Kuri women were involved in, and led: The Land March³ of 1975; Māori women’s rights movement; Māori education and research; Te Reo Māori movement; and environmental justice. In the following section the Waitangi tribunal claim 262 (Wai262) is discussed to underline the past work of Ngāti Kuri women and others in protecting flora and fauna and intellectual properties significant to Māori.

Wai262

Scientific data about Aotearoa’s environments, flora and fauna, minerals and resources has been collected since Captain Cook reached the islands in 1769. Through scientific data brought back from each voyage the British Empire was soon aware that Aotearoa was a land that held many resources. Up until 1840 when Te Tiriti o Waitangi was signed, access and appropriation of resources was successfully negotiated with Māori holding the power to

³ In 1975, Ngāti Kuri participated in the land march, which set off from Te Hāpua. The march was led by Dame Whina Cooper and those marching called for “not one more acre of Māori land” was to be taken. The land march was to present a petition to the New Zealand Government. Signatures were collected from both Māori and non-Māori as the protestors walked the length of the North Island of New Zealand. The march and petition was received in Wellington by the Hon. Matiu Rata (Ngāti Kuri) and resulted in the Waitangi Tribunal Act 1975.

control trade. Over time and through colonisation the management of resources were appropriated and became informed by science and driven by capitalism.

Saana Waitai-Murray of Ngāti Kuri was aware and concerned about the environmental degradation taking place in her tribal lands. She was also well aware and concerned about the increasing scientific research in search of knowledge and resources was occurring in Te Hiku o te Ika. Her response was to join with other tangata whenua from around Aotearoa and in response claimants lodged the Waitangi Tribunal claim (Wai262) in 1991 (Waitangi Tribunal 2011). The claim developed from Māori concerns regarding research, collection, use and commodification of flora and fauna, resources and knowledge (Waitangi Tribunal 2011). Claimants were concerned about the lack of Māori consent to research in their lands, their taonga (treasure, anything prized - applied to anything considered to be of value) and the exploitation of the mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledges and science) in the 1980s. Claimants felt that taonga species were declining and with that mātauranga Māori about those species would also disappear.

Mātauranga Māori has evolved from the knowledge Polynesian explorers brought to Aotearoa over 5000 years ago shaping the worldview and dynamic knowledge systems of Māori (Ens et al 2021). Traditional mātauranga Māori has been maintained and continues to be the foundations for contemporary Māori ways of knowing and being (Smith 2020, Ens et al 2021). Mātauranga Māori is a holistic knowledge system that seeks to clarify the physical, metaphysical, social, political and economic domains of Māori (Ens et al 2021). The work of the Wai262 claimants have contributed to retaining mātauranga Māori and relationships with taonga. In Aotearoa mātauranga Māori is increasing applied to scientific research to develop new models for sustainable resource management and environmental well-being (Ens et al 2020, Wehi et al 2019).

The Wai262 claim is New Zealand's first whole of government claim and the first to move beyond historical treaty breaches (Waitangi Tribunal 2011). The Wai262 claim investigates treaty breaches that denied Indigenous ownership and control over: intellectual property and artist works; denied access and protection of flora, fauna and ecosystems (Waitangi Tribunal 2011). The Waitangi Tribunal investigated the claim for twenty years and their recommendations were published in 2011. The claim remains unsettled. Negotiations are continuing but are often compounded by changing governments and an unwillingness to relinquish power.

The Wai262 claim was a response to treaty breaches, and claimants identified that the central focus of the claim was:

The customary tikanga (customary systems, protocols, Māori law and lore) rights inherent in and associated with the natural resources of indigenous flora and fauna me o ratou taonga katoa. Rights which the claimants say were guaranteed to them by Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Waitangi Tribunal 2011 2).

Within the claim was the right to exercise tino rangatiratanga and participation in decision-making in regard to conservation, use, development and any benefits relating to indigenous flora and fauna. It was a request for environmental well-being, respect for and acknowledgement of the value in mātauranga and a recognition of iwi interests and connection to taonga tuku iho.

Wai262 is a large and complex claim where claimants from different tribes across Aotearoa came together to submit a claim against the Crown for breaching its Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligation to ensure Māori retained undisturbed possession and full authority of their taonga. There were six original claimants: Saana Waitai-Murray (Ngāti Kuri); Hema Nui A Tawhaki Witana (Te Rarawa, also known as Del Wihongi); Te Witi McMath (Ngāti Wai); Tama Poata (Ngāti Porou); Kataraina Rimene (Ngāti Kahungunu) and, John Hippolite (Ngāti Koata). The

claim refers to Indigenous flora and fauna as well as cultural and intellectual property rights. It is a claim about mātauranga Māori and is crucial to the ‘survival of Māori culture and its ongoing place’ in Aotearoa (Waitangi Tribunal 2011 1).

Saana Waitai-Murray of Ngāti Kuri was concerned about the encroachment of science and scientists visiting the lands and waters of Ngāti Kuri. She built relationships with scientists working in the government agency Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) who supported the WAI262 claim and began the process of sharing the Māori names and knowledges on Indigenous and endemic flora and fauna. Her response to environmental degradation and the excavation of knowledge and resources was to build relationships within the science community. Saana Waitai-Murray formed allegiances that are continued in the work of the NKRWG to build a working treaty partnership with the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

Ngāti Kuri Relationship Working Group

Since the ratification of the Ngāti Kuri Deed of Settlement (Wai747) in 2014 the [Ngāti Kuri Trust Board](#)⁴ has been working to develop treaty partnerships with research institutions such as Tāmaki Paenga Hira, Auckland War Memorial Museum, NIWA, Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research, Auckland University and several other research institutions. With the signing of Wai747, research institutes were required to gain permission to conduct research within the tribal lands of Ngāti Kuri. To make the transition the Ngāti Kuri Trust Board

⁴ The Ngāti Kuri Trust Board (NKTB) strives to move beyond a state of grievance due to breaches of Tiriti o Waitangi. Post-settlement, they aim to mobilise iwi into a mind-set of development, success and governance, and in doing so they are met with many challenges and opportunities. The way a Ngāti Kuri identity, within the NKTB, is conceptualised places value and power within these many political and environment spaces and plays an integral role in the unfolding of future collaborations and governance. The NKTB intends to build Te Tiriti based partnerships across a number of sectors. Taiao, environments and ecosystems are a key area of NKTB focus. NKTB recognises that research and physical science offers new knowledge. They also recognise that cloaking research and science in Te Ao Ngāti Kuri reinstates mana and autonomy, it is a step towards mana motuhake (distinct power and sovereignty derived from the gods and goddesses).

strategised for treaty partnerships not only in research, but also for Ngāti Kuri to lead research. The NKRWG was founded in 2015 to begin the process of whakawhanaungatanga, to build on working relationships, with research partners. The purpose of NKWRG was to draw from mātauranga o Ngāti Kuri (Ngāti Kuri knowledges) and then to identify and fill knowledge gaps pertaining to our histories, landscapes and taonga species. The repatriation of knowledge is key to returning and evolving our collective and cultural knowledge for our people and, in particular, our tamariki (children). The NKRWG task was to work towards building relationships that increases Ngāti Kuri knowledge but also to ensure we construct, reclaim and repatriate our own historical and contemporary knowledges.

The focus and intention was to embed Māori values and principles across all treaty partnerships and collaboration with our research partners. At its inception the NKRWG was led by Sheridan Waitai, Huia Murupaenga, Wayne Petera and myself. The group grew and Jerry Norman, Bruce Ngauma, Vonni Petera and other Ngāti Kuri kaumātua kaunihera (elder council) supported and contributed to what was to become a successful and active working group. Below is a list of initiatives led by NKRWG:

- Three wānanga held on bringing science partners and iwi members together to share knowledge and whakawhanaungatanga – Wānanga on Wheels 2016 and Ngāti Kuri Wānanga 2017 in Ngātaki and Pārengarenga Kete Rau Wānanga, 2018, Te Hāpua.
- Connecting the museum and scientists with tamariki of Ngātaki School. This involved fortnightly meetings using Skype. The relationships between our tamariki and scientists was re-enforced through school visits to the museum and site visits with scientists.

- Two Bioblitz at Kapowairua in 2018 and Te Paki in 2020. These events brought our science partners together with our tamariki during scientific field trips. Both Bioblitz ran over a three-day period.
- Official scientific naming of taonga species. This initiative is continuing and involves co-authorship of taxon and academic articles (see D'Archino et al. 2020, Heesch et al. 2021, Kessek et al. 2022, Nelson et al. 2019, Nelson et al. 2022). Ngāti Kuri were the first tribe in the world to embed a tribal name into a taxon. Ngāti Kuri have co-authored four taxa to date with several more as work in progress. This work is now handled by the Ngāti Kuri group 'Tira ma te Wa'. I continue to work within this group.
- Production of three wānanga and two Bioblitz booklets recording Ngāti Kuri histories, pūrākau and information on taonga species.
- Repatriation of kōiwi (ancestor remains) taken in the past for scientific research, February and March 2018.
- Taiatea Gathering of Oceans 2019. This was a two-week conference with environmental protectors from around the Pacific Ocean and was produced in partnership with the Worldwide Wildlife Fund. The conference started in Te Hiku o te Ika and finished in Auckland.
- Coordination and application for funding. This applies to multiple research projects and Ngāti Kuri initiatives and led to a large joint research initiative led by Ngāti Kuri in 2020 called Te mana o Rangitāhua: A holistic approach to transform ecosystem wellbeing. This is a five-year research programme funded by Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment's (MBIE) Endeavour Fund (MBIE 2020).

NKRWG recognises and respects the diverse and vast knowledges of Ngāti Kuri and the pūrākau information and work they have done is merely a drop in the ocean that is

mātauranga o te Ngāti Kuri (NKRWG 2017). Original members of the team continue to work and lead in a number of diverse initiatives and many skilled and knowledgeable Ngāti Kuri people have been brought into work within research and conservation spaces because of the relationship and partnerships fostered by NKRWG.

Conclusion

This chapter offers geographical, social, cultural and political context in order to better understand the identities, relationships and geographies of the research site and participants. Background information on locations significant to the research and participants and the foundation of the tribe that is Ngāti Kuri, examples of colonisation and Ngāti Kuri women's responses are discussed. These examples not only reveal historical and contemporary leadership but also a gap in knowledge that tells us about Māori women's challenges, successes and access to lead in Aotearoa's te taiao. This chapter addresses those knowledge gaps and records important events and women to begin re-storying the geographies of Ngāti Kuri women.

Chapter three: He tohu o Ngāti Kuri: Guiding the Research

At the dawn of the twenty-first century the recovery of Indigenous knowledge is a conscious and systematic effort to revalue that which has been denigrated and revive that which has been destroyed. It is about regaining the ways of being that allowed our peoples to live a spiritually balanced, sustainable existence within our ancient homelands for thousands of years (Wilson 2004 359).

Indigenous commitment to home, whenua, whanaunga (relatives, family members) and tūpuna, particularly tūpuna wāhine, has the power to ‘rupture colonial narratives and mindsets’ (Hickey 2019 164). Building on and extending existing theoretical literature provides a conceptual pathway to negotiate the complexities and challenges of Indigenous research (Murphy 2014). In this chapter I review Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine knowledges alongside Indigenous relational geographies in order construct a theoretical framework around Ngāti Kuri women’s experiences and relationships with taiao. Kaupapa Māori prepares the foundations for Mana Wahine knowledge. This combination – Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine - provides a robust and solid grounding to engage with Ngāti Kuri women’s experiences and relationships within te taiao. Research from within geography about multiple ontologies, place-based and lived practices of Indigenous autonomy reconfigures and indigenises Western ways of thinking about human responsibilities to place, land, people and waters (Daigle 2016). This chapter, therefore, also contributes to geography through reviewing literature and theories concerning Indigenous identities, landscapes and place-based relationships.

Like many academic disciplines, geography requires decolonisation to understand the ways in which Indigenous self-determination is either practiced or marginalised within institutions (Daigle 2016). This chapter presents literature about geographical understandings of land-based knowledges and relationships through Indigenous concepts of place and land (Sioui 2021).

In the first section I consider Western conservation and science as it relates to Aotearoa and impacts Māori, particularly Māori women. The patriarchal perspectives of Western science and conservation has silenced Indigenous women, yet pre-colonialisation women's knowledge and roles contributed to environmental management and decision-making.

Second, I centre Kaupapa Māori knowledges to ensure the research is grounded in Te Ao Māori. Te Ao Māori is ever evolving and progressing as contemporary Māori move into the future (Harmsworth 2020). This is followed by a discussion of mana wahine as one articulation of Kaupapa Māori. These theories provide me with a voice and a platform to negotiate the complexities and rich data that unfolds when working from within the geographies of Ngāti Kuri women. The research also acknowledges that the 'nature of knowledge' (Murphy 2014 19) is interconnected with all parts of our being: our bodies; our minds; our spirit and indeed, our research.

In the third section, Mana Wahine o Maieke, a Mana Wahine theoretical framework is discussed as for a way to prioritise Māori women's voices and autonomy within research contexts. The research is interested in the stories of tūpuna wahine that inform Māori women's identities and relationships. Mana Wahine works together with Kaupapa Māori to cloak Maieke, Ngāti Kuri's founding ancestor, and Moehau, kaitiaki (trustee, minder, guard, custodian, guardian, caregiver, keeper, steward) and tohunga ahurewa in a framework designed specifically for Ngāti Kuri women. Telling, listening to and writing Maieke's and Moehau's stories disrupts colonial and patriarchal notions and systems that marginalise Māori women (Johnston and Pihama 1995, Murphy 2019, Pihama 2001, Simmonds 2014). Woven throughout this Mana Wahine section is a review of feminist geographers' work and their contribution to understanding gendered relationships and attachment to place. Feminist geographers have been dismantling archaic patriarchal systems for generations. They offer

another theoretical thread from which to support and build on Mana Wahine ways of being, thinking and doing.

Following that, pūrākau is then considered. Throughout this thesis my own personal stories and the shared stories of participants are woven together. The storywork of Indigenous women help develop a deep understanding of women's worlds, challenges and successes. Pūrākau can be both shared historical stories offering insights into the past as well as contemporary stories that are making history. Storywork, historical and / or contemporary, informs and shapes future generations' understanding of their ancestors, identity and relationship to place.

The final section explores relational geographies through an Indigenous women's lens. There are three parts to this section that drills down into literature that reflects on relationships of responsibility, homelands and Indigenous sensing of place. This section weaves together human and more-than-human beings as an environmental family who work together to create meaningful relationships.

Conservation, science and Te Tiriti o Waitangi

In this section I critically review literature about colonial and patriarchal systems of science and conservation from an Indigenous perspective. As a result of colonisation, the exploitation and appropriation of land and resources and the marginalisation of Indigenous peoples, the health of Indigenous peoples and their ecosystems have suffered and continue to deteriorate (Wilson 2004). Indigenous geography is a growing discipline that critiques spatial constructs, landscapes, boundaries and borders while providing alternative ways in which to understand and restructure Indigenous relationships to and with people and place (Coombes et al. 2012,

2013, 2014, Daigle 2016, Radcliff 2017, 2018, 2020). Indigenous geography grounded in Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine enhances decolonisation from within the academy.

In 2004 Jacinta Ruru critically examined how the Department of Conservation (DOC) interpreted and applied the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi to the 1987 Conservation Act. Environmental protection is assembled and governed through the New Zealand Conservation Authority, Minister of Conservation and independent statutory bodies. The power of the Conservation Authority is ‘intricately involved’ in informing conservation planning, policy making and management (Ruru 2004 247). DOC has a singular mandate: ‘conservation through the practice of preservation and protection’ (Ruru 2004 247).

The Department of Lands and Surveys governed conservation lands in Aotearoa until 1987 and was also responsible for purchasing private lands, developing and surveying state lands. DOC was then commissioned to take over the governance, protection and conservation of historic and natural resources, educate and promote environmental conservation and advance conservation sites for recreation and tourism. What is considered to be valuable histories, environments and the ways in which protection and conservation is applied is contingent on the power and cultural values of the government. This has directly impacted on the way Māori access and relate to the lands, their capacity to apply rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga (Wehi et al 2019, Ruru 2004).

Under the ruse of environmental protection, the application and enforcement of conservation legislation has been, and continues to be, a colonial instrument that excludes Indigenous peoples from highly valued ancestral, spiritual and traditional sites of significance (Ens et al 2021, Greensill 2005, Whyte 2020). In the first 15 years of DOC’s management of Aotearoa te taiao the conservation estate increased to compartmentalise approximately 30% of the country’s land mass (Ruru 2004).

Much of the conservation estate is covered in native and endemic flora and fauna, pristine waterways and mostly free of human interference. Through legislation and media reports Māori were criticised for leaving land untouched, while introduced gorse and thistle, and many intrusive flora and fauna, grew rampant on a land stripped of its great forests (Greensill 2005). The colonial representation of Māori as ‘lazy’ land-owners incapable of successfully managing the environment was planted in the minds of the general public and on a national and political platform. Thus, stripping Māori of their political autonomy and economic base on a landscape that is an ancestress, a creator of life (Bargh 2012, Ka’ai 2004, Roberts, Norman, Minhinnick, Wihongi and Kirkwood 1995, Murphy 2019, Mutu 2013). The power to maintain te taiao relationships, positioning and roles becomes increasingly difficult. Uneven partnerships are measured by shares, interests and social capital in Western conservation systems with the majority of the power sitting in the dominant culture (Coombs and Hill 2005, Mutu 2013). The power to represent has been temporarily appropriated through colonisation and ancestral connections are, at times, severed and/or given little more than lip service in Western spaces of conservation and science (Sious 2021).

Pre-colonisation access to wāhi tapu (sacred place, sacred site), mahinga kai and taonga species were regulated and restricted by kaitiaki and tohunga ahurewa (Ka’ai 2004, Roberts et al. 1995). In contrast, colonial empires regarded and continue to regard, the environment as a resource for exploitation and conservation sites are not excluded from exploitation investigation (Ruru 2004). Colonial and Western conservation models have had a direct impact on the lives and relationships of Ngāti Kuri. The silencing of Māori environmental science and praxis has been ongoing through the governance and conservation of te taiao (Greensill 2005).

Claiming natural heritage was yet another state mechanism for legalising land confiscations, however, with the arrival of the Conservation Act in 1987, policies were required to regard Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Ruru 2004). The state was under pressure to honour treaty partnerships. Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the The Treaty o Waitangi included provisions that meant that Māori retained rights over their lands, resources and taonga tuku iho. While legislation requires that Te Tiriti o Waitangi is honoured, DOC has been slow to share its power to govern the conservation estate (Ens et al 2021).

The environment is of great value to Māori. Environmental access, value and management extends far beyond capital gain, conceptualising the environment and all that it holds is connected as spiritual, ancestral and physical taonga (Ka'ai 2004, Roberts et al. 1995, Ruru 2004). Mountains, forests and waterways have always been considered whanau (family, extended family), therefore taonga, by Māori. Environmental relationships are treated with a holistic approach where whakapapa, whakawhanaungatanga and kaitiakitanga are balanced with many values and principles that embedded Māori women's identity, roles and responsibilities at the fore Roberts et al. 1995). Values and principles that were in place before European arrival have prevailed throughout the following colonial invasion (Waitangi Tribunal 1997). The government has, over time, violently assumed and enforced their authority and power not only ignoring Māori conservation ethics and praxis but also seizing, restricting and deconstructing the Māori economy (Bargh 2012, Goodall 2005, Ka'ai 2004, Roberts et al. 1995, Mutu 2013, Ruru 2004).

This colonisation has not been accepted by Ngāti Kuri women. One such Ngati Kuri women to contest this colonisation was Waerete Norman (1942-1999). Waerete Norman authored and co-authored numerous articles and contributed to the definition of kaitiakitanga within academic spaces. The article *Kaitiakitanga: Māori perspectives on conservation* (Roberts et

al. 1995) is a critical reference regarding kaitiakitanga. With this in mind, I centralise this definition of kaitiakitanga within the thesis to bring the work of our tupuna wahine to the forefront. In doing so, kaitiakitanga from a Ngāti Kuri women's perspective is recorded and honoured. Centralising the academic work of tupuna wahine also works to decolonise what is considered as robust literature by moving away from a somewhat homogenised definition of kaitiakitanga towards a deeper and more meaningful geographic understanding of the term in line with participants' conceptualisation.

Waerete Norman graduated and lectured at the University of Auckland and stepped up to become the national secretary of the Māori University's Teachers Association. She was also the chairperson of Te Puna Manawa Korero, the Māori advisory board for the Auckland Regional Council and on the Auckland Regional Council Park and Wilderness Trust, 1991 and she served as a District Māori Council delegate.

Waerete Norman also served on an executive council for Te Runanga of Muriwhenua contributing to the ground-breaking Muriwhenua Claim for 18 years. Her extensive research contributed to Muriwhenua claims before they were submitted to the Waitangi Tribunal. Fluent in Te Reo Māori she was also an interpreter for the Waitangi Tribunal. She described her expertise as an 'education given by the iwi and hardened by academia' (Ihimaera 1993 173). Waerete Norman infiltrated colonial political institutions of conservation and land management through sitting on boards and councils.

Through her work with conservation and environment polices Waerete Norman went on to inform the ways in which kaitiakitanga is conceptualised in academic spaces. She contributed an alternative to Western science and conservation. Her efforts, identity and mātauranga Māori shaping, transforming and indigenising environmental management in Aotearoa and across the globe for Indigenous women (see Whitt et al. 2001).

An advocate for Indigenous women's rights, she attended the first International Indigenous Women's Conference in Australia in 1988. Sadly, Waerete Norman was near finishing her Doctor of Philosophy when she passed away in 1999. Her thesis examined traditional and contemporary issues relevant to Māori women. Her academic career informs kaitiakitanga having contributed to a number of written works. In the article *Kaitiakitanga: Maori perspectives on conservation*, Roberts, Norman, Minhinnick, Wihongi and Kirkwood, critique the ways in which Indigenous concepts are juxtaposed into a colonial and foreign perspective of conservation often 'debased and divorced from its traditional cultural setting' (Roberts et al. 1995). The article addresses the concept of kaitiakitanga and the increasing importance in environmental management in Aotearoa. Infiltrating and reconfiguring environmental management and conservation institutions Waerete Norman cleared the pathway to Māori women's autonomy from inside institutionalised colonisation. My thesis is only possible due to her early work and substantial influence.

In Parson et al. (2017) article *Alternative perspectives on sustainability: Indigenous knowledge and methodologies*, the authors argue that while 'bottom-up place-based knowledge 'integrated' with sustainability science is a positive move towards responding to climate change, it remains with its challenges' (p 7). While the transdisciplinary nature of sustainability science has the potential to scrutinise the world through a holistic approach to community resilience, response and adaption to extreme environmental events it often fails to fully acknowledge community members as 'experts' and remains focused on resource use rather than environmental relationships of responsibility (Rarai et al 2022).

Morton-Robinson (2013 332) states:

We (Indigenous) are involved in a constant battle to authorise Indigenous knowledges and methodologies as legitimate and valued components of research. Yet, Indigenous peoples have been practicing sustainability science for eons. This knowledge is at risk of being extracted, exploited

and diluted through Western science while rendering and representing Indigenous, the knowledge holders, as vulnerable, at risk and powerless.

The ontologies and epistemologies of European/Western/colonial institutions, paradigms and praxis are “highly resistant to alternative ways of being, relating and knowing nature and place” (Johnson 2012 830). Western ways of knowing and doing, push dualistic and reductionist structures into Indigenous worlds dividing and separating culture, civilisation and people from nature and dividing the world into distinguishable slices of the colonial pie. Wilson (2004 360) reminds us that “Indigenous traditions are of little value in a world based on the oppression of whole nations of people and the destructive exploitation of natural resources”.

Scientific knowledge has been positioned as universal, objective and rational while Indigenous knowledges are labelled as highly localised, specialised, fixed and subjective based in the mythical (Parson et al. 2017). Indigenous knowledge is stamped as knowledge that is conceived through myth and legend resulting in inaccurate and delusionary understandings of ecosystems and environmental changes (Johnson 2012, Parsons et al. 2017).

Parsons et al. (2017) acknowledge that sustainability science has been scrutinised for undervaluing Indigenous knowledges, issues and contributions. The discipline focuses on a form of science that claims ‘objectivity’ and ‘truth’ about our world. Another critique is that it continues the colonising practise of taking knowledge, and only the parts that ‘sustains’ the scientific, cultural and political intentions of the dominate culture. The result of Western scientists visiting Te Hiku o te Ika was the denied access to traditional and contemporary resources for Ngāti Kuri. Many scientists did not see Ngāti Kuri as part of the ecosystem, nor as mana whenua (territorial rights, power from the land, authority of land or territory). Large areas were fenced off in the name of conservation. Ngāti Kuri were pushed out of

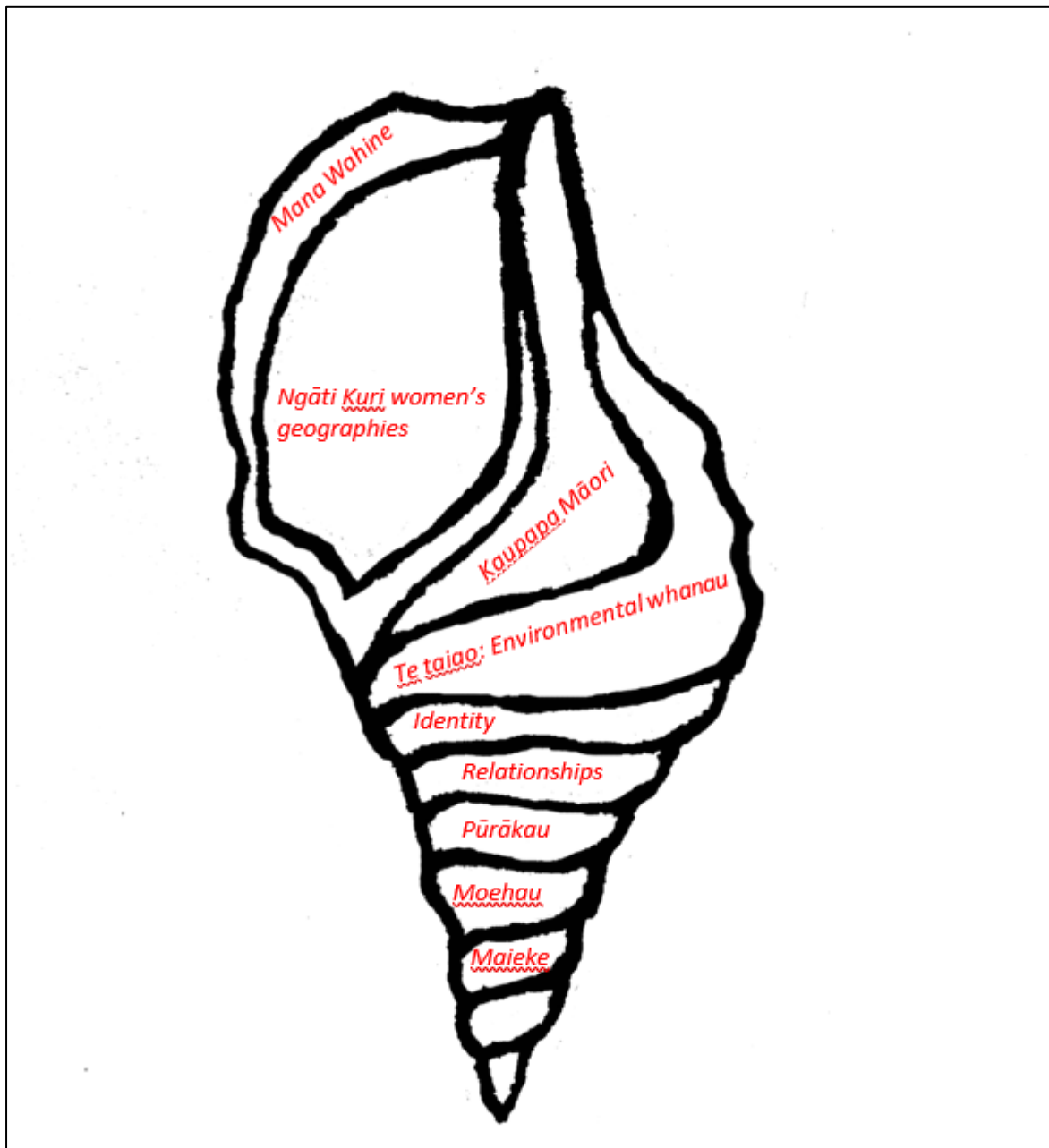
turangawaewae, exotic forests and grasses were planted, dairy and dry stock farms were introduced, all of which modified and put at risk the rare ecosystems of the Far North.

Science can be a dangerous weapon in the hands of a colonising Empire. It is used to categorise people and places through a Eurocentric gaze that is founded on racism and white supremacy. Indigenous peoples, their knowledges, science and environmental practices across the world have been devalued, decentralised and, at times, criminalised through the discourse of science. This has not gone unnoticed by Māori or Indigenous people across the globe. Māori have responded strategically through the Wai262 treaty claim holding the New Zealand government accountable and responsible for the protection of environments, resources and intellectual properties of Māori. The Wai262 is a crucial claim for all New Zealanders. It has a wide reach that protects Māori cultural and environmental assets from being extracted and commercialised by non-Māori. The claim protects what makes Aotearoa unique. It protects Māori culture and environmental relationships. It protects what makes us, as a nation, wealthy and healthy. It is vital that scientists: value Indigenous knowledges; value Indigenous practice and protocols; promote partnerships that have balanced powers; and respect the environment as family.

Figure 3.1 is a diagram that represents the relationships between the concepts and theories that frame this research. I have used the shape of a pūteretere shell (Triton trumpet, *Charonia Lampas*) to represent the research. Pūteretere are found on the shores of the Ngāti Kuri's coast lines. There is a proverb that Ngāti Kuri have in regard to the pūteretere, when the shellfish are found in abundance, we can be assured that our ancestors are with us. While the taonga species is not endangered it is thought of as a tohu that "symbolises the life and breathe of our kaupapa (topic, initiatives, agenda)" (Waitai et al. 2018). The pūteretere represents the relationship between te taiao, ancestors and Ngāti Kuri in that the empty shell

contains layers of chambers which are capable of producing acoustic messages (in the form of sounds from the shell) of knowledge and skill across landscapes. In this chapter I frame the theoretical concepts in the shape of a pūteretere shell.

Figure 3.1: Framing the research



Source: Sandi Ringham

At the very tip of the shell sits Maieke and Moehau to represent the idea that Indigenous ancestors continue to influence the ways in which identities and relationships are shaped and informed. The wider edge where the living snail once protruded and where one would blow to produce sound, is where I have contained Ngāti Kuri women's geographies. Sitting in the chambers in between the two are the theories that the research employs to frame data analysis and the dissemination of findings. The size of the chamber in which each theory is contained is of no relevance rather the chambers where Maieke and Moehau are present represent the very beginnings of Ngāti Kuri women as valuable leaders holding roles, responsibilities and autonomy. From these beginnings, pūrākau o Ngāti Kuri travel through time sending tohu, signals, messages to generations of Ngāti Kuri women. The sound of their voices echo through every theory applied to this research.

Kaupapa Māori

Research grounded in Kaupapa Māori provides a 'rich and fertile soil' on which to build a political platform (Seed-Pihama 2017 51). It allows for diverse understandings of Māori experiences, concepts and values to be voiced and validated by and for Māori (Bishop 1999, Pihama 2001, Smith 2012; Smith G. 1997). Seed-Pihama (2017 51) eloquently describes the seed of Kaupapa Māori as:

The philosophies and frameworks of which have been sown and continue to grow upon our whenua and are nourished by our reo, tikanga and whakapapa. It is a theory that celebrates our culture, our ancestors, our knowledge, and furthermore, for those very reasons, it is a theory that is flourishing here in Aotearoa amongst Māori researchers.

Research grounded upon Kaupapa Māori allows for the diverse values, practices and perspective of each iwi visited, to be woven into the conceptual framework as defined by them (Cram 2001, Simmonds 2009, Smith 2012). By embracing the social, environmental, political, spiritual values and practices of Māori, Kaupapa Māori geographical research

provides a lens in which to examine multiple realities and spatial complexities of power relationships (August 2005, Brown 2008, Simmonds 2009, Stokes 1987).

A Kaupapa Māori framework is inter-connected to a number of theoretical concepts that holds steadfast to Papatūānuku (earth mother), whakapapa, Te Reo Maori, tikanga and tino rangatiratanga (Pihama 2015, Smith 2015). Indigenous academics from across a range of disciplines have created a plethora of work that continues to critique and dismantle the impacts, structures and systems of colonisation (Pihama 2015, Seed-Pihama 2017, Simmonds 2014, Smith 2015). In Aotearoa, this is applied to the Crown's ongoing efforts to confiscate and appropriate Māori lands and resources, assimilate and oppress Māori peoples, culture, values, and mātauranga (Ens et al 2022, Murphy 2019).

Kaupapa Māori theory is diverse and ever evolving (Smith 2012). There is no singular 'Māori' perspective (Parsons et al. 2017) therefore Kaupapa Māori is open to diversity and growth (Seed-Pihama 2017). Kaupapa Māori is the theoretical grounding I used to develop a Ngāti Kuri women's framework that supports the research across te taiao, institutions and Māori women's geographies. Indigenous researchers navigate the confinements of Western, scientific and colonial disciplines that have constructed, allegedly as 'objective' theories to examine Indigenous ways of being (Coombes et al. 2014, Parsons et al. 2017, Seed-Pihama 2017, Sioui 2021, Smith G 1997, Smith 2012, Wilson 2004). Kaupapa Māori acknowledges that research and researchers do not strive to be 'objective' and are attuned to perspectives, experiences, training and political agendas.

Kaupapa Māori theory strives to shift the power from the oppressor to the oppressed (Smith 2012). Seed-Pihama (2017 56) maintains:

Any research conducted should assert and honour our tūpuna, our tikanga, our reo. I take it one-step further. I argue that Kaupapa Māori research should actively (re)assert the teachings of our ancestors, recognising the immense mātauranga they had and, therefore, that we as a people have. This same mātauranga has much to contribute toward interventions that work to solve our current issues and many of the wider societal issues. We too, like many nations and cultures around the world, come from a long line of theologians, philosophers, theorists, and scientists.

Through asserting the teachings of our ancestors, we return to our purpose and our power.

There is power in the knowledge that whakapapa, mātauranga (knowledges) and tikanga provides a holistic, resilient and compelling pathway to decolonisation of our worlds and ourselves (Smith 2020). This has been particularly true for me. Grounding, not only the research but also bringing me, my identity and spirit, back to the theories, values and principles of my ancestors. I am able to break through, and break down, oppressive structures and discourses that attempted to keep me, my participants, my iwi, hapū, whānau and knowledges in and out of place.

Kaupapa Māori ensures the research methods and analysis in this thesis are carefully woven together and are grounded in Te Ao Māori, the tikanga and the experiences of the participants (Simmonds 2014, Smith 2012). The intention of this research is to bring Ngāti Kuri women's voices and experiences to the fore. As Murphy notes (2019 24): 'Kaupapa Māori theories have the potential to create transformation through research and the production of knowledge.' Transformation of Indigenous people, spaces and theory takes place when a unique framework is developed and woven together with the principles, design, strategies and philosophy of the research community (Hutchings 2005, Murphy 2019, Pihama 2015, Simmonds 2014, Smith 2015, Smith 2020). When analysing the experiences and relationships of Ngāti Kuri women in and with the taiao, it is important to expand on Kaupapa Māori to ensure the theoretical framework provides a critical lens that explores and exposes the past and current structures of

power, gender, places and spaces that shape and inform the te taiao of Ngāti Kuri women.

Research grounded in Kaupapa Māori is committed to Māori autonomy and transformative research (Smith 2020). It is constructed and informed by Māori perspectives and values (Murphy 2019, Smith G. 1997, Smith 2012). Through this research the perspectives and practises of the Ngāti Kuri women involved are deeply embedded in the way information is gathered, analysed and produced, rather than through the methodologies of a theory developed in a foreign land by a privileged and often white male academic (Bishop 1999). This component of Kaupapa Māori ensures research goes beyond hegemonic approaches and, when applied to a critical analysis of Aotearoa's environment and knowledge making. Kaupapa Māori also provides a framework that allows for the social diversity of Ngāti Kuri women in space and place to be recognised and valued.

Research by and for Māori has the capacity to become a site of propagation and growth for Indigenous communities to develop their own set of research principles, practices and methodologies (Smith 2012). Systems, structures and discourses that choke and strangle the social, political and economic growth of Ngāti Kuri have been weeded out, exposed and critiqued through engaging participants in both analysis and development of place-based theoretical frameworks. Smith (2015 47) notes:

Kaupapa Māori is neither fixed nor rigid. It is open-ended, it is ethical systematic and accountable. It is scientific, open to existing methodologies, informed and critical. But it comes from the tangata whenua, from whānau, hapū and iwi.

To co-produce research with Ngāti Kuri women, the theoretical framework needs to reflect our unique and diverse ways of being and doing. Kaupapa Māori is fluid, ever evolving and embraces diversity within Te Ao Māori (Smith 2012). It validates the experiences and

worldview of each iwi, hapū and whānau as meaningful and valuable and the further development of Indigenous theoretical frameworks. In order to understand the experiences of Indigenous peoples, a Kaupapa Māori approach begins with first understanding their unique world views, histories and subjectivities. To examine Indigenous experiences without understanding these things will only serve to continue reproducing colonial discourses.

A Mana Wahine lens is used for the research in order to shine light on the geographies of Ngāti Kuri women's experiences in the taiao. Mana Wahine insists Māori women's voices are at the foreground of the research (Pihama 2001). In the following section Mana Wahine is discussed in order to further understand the ways in which Māori women's theoretical frameworks not only resist, reshape and decolonise research. This also provides a pathway to new, unique place-based theories to understand the complex relationships and experiences Ngāti Kuri women navigate and negotiate relationships in and with te taiao of Aotearoa.

Mana Wahine o Maieke

Mana Wahine reaches beyond feminism to embrace Kaupapa Māori and the intersections of ethnicity, power and discourse (Simmonds 2011). Leonie Pihama (2001) asserts that Mana Wahine provides a pathway to the (re)positioning of Māori women and what constitutes as mātauranga Māori. Mana Wahine enables Indigenous researchers to analytically explore the complex, and at times, adverse intersections of colonisation, race and gender (Campbell 2019, Pihama 2001). These intersections have, and still do, affect our daily lives in ways that can interfere with the well-being and the capacity of Māori women to reach their full potential and tino rangatiratanga.

In this section the mana, the power, authority and autonomy of Ngāti Kuri women is brought to the surface through naming Maieke, our founding tupuna wāhine, who

features in the title of this thesis and this sub-section title. In naming Maieke as founder and tribal leader, Ngāti Kuri women are identified as the engineers of their destinies and future autonomy. The focus of Mana Wahine is to ensure that the multiple realities, experiences and aspirations of Māori women are brought to the foreground (Campbell 2019, Johnston and Pihama 1995, Murphy 2019, Simmonds 2014). While similar to Indigenous feminist approaches in the aim to re-position Indigenous women who have been rendered invisible and silent and concerned with reviving and projecting Indigenous women's voices, stories and knowledges into the future (See Hunt 2014, de Leeuw and Hunt 2018 and Wilson 2014) - Mana Wahine is grounded upon and informed by the unique histories, knowledges, experiences and the lands held by Māori women. As a theoretical framework Mana Wahine makes space for, and places value in, the voices and narratives of Māori women through an exploration of diverse, intergenerational creativity and intersecting realities (Campbell 2019). Mana Wahine provides a pathway to examine and honour the pasts, present and futures of Māori women (Irwin 1992, Simmonds 2011).

Ngāti Kuri kuia and scholar Dame Miraka Szászy (1921 – 2001) (Ngāti Kuri, Te Rarawa and Te Aupouri) was an active leader in the welfare and rights of Māori women (Williams 2018). Her lifetime achievements and education saw her receive many awards including her damehood. She was awarded an honorary doctorate in law at Victoria University. Dame Miraka Szászy was an avid advocate for higher education and Te Reo. She sat on several of advisory boards that ranged from broadcasting and radio, race relations, citizens' rights, social welfare and Māori development. The establishment of The Mira Szászy Research Centre and a Māori Alumni Award at the University of Auckland recognises her achievements and contribution to Māori education and development (Williams 2018).

Dame Miraka Szászy was one of the original leaders of the Mana Wahine Claim lodged with the Waitangi Tribunal in 1993. The claim addresses the New Zealand Government's actions, inaction, policies and processes that subverted the rangatira status of Māori women (Williams 2018). The claim was sparked by the removal of respected Māori women from the shortlist of appointees during the negotiation of the Muriwhenua Fisheries Settlement process (Mikaere 2005).

The work of Dame Miraka Szászy makes this thesis possible and is visited in more depth in Chapter 5 in an exploration of the pathways mapped and cleared by Ngāti Kuri tūpuna wāhine. Throughout her career Dame Miraka Szászy was vocal on the issues facing Māori women. She critiqued the establishment of the New Zealand Māori Council and believed that Māori men were buying into the power granted to them by a colonial, therefore patriarchal government (Williams 2018). This she understood to be an example of the growing dichotomy of power between Māori men and women.

Dame Miraka Szászy did not identify as a Māori feminist but agreed that Māori women's oppression was increasingly at the whim of Māori (and Pākehā) men. She opposed the exclusion of Māori women's voices from tribal committees and decision-making forums. Ngāti Kuri women have always spoken on the marae and this is true for many tribes throughout Aotearoa. Dame Miraka Szászy believed that this was again a colonial imposition fostered and practiced increasingly by Māori men as Indigenous rights were gaining momentum in policies of the New Zealand Government (Williams 2018).

Dame Miraka Szászy contributed to feminism in Aotearoa by critiquing the movement for misrepresenting the roles and challenges Māori women faced. She noted that race and gender intersected. Dame Miraka Szászy claimed that while progress was being made for Pākehā

women – colonial discourses about race kept Māori women silent and marginalised (Williams 2018).

Building on the early work of Dame Miraka Szászy, Pihama (2001) proclaims that a Mana Wahine theoretical framework provides a pathway to decolonisation, (re)positioning and autonomy of Māori women and their communities. Mana Wahine has been applied to every aspect of Māori women's lives: social; historical; political; environmental; economic and spiritual. In practice, Mana Wahine research has and continues to provide Māori women the tools to re-write and re-create our lives, stories, roles and positionality (see Campbell 2019, Hutchings 2020; Murphy 2019, Simmonds 2014). Mana Wahine is employed in this research to untangle the colonial strands of power from Māori women's environmental relationships. As the overarching theoretical framework and filtered through a Ngāti Kuri centric lens, women, homelands and ecosystems are given power and authority to tell their own stories and strategise for a fair future.

Māori women are, when given the space and opportunities to thrive, the conduits between tangata, tūpuna, te taiao and wairua (spirit, soul - spirit of a being which exists beyond the physical body and death) (Murphy 2019). Māori women have intimate connections and relationships with land, whakapapa and the metaphysical whether we know and/or experience it in our daily lives or not (Murphy 2019, Johnston and Pihama 1995). Mana Wahine exists beyond the realm of the academy and colonial contact. Creations stories place Papatūānuku as the mother of all things. These creation stories are at the foundations of Mātauranga Māori and relationships to te taiao and atua (Campbell 2019, Ens et al 2021, Harmsworth 2020, Hutchings 2020). All sentient beings, flora and fauna, humans included, came from the womb of Papatūānuku. This connection to each other creates a complex whakapapa that blurs a Western

classification of tangible, intangible, genealogy, species, nature and ecosystems (Harmsworth 2020, Hutchings 2020). The ancestresses featured in this thesis are also at the foundations of the tribe Ngāti Kuri. As discussed throughout this thesis Maieke was a founding tupuna at the beginnings of Ngāti Kuri's whakapapa. Maieke's role and identity as rangatira establishes her as the ūkaipō (origin, mother, source of substance) of who we are, where we belong and our responsibilities and obligations to taiao.

Colonisation and patriarchal systems have fragmented, hidden and silenced Māori women's roles, status and authority (Hutchings 2020, Murphy 2019, Pihama 2001, Johnston and Pihama 1995, Simmonds 2014, 2012). Māori women, however, are reclaiming, rejuvenating and reinstating their capacity to shape relationships between te taiao and tangata through engaging in both social and physical sciences. Exploring power relations at work within environmental management and conservation in Aotearoa reveals the intersecting realities of Māori women (Hutchings 2020). As Māori women inform conservation and environmental management, the negotiation of Māori, patriarchal, matriarchal, feminist and colonial worlds and systems are reshaped and re-written (Hutchings 2020).

As a theory Mana Wahine opens and reveals a framework that may be empowering, beneficial and constructive for Māori women and the wider Indigenous community. Pihama (2001) acknowledges the need to move quickly into these openings:

There is no guarantee that the openings will be there indefinitely and so there is a sense of urgency that I believe exists in the need for us as Māori people to be more confident in the bringing forth of our knowledgeable strategies for change. There are, in my view, possibilities and potentialities in the openings (Pihama 2001 19).

Mana Wahine connections and relationships with land, whakapapa and spirit are created from historical and cultural origins that "both precede and succeed us" (Johnston and Pihama 1995 84). We stand not alone but with land, ancestors and atua (Murphy 2019, Smith 2012). As a

theoretical tool, Mana Wahine enables Indigenous women, as researchers and participants, to analytically explore the complex, and at times, adverse intersections of colonisation, race and gender (Murphy 2019, Pihama 2001, Simmonds 2014). Mana Wahine is applied in this research to the geographies of participants to better understand the ways in which women indigenise their world and relationships within it.

As mentioned previously, to define and translate kupu (words) to English is problematic (Simmonds 2011). The English language lacks the cultural and spiritual capacity to capture and articulate the full meaning of Māori concepts. Lost is the physical, spiritual, relational and spatial influences that overlap and entwine tangible and intangible meanings, understandings and knowledge (Simmonds 2011). While the literal meaning of kupu can be translated, translation often fails to articulate the multiple layers of temporal, spatial and cultural meanings that are unique to iwi, hapū and whānau. Cultural because social values and principles are deeply embedded in Te Reo and temporal because of the importance of whakapapa and looking back to the past to prepare for the future (Mikarae 2011). Kupu also describe Māori concepts and relationships with space, place, distance, proximity, social and spiritual value in land, social structure and women. Further investigation into linguistics reveals a lack of gendered pronouns in Te Reo (Simmonds 2011). Hierarchy was more likely to have been established through whakapapa rather than gender. Naomi Simmonds (2011 13) notes that Mana Wahine “is premised on the argument that pre-colonisation, Mana Wahine and Mana Tāne existed as complementary parts. The roles of men and women, while distinct, were not mutually exclusive or necessarily hierarchal”.

Patriarchal and masculine social structures of colonialism and capitalism, have and continue to, rearrange Māori social systems (Murphy 2019). A Mana Wahine framework enables the

researcher to examine who is mobilising dominant discourses (Hoskins 1997). Māori women are participating in cultural, environmental and political relationships and their leadership plays a fundamental role in maintaining, (re)constructing and transmitting Māori knowledges and resource management practices (Greensill 2005). A Mana Wahine analysis positions Māori women as central to the research, therefore disrupting the notion of minority groups in the margins (Johnson and Pihama 1995, Pihama 2001).

Embracing, employing and embodying Mana Wahine offers me the determination, knowledge and tools to critique, trouble and resist colonial, dominant and patriarchal discourses that shape Ngāti Kuri women's worlds. I exercise this taonga in academic spaces and research, but also in my everyday spaces. It has strengthened my wairua, my spirit and my self-worth, my connection to people and environments. I can now (somewhat more) confidently disrupt the notions of what my friends, the academy and sometimes even whanau assume about me and many other Māori women. Their perceptions are often based on gendered, archaic and colonial discourse and what they see and hear in mainstream media. My rhetoric is often met with disbelief and a lack of willingness to let go of their positions of power and privilege. I can now take part in the development of robust and valid theories to understand and explain my world. While I stand and stomp my feet in my small social circle to generate change, I feel the need to reach further. To disrupt the gendering and racialisation of our worlds at the grassroots, there must be change in the way knowledge is produced and valued. To elaborate on the ways in which disruption can be mobilised I now look to feminist geographies.

Indigenous and feminist geographies explore the way in which people develop a sense of belonging (Johnson 2012, Johnson and Larsen 2013, Sioui 2021). In Aotearoa, some geographers are conscious of the importance in engaging with concepts of Mana Wahine and

mātauranga Māori (Adams-Hutcheson et al. 2019). Some scholars who study feminist geographies, both locally and internationally, are intertwined with the drive to decolonise spaces and bodies that meet at the intersections of colonial and patriarchal governance (Longhurst and Johnston 2005, de Leeuw and Hunt 2018). The sub-discipline of feminist geographies makes space for women's knowledges, practices and subjectivities to be reasserted (Adam-Hutcheson et al. 2019, Johnston et al. 2020).

Feminist geography is also interested in decolonisation of the spaces women occupy, understanding that equality must always be balanced across all community members, including ecosystems and land (Beiso et al. 2008; Kiddle 2020; Stokes 1987; Thomas 2015, de Leeuw and Hunt 2018). The intersections of gender, race and sexuality prolong forms of marginalisation of people and place in Aotearoa and around the globe (Adams-Hutcheson et al. 2019).

The resurgence of the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi provides a pathway for feminist geographers to collaborate with women from diverse communities, movements and backgrounds and is committed to providing a platform for all women's "voices, bodies and politics" (Adam-Hutcheson et al. 2019 1188). It is judicious that Indigenous women are heard and seen through their own representations, understandings and knowledges. Place is explicit in establishing a complex set of concepts that help us comprehend our world. Through feminist geography the concept of 'place' is understood, imagined and scrutinised through a number of diverse viewpoints including Mana Wahine (Longhurst and Johnston 2014, Murphy 2019, Simmonds 2009, de Leeuw and Hunt 2018).

In the following I discuss pūrākau as a way in which to further validate Indigenous women's research and theories of deliberation, learning and being. Kana'iaupuni and Malone (2006 297) state that shared knowledges and stories reinforces an integral link between Indigenous

ecosystems and identities. The recognition of Indigenous engagement within ecosystems is pivotal in the transformation of roles, responsibilities and relationships (Smith 2020).

Pūrākau informing our worlds

Indigenous women's stories have the power to heal and reactivate their ontologies (Murphy 2019). Every Indigenous person has a place within tribal and collective stories. The storyteller and the story not only connect people with the past, present and the future, but also work to connect people with land and all that it holds (Murphy 2019, Smith 2012). In this section pūrākau is linked to both theory and methodology as an Indigenous pathway towards further decolonising the academy, research and analysis (Archibald 2008, Lee 2009, Simmonds 2014). For many Indigenous peoples, storywork informs our responsibilities and relationships to ancestral lands, waters and ecosystems, our connection to ancestral lands, our values, principles and practice (Daigle 2016, Simpson 2013, 2014).

Pūrākau as Indigenous storywork frames the intersection of theory and methodology. The gathering, recording and analysis of pūrākau in this thesis has been co-produced and co-analysed alongside participants. As a theory, pūrākau offers the research a theoretical tool that was germane to exploring Ngāti Kuri women's geographies. Exploring pūrākau as both theory and method in research activates a strengthening of Indigenous epistemological and ontological constructs (Lee 2009, Simmonds 2014). Harmsworth (2020 34) states that "drawing on pūrākau and teachings from ancestors gives a sense of mana, pride and identity". Pūrākau can encompass both contemporary and traditional stories both providing a pathway to better understanding our past, present and future (Lee 2005, Mikaere 2003, Murphy 2019).

Indigenous storywork is imperative to sustaining and protecting not only knowledge but it also enables Indigenous research, researchers and participants to construct theory and method through oral, written, traditional and contemporary narratives unique to them (Archibald 2008, Lee 2009, Simmonds 2014). Mana Wahine storywork maps “instructions toward inner-transformation and healing” (Murphy 2019 34). A key objective in the decolonisation movement is for Indigenous peoples to have the power and autonomy to tell our own stories (Murphy 2019, Pihama and Johnston, 1994; Simmonds, 2014; Te Awēkotuku, 1992).

The collection, recording and interpretation of pūrākau is important work to undertake. The participants in this research understood that colonisation had silenced and marginalised Māori systems, identities, voices and their pūrākau. Both women and men who spoke with me on my research journey feel a sense of urgency to get pūrākau recorded. As I listened, I was motivated to record Ngāti Kuri pūrākau about te taiao, people and places within this thesis. There are, however, ethical implications around a researcher’s right, ability and intent to interpret pūrākau and these are complex grounds to work within (Archibald 2008, Lee 2009, Simmonds 2014). Researchers that re-tell and re-create participants’ pūrākau must have consent and the processes must be overt and transparent. Using pūrākau as framework within this research is in line with my participants and Indigenous aspirations. Recording, re-telling and re-creating pūrākau through Indigenous research is at the fore of Kaupapa Māori approach that enhances and activates agency, validity and authority through tino rangatiratanga, mana and tikanga.

Indigenous research that retains storywork steps beyond Western research practices that formulate evidence, results and research outcomes (Archibald 2008, Lee 2009). Pūrākau enacts Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine through engagement in the diverse ways in which kōrero and text is analysed and interpreted (Lee 2009). Māori have always engaged in

storytelling. There are many Māori and Indigenous who author books, letters, essays, newspapers, histories, songs and stories (Archibald 2008; Hereaka and Ihimaera 2019; Lee 2009). While there is increasingly more use of Indigenous storytelling as a theoretical framework, in some disciplines many important stories remain on the lips of elders and in private whanau collections (Lee 2009).

All research is value laden. The job of the researcher is to navigate philosophical systems in a way that creates a space where the experiences and perspectives of both the researcher and participants are acknowledged and explored (Lee 2009). Framing theories and methodology in pūrākau supports Ngāti Kuri women to continue to write-back, resist and dismantle the control of hegemonic and elitist production of knowledge, hence transformation takes place (Lee 2009). Pūrākau empowers Ngāti Kuri women to continue to rewrite the story with whakapapa, whanaungatanga and manaakitanga (hospitality, kindness, generosity, support, the process of showing respect, and care for others).

Indigenous and relational geographies of responsibility

In this section, literature is reviewed in relation to Ngāti Kuri women's geographies as they engage with environments, ecosystems, mātauranga Māori, science and conservation.

Indigenous ontologies provide and transmit alternative politics for Indigenous autonomy (Daigle 2016). Indigenous cultures, knowledges, languages, cosmologies, environmental praxis, epistemologies and ontologies are created and recreated through ever evolving relationships with land and more-than-human participants (Rarai et al 2022, Sioui 2021, Smith 2020, Whyte 2020). Relationships with land are central to Indigenous knowledge and this thesis critically engages with those relationships. Indigenous histories are not separated from te taiao but rather the emergent wisdoms are learnt through “complex biological

interactions” and have evolved over time and simultaneously shape the future (Wildcat 2005 334).

Indigenous geography is a growing discipline that focuses on decolonisation of space and place through exploring Indigenous rights (Coombs et al. 2012, 2013, 2014, Johnson and Larsen 2013, Radcliff 2017, 2018, 2020, Sious 2021). Coombs, Johnson and Howitt (2012, 2013, 2014) wrote three papers that reported on the progress of Indigenous geographies in the journal *Progress in Human Geography*. Within these papers are a thorough critique of Western geographical practices, resource use and research representing Indigenous peoples, their relationships and belonging to place.

Coombs et al. 2012 provide a robust body of work that reflects on indigeneity, research and representation while critiquing the broader political implications of environmental management. Indigenous incentives to protect the environment reaches beyond environmental well-being and are linked to tribal recognition, reclamation, rejuvenation and sovereignty (Coombs et al. 2012). Indigenous geographies challenge the status-quo and promote the ethical foundations for improved human and more-than-human relationships with and in place (Coombs et al. 2012). Noted in their second progress report Coombs et al. (2013) is the attention, effort and approaches Indigenous peoples apply to building relationships and alliances. While they acknowledge that Indigenous leadership and resurgence can be, at times, tenuous and enigmatic there are real and significant triumphs in the decolonisation of geography as a discipline and transcultural relations (Coombs et al. 2013).

In the third progress report Coombs et al. (2014) examine and challenges geographies approaches to working with Indigenous peoples and state that decolonising geographies requires a careful response and that if given the space to work unhindered by the shackles of

institutional racisms “Indigenous geographies may reveal their potential to nurture, enliven, teach and transform” research methodologies (Coombs et al. 2014 851). The performative and emotional nature of storytelling records histories and is a call for affective research by Indigenous peoples to reveal a deeper sense of place from an Indigenous perspective (Coombs et al. 2014, Johnson and Larsen 2013). These theories establish a relational ethic from which to challenge the binaries of human and nature relationships and help to produce research where “ethics becomes method; data become life; landscape becomes author; participants become family” (Coombs et al. 2014 850). Miguel Sioui (2021) calls for a shift in Indigenous geography to now centralise Indigenous relationships and in particular, relationships to place.

In Sioui’s 2021 book *Indigenous geographies in the Yucatan* he discusses Indigenous knowledges as crucial in the reframing and transformation of mainstream environmental management. Sioui (2021) attends to Indigenous relationships to place, land and other-than-human beings (flora and fauna, mountains and waterways, ancestors and spirit) by employing an overlapping comprehensive approach that combines Indigenous geographies and Indigenous knowledge. The result is meaningful insights into the environmental ethos of the Maya people.

Sioui (2021) recognises Indigenous ways of knowing and being in this world as potentially powerful in remedying not only climate, environmental and biodiversity challenges but also in building resilient healthy peoples and communities. Noted in his book is the significance of cultural identity, gender and age roles as an “important aspect of land-use patterns and practices, as well as social organisation” (Siouis 2021 98). Siouis (2021) calls for scholars to keep Indigenous knowledges at the centre of environmental management rather than an addition and adds that “Indigenous understandings of gender and gender roles could offer

new windows from which to critique hegemonic Western gender definitions and meanings” (Siouis 2021 96). Indigenous peoples have been managing relationships with ecosystems (where people are considered an equal rather than superior) for generations (Smith 2020, Whyte 2020). Since the invasion of colonisation, Western science and environmental management systems have unseated fit-for-purpose and time-tested Indigenous knowledges and praxis (Coombs and Hill 2005, Harmsworth, Hutchings 2020, Johnson 2012, McGregor 2021, Parsons et al. 2017, Wilson 2014). This has progressed Indigenous knowledges to incorporate Western technologies, science and knowledge while keeping Indigenous environmental ethos and relationships at the centre (Ens et al 2021, Sioui 2021).

Throughout this thesis, taiao, our ecosystems and lands, are considered as more than just a place or site where attachments are constructed, rather the environment is a “self-intelligent” participant in a network of relations that are constantly negotiating and evolving (Sioui 2021 28). While the agency of place when Indigenous peoples and their lands meet a “co-becoming of space/place that is not human-centric” occurs (Country et al 2016 458). Meaning both human and more-than-human have the agency to shape a sense of belonging. An exploration into the intelligence and agency of place helps us to critically understand the Indigenous geographical more-than-human self (Larsen and Johnson 2016). Bringing together Indigenous knowledges and Indigenous geographies deepens understandings of the relationships within te taiao o Ngāti Kuri women.

Indigenous knowledges are more than a way of knowing, it is also a way of being and relating (McGregor 2021, Siouis 2021). As mentioned previously ‘colonialisation’ has marginalised, decriminalised and silenced Indigenous knowledge. Wilson (2004 362) reflects that Indigenous knowledge recovery as a movement can “reverse the damage wrought” by historical processes of colonisation that systematically diminished and devalued Indigenous

ways of being. These same intentions and processes of Indigenous knowledge recovery work to reconfigure, rejuvenate and strengthen positive identities and relationships.

Of colonisation Wilson (2004 361) states:

In telling us (Indigenous) we must change and adapt, they (colonists) really meant that the old ways must end because they were unwilling to change their colonising ways. They were unwilling to end their occupation of our homelands; they were unwilling to foster the restoration of the plants and animals indigenous to our homelands; they were unwilling to discontinue their exploitation and destruction of all that we cherished; and they were unwilling to let us retain the knowledge of alternative ways of being. Because the colonisers wanted to continue colonising, we had to change, and our way of life had to be destroyed. So, goes the nasty business of empire building.

This thinking constantly continues through science and conservation (Ens et al 2021).

Indigenous knowledges is mined, exploited and diluted to fit within Western science and the academy (McGregor 2021). The colonial system remains unwilling to identify Indigenous peoples as the experts and authority providing models that provide environmental and climate solutions. Western science and conservation systems are slow to be inclusive and diverse, rather these systems cling to unrealistic ideals of ‘objectivity’ and ‘truth’. Western cultures are centred around exploitative relationships with land, water and ecosystems which is in stark conflict with Indigenous ways of being and knowing (Ens et al 2021, Rarai et al 2022, Sioui 2021, Whyte 2020).

Revival, recovery and growth of Indigenous knowledges is woven into the critical processes and conscious intentions of decolonising and indigenising projects (Ens et al 2021, Whyte 2020, Wilson 2004). Indigenous knowledges are not static or fixed, knowledge systems are continuously re-visited to consider new challenges and possibilities, innovations and technologies (Ens et al 2021). In the context of Aotearoa, mātauranga Māori continues to be “a living dynamic entity strengthening the fabric of Māori society, improving the articulation

of Māori values, and at the same time keeping the integrity of past knowledge and traditions in modern society” (Ens et al 2021 120).

Recovery and protection of place-based knowledge and connections acknowledges the significance and importance of Indigenous ontologies (Johnson 2012). Place is an active participant in the recovery and protection of place-based knowledge, Indigenous languages, practices and belief systems in that place, whether land, water, mountain or forest, influences how, where and what is recovered and protected. What ‘place’ reveals to us, the sense of belonging we may or may not experience is not solely dependent on human conceptualisation (Kana’iaupuni and Malone 2006, McGregor 2021). Place, landscapes and ecosystems change, evolve and/or deteriorate. These changes influence the way we see and understand our ‘place’ within our world.

Indigenous knowledges are transdisciplinary in that technologies - traditional and contemporary - are constantly evolving and are woven together to make sense of social, economic and philosophical social systems (McGregor 2021, Parsons et al. 2017) and relationships (Sioui 2021). In a deliberate shifting of values and praxis, Indigenous knowledges and sciences centre on advocacy and collective problem-solving disturbing neo-colonial representations of Indigenous systems, identities, positioning and relationships (Hutchings 2020, Parsons 2014, Sioui 2021). Relationships in an Indigenous context informs engagement, collaboration and conversations. Research that considers relationships with place better addresses the wants and needs of the community and environment (Parsons 2014). As Hutchings (2020 56) notes: “Transformation and a lifting of spiritual consciousness is already happening in our communities and continues to spread through the webs and connections that bind our Māori world”. Indigenous scholars call-out academic unwillingness to accept and advocate for authority and expertise to be given to Indigenous

knowledge systems (Parsons et al. 2017, Sioui 2021). Oral traditions, Indigenous narratives and cultural practices are vital for the environmental protection and recovery (Johnson 2012, Parsons et al. 2017, Sioui 2021). In contrast to much of Western knowledge, Indigenous knowledges value the “intimate and emotional connections with and a love for the land” and an understanding that land and all that it holds, tangible and intangible are active participants in sustaining and guiding life (Sioui 2021 25). Indigenous relationships to place inform an environmental ethos that insists on: balancing resource-use with resource protection; human and environmental agency; metaphysical and physical worlds and, the power to discern sustainable practices based on signals from the environment (Sioui 2021).

Indigenous knowledges guide and regulate human interactions and relationships with environments and ecosystems creating a conservation ethic that is a blueprint for life (Berkes 2008, Ens et al 2021, Pierotti and Wildcat 2000, Sioui 2021, Whyte 2020). The result is an approach and perspective that is based on respect, reciprocity, responsibilities and accountability to a family that includes the environment (McGregor 2021, Sioui 2021, Whyte 2020). Reciprocity is a crucial layer within whakapapa relationships with human and more-than-human beings. To be in in a whakapapa relationship is to ‘take to heart’ the honouring and devotion involved in supporting the well-being of an environmental family (Whyte 2020 268). Learning to be part of the land and fulfilling Indigenous responsibilities to land, grants us access to an infinity of more-than-human relationships that are based on love, respect, reciprocity and balance (Sioui 2021).

Relational geographies offer effective philosophy for studying and understanding the interactions that take place within Indigenous landscapes (Sioui 2022). Relationships to place initiate a sense of belonging (Smith 2020, Johnson 2012, Longhurst, Johnston and Ho 2009, Moreton-Robinson 2013, Morrison et al. 2013, Morrison et al. 2020, Ormond and Ormond

2018, Rarai et al 2020, Simmonds 2014). For many Indigenous peoples' relational geographies are woven together with a sense of responsibility (Kana'iaupuni and Malone 2006, Sious 2021).

Sious (2021) considers place-as-relationships through Indigenous geography. He applies a responsibility-based theoretical framework to Indigenous geography to better understand the ways in which relationships with land are constructed through intimate interactions and interplay with place (Sious 2021). Here he unravels an Indigenous sense of place as more than a set of human experiences to reveal a spatial ontology that includes human and more-than-human identities and agency (Sious 2021). An Indigenous sense of place is created and given meaning through intimate interactions and relationships with and within land (Country et al 2016, Rarai et al 2022, Sioui 2021, Larsen and Johnson 2016). Te taiao, the entire ecosystem, are active participants in the shaping of relationships with more-than-human counterparts (Country et al 2016, Hickey 2019, Kearney 2009, Larsen and Johnson 2016, Thomas 2015).

The obligations Indigenous peoples have for their ancestral lands reaches beyond colonialscape reserves, treaty territories, boundaries and borders (Daigle 2016). Pre-colonisation, iwi, hapū and whanau land ownership and fixed boundaries did not exist (Greensill 2005, Ruru 2004, Smith 2012, Stokes 1987). Boundaries were understood as overlapping and fluid, shifting and changing, shared and seasonal and structured by whakapapa rather than ownership (Simmonds 2009). Imagined and enforced colonial boundaries and borders go unrecognised within te taiao. Boundaries and borders are governed by changes in geography, climate, ecosystems and water. More-than-human inhabitants, our entire global community of biodiversity, suffer the impacts of colonial, capitalist land use (FARIPCC 2014, Ruru 2004).

Indigenous knowledge and relationships provide a model for protecting and preserving physical and metaphysical life-forms (Hickey 2019, Daigle 2016, Hunt 2014, Pierotti and Whyte 2020, Wildcat 2000). Indigenous relationship models are imperative to mitigate the destruction of our natural world (FARIPCC 2014). Indigenous relationships to ecosystems and environment are place specific, diverse and a political and social responsibility.

Ecosystems can be defined as a community full of relationships between organisms. Many Indigenous people understand this and see themselves as a member of that community and interconnected through the sharing of nutrients and energy (Whyte 2020).

Responsibility to place is cultivated, nurtured and transmitted through interactions between lands, ancestors, present and future generations and are maintained through language, place names and traditional practices such as food and resource harvests (Daigle 2016, Simpson 2014). Daigle (2016 261) states: “Everyday geographies of self-determination rooted in Indigenous ontologies help us understand that, in some instances, relational responsibility starts with renewing those with the land”.

Indigenous landscapes are arranged through relationships with place and culture (Sioui 2021). Land is central to Indigenous societies and fundamental to the conceptualisation of an Indigenous identity and sense of belonging (Kana’iaupuni and Malone 2006, Simmonds 2014, Sious 2021, Smith 2020). Cultural, political and spiritual perspectives inform the ways in which landscapes are read. Signals, tohu, from the living landscape shape obligations and responsibilities are negotiated and read through signals from with ancestral and the living landscape (Kearny 2009). The next section explores Indigenous sensory geographies.

Tohu: Environmental relationships and communication through the senses

Māori geographies, lands and landscapes are inhabited by tūpuna, human and more-than-human and the foundational narratives of iwi (Clement 2017). Māori geographies reach beyond the physical, visible and the tangible and possesses a “thickness and depth” that outlines a conceptual framework from which to decolonise research (Clement 2017 322). Māori geographies grounded in Kaupapa Māori offers a platform from which to deconstruct colonial and patriarchal hegemonies (Simmonds 2009). Not only is Māori geography local and place specific it takes research to another dimension to embrace the political, emotional and spiritual perspectives and experiences of tangata whenua (Simmonds 2009, Stokes 1997). Māori geography is a significant body of knowledge that has the capacity to transform and decolonise human geography (Simmonds 2014, Longhurst and Johnston 2005).

Embracing the social, environmental, political, metaphysical geographies of the participants provides a lens in which to explore the multiple realities and spatial complexities Māori and Indigenous women negotiate and navigate (August 2005, Brown 2008, Rarai et al 2022, Simmonds 2009, Stokes 1987). Land is a participant that hosts human, more-than-human, and ancestral beings are in constant interplay (Country et al 2016, Sious 2021). Te taiao is where sensory memory, experience and understanding are established and negotiated. We (humans) are sent tohu, environmental signals that informs every fragment of our lives (Rarai 2022).

This section explores literature that discusses Indigenous place ‘sensing’. Indigenous scientific observations are longitude studies. Studies that have accumulated data, translated that data into knowledge and created prosperous and prolific societies, economies and cultures. Observations are made through the senses. To know our place in the world we must listen, watch, taste, smell, touch and I add, feel our world.

This research is deeply personal, collective, embodied and emotive and informed by visceral and sensory embodied experiences (Longhurst, Ho and Johnston 2008). The sensory geographies of Indigenous peoples have received very little attention (Mills and Dooley 2019). Jessica Hutchings (2020 47) describes Te Ao Māori as a ‘cosmic family’ where atua, ancestors and diverse lifeforms come to meet. Emotional relationships are informed and shaped through sensory exchanges and mutually constituted alongside te taiao. Through the senses we become cognisant of the knowledges and shared experiences that are embodied through place-based exchanges (Moreton-Robinson 2013). Place is an active informant in creating human experiences, feelings, and meanings (Sioui 2020). A “sense of place is co-constituted by human and other-than human creatures and their experiences, feelings, meanings, and relationships within that place (physical location)” (Sioui 2021 93). Meaning, understandings and attachment to place are also created by both ancestors’ experiences and relationships with and within ecosystems (Sioui 2021, Whyte 2020).

Jessica Hutchings and Jo Smith (2020) acknowledge the active agency of the environment in the writing of their book *Te mahi oneone hua parakore: A Māori soil sovereignty and wellbeing handbook*. They consider soil as an important member of the “interconnected universe” in which they work (Hutchings and Smith 2020 7). The book discusses Māori ways of knowing and relating to oneone (soil) that reveals a deep sense of place (Hutchings and Smith 2020). Oneone is considered a silent ally “providing an anchor point for our identity and memory” going on to say that soils are a crucial participant in providing Māori with living economies (Hutchings and Smith 2020 46). The collection of chapters in the book showcases te taiao, the environment input and engagement in constructing and securing Māori identities and sense of place.

Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2013) discusses an Indigenous women's lens as a way of doing things that are informed by communal responsibility and relationality and/or relatedness. Morton-Robinson writes that it is through the senses that we become cognisant of the signals and knowledges that are embodied through place-based exchanges (Moreton-Robinson 2013). Aileen Morton-Robinson (2013 341) states "Indigenous women's ways of knowing are informed by shared knowledge and experiences, some of which we are conscious of while others remain in the unconscious" just below the surface of knowing, felt in the tinana (body), wairua and hinengaro (mind, thought, intellect, consciousness, awareness).

A sense of belonging is established through environmental, social and metaphysical relationships, memories and narratives that enhances the construction of identities and connection to place (Kana'iaupuni and Malone 2006, Kearney 2009, Mocaraka-Harris 2019, Smith 2020). For Indigenous peoples the prominence of these interactions and relationships is set upon the foundations of their unique values, belief systems and practices (Ka'ai 2004, Kearney 2009, Mocaraka-Harris 2019).

Tuck and Yang (2012) argue that tribal lands extend beyond Western perspectives of land as nothing more than a site to own, a site where history and wealth, is made, consumed and accumulated. Kawagley (2010 xiii) reminds us that "Mother Nature has a culture" and that culture is 'Native'. Kearney (2009 218) describes Indigenous sensory encounters within homelands as "sensual inscriptions", a "language of sensory experience" that reveals and creates complex and meaningful relationships and understandings across the landscapes of home. Sensory exchanges in and with place reveal the ways in which a sense of belonging is negotiated, lived and embodied (Morrison et al. 2013). In the next section literature about homelands is explored from a Māori women's perspective. Linking sensory experiences with

the conceptualisation of homelands is crucial to understanding Indigenous relationships with place.

Turangawaewae: Indigenous Homelands

To be Māori is to have a tūrangawaewae (a place of strength and belonging, a place to stand) (Groot et al. 2010 125).

Indigenous conceptualisation and creation of homelands, landscapes and identities are at the fore of this research. To bring these concepts to the centre Indigenous knowledge revival must continue to take centre stage (Wilson 2004). In this research ‘homelands’ are interpreted from an Indigenous ontology that is both metaphysical and physical and understood as a ‘dynamic ancestral territory, landscape, place and community’ member (Ormond and Ormond 2018 80). Homelands are understood to be a “powerful and intelligent being able to give, sustain, guide and take life” (Ormond and Ormond 2018 81).

While ‘place’ plays an important role in the creation and understanding of Māori women’s identities and relationships, for some participants, te taiao is ‘a given’, a ‘taken for granted’ everyday phenomena that is unconsciously embodied through the senses rather than something that is easily articulated. Homelands are an important site and informant central to creating their tribal identity and connection people and place. Homelands become more than just a place to call home, destination, or an on-going and far-reaching journey to be travelled, fostered and learnt – homelands become an active participant guiding, informing and negotiating relationships.

The following literature about relationships and the articulation of homelands reveals ‘home’ as a valued emotional place with its own language, culture, life and history. Turangawaewae is an active participant in connecting and bringing people together. Homelands are an “earthscape” (Ormond and Ormond 2018 81) and context to the ways in which participants

constructed their understandings of Ngāti Kuri women's roles in their daily lives and in the future and their relationship to home. For Māori a "tūrangawaewae is something that is engaged, nurtured and sustained through whanaungatanga and ahi kā (keeping the home-fires burning)" (Groot et al. 2010 127). 'Homelands' symbolise a meeting place where physical, human, metaphysical and ecosystems intersect (Ormond and Ormond 2018). The personification of te taiao articulates a "cultural interface" – te taiao resembles a portal where communication flows between people and place that is distinct and stipulates a homeland territory (Ormond and Ormond 2018 81).

Whakapapa is at the foundations of conceptualising homelands, individual and collective identities. Indigenous bodies, living and the dead, "breathe life into Indigenous homeland" triggering memories and are often the stimulus for Indigenous action and being (Kana'iaupuni and Malone 2006, Kearny 2009 215). Homelands continue to be a constant theme for many Indigenous peoples and a discussion about the tohu reveals the power of both place and ancestors to cross physical and temporal boundaries and inform the lives and identities of Ngāti Kuri women (Hickey 2019, Kearny 2009).

Space and place cannot be separated from bodies that experience and express love (Johnston and Longhurst 2010). From an Indigenous perspective this is a 'taken-for-granted' understanding. Love for land, waters and ecosystems is deeply embedded into many Indigenous cultures (Sioui 2021, Whyte 2020) and it is understood that aroha flows back and forth between the environment and people born of that land. For Māori the concept of love can be interpreted as aroha (compassion, love, empathy). Many Māori maintain they are "intimately bound to our land" (Elder 2020 5). Aroha for land is emboldened with ethics of care, concern and connection. Aroha can be applied to individual and collective ideals and notions of nationhood (Elder 2020). Notions of love of place and people intersect with

politics and power (Morrison et al. 2013). This is evident in the ways in which Indigenous peoples continue to care and fight for the protection of tribal survival, land, waters and ecosystems (Sioui 2021, Whyte 2020).

While geographies of love have received very little attention in the past feminists and queer geographers are increasingly considering the multiple ways in which love is constructed in place and over time (Morrison et al., 2013). The intent of the article is to further extend geography by thinking about ‘new forms of love’ that have yet to be studied in any great depth’ (Morrison et al. 2013 507). They call for geographers to study love between friends, family, community and place in order to better understand the spatial and ‘ethical relationships’ of love (Morrison et al. 2013 506).

The authors argue that what one loves is highly political, spatial and relational and is used, at times, to devalue women as overly emotional, impractical, lacking in rationality and reason, and liable to make impulsive decisions based on what they feel rather than knowledge (Morrison et al. 2013). This has also been the case for the relationships between many Indigenous cultures and land (Sioui 2021, Whyte 2020). Thinking critically about love of place or topophilia opens up many possibilities for understanding spatial, emotional and political relationships with place (Morrison et al. 2013, Sylaiou and Ziogas 2019, Tuan 1990). Topophilia describes more than an emotional bond between people and place it includes a “relation of identification” something from which identities and connections are shaped (Sylaiou and Ziogas 2019 58, Tuan 1990). Encounters with place are transcendent and yet a lived experience where the living breathing landscape rouses emotions of love and affection or dread and abjection (Sylaiou and Ziogas 2019 58).

Conclusion

Te taiao provides a space between colonial and scientific systems of power where human and more-than-human beings are “balancing precariously but productively on the edges” of sovereignty (Hickey 2019 166). This research, from all angles, is driven by people and with them comes, acknowledgment of their perspectives, bodies and spirit. This chapter provides a theoretical approach that has enabled the research to capture meaningful insights into and an understanding of the aspirations, challenges and successes of Ngāti Kuri women.

A Mana Wahine framework enables researchers to explore who is mobilising dominant discourses with a focus on the intersecting realities of Māori women (Simmonds 2014). It also provides a framework that moves past notions of exclusion and marginalisation by providing examples and pathways for Māori women to engage in research and conservation in powerful and meaningful ways. Through hearing and embedding tūpuna wahine voices into the theoretical framework the research contributes to both Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine through the development of a Ngāti Kuri approach to research, science and conservation.

This chapter focuses on the theories and concepts relevant to the geographies of Ngāti Kuri women. Indigenous women’s identities and relationships are constantly evolving through the re-storying and re-connecting to tūpuna wāhine and te taiao. In the next chapter I discuss the methods employed to collect information and the methodologies used to bring light and meaning to the ontologies and epistemologies of Ngāti Kuri women.

Chapter four: Tipi haere talk: Approaching method and analysis

In this chapter I discuss the ways in which the research is framed, approached and experienced. The methodological framework is built from Kaupapa Māori, Mana Wahine and relational geographies foundations. At the centre of this work is mātauranga o Ngāti Kuri. The way the information was collected for this research was an evolving process of methodological practices. This follows Kaupapa Māori research praxis, being an approach to collecting and analysing information that constantly requires remodelling and reconfiguring to meet the needs of the communities visited (Smith G. 2020). The methodology galvanises the values, principles and authority of Ngāti Kuri women. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2005 90) describes Kaupapa Māori as a methodological approach that requires “consciously employing a set of arguments, principles, and frameworks that relate to the purpose, ethics, analysis and outcomes for the research.” Ngāti Kuri women who participated in this research contributed to Mana Wahine and pūrākau methodologies. Together, we considered methodologies and were able to define the ways in which the research praxis was approached and developed. Grounding research in Kaupapa Māori, Mana Wahine and pūrākau meant that ethical considerations were at the forefront of methodologies and methods (Lee-Morgan 2017, Smith G. 2020, Smith L 2012).

Methodologies were designed to honour and understand the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women’s identities and relationships are guided by tūpuna wahine and taiao. The methodologies allowed for a study of the intergenerational challenges Ngāti Kuri women face while attending to their responsibilities in passing a healthy environment over to future generations. Methods were designed to explore the possibilities of guidance from te taiao, an environment family, and tūpuna wāhine, our ancestral women, our grandmothers. Tūpuna wāhine are sometimes referred to as grandmothers within this thesis. This, for me at least, signifies the close whakapapa connection Ngāti Kuri women hold with our ancestors and

expressed the continuing influence Māori women might experience when connecting with tūpuna wahine. Te taiao is considered as an environmental family that includes more-than-human members of the wider Ngāti Kuri community. Participants contributed to the development of methods ensuring Ngāti Kuri autonomy remained at the forefront of analysis. Participants, grandmothers and environmental family shaped the ways in which methods and methodology unfolded.

In the first section ‘Pūrākau: Portraying powerful grandmothers’ I address the collection of pūrākau for this thesis. I discuss the ways in which the pūrākau were collected, co-produced and co-written. Pūrākau are the stories of our land (Lee-Morgan 2017) and of te taiao, our environmental family. The pūrākau featured in this thesis centralise Ngāti Kuri women’s identities, roles, relationships and responsibilities (Archibald 2008, Lee-Morgan 2017, Pihama Campbell and Greensill 2019). The collection of stories activated participants’ power to portray their relationships and identities in ways that destabilise colonial and patriarchal myths about Māori women, their knowledge and identities (Lee-Morgan 2017, Simmonds 2014).

Following this section, in ‘Methods for the research kete’ I reflect on methods used to gather information, and the ways in which participants and their narratives were approached. Tables show the research sites, numbers of participants and how they contributed to the research. Each method used is discussed in the following sections as they unfolded during the research. Three wānanga were held. One to connect with participants and to collect information. The second to discuss and analysis the use of pūrākau. The third was held to present findings back to my participants.

The wānanga were held to gather information and inspiration from participants and to keep participants updated on the progress of the research. Wānanga are collective spaces of

learning and have been likened to a learning institute, much like a university, however, they ‘are charged to assist in the application of knowledge regarding āhuatanga Māori (Māori tradition) according to tikanga Māori (Māori custom)’ (Mead 1998 109). All wānanga were held in Te Hiku o te Ika. In the section ‘Wānanga one: Connecting with participants and te taiao’ reviews the processes involved in the first wānanga held with participants. This section describes and reflects on the challenges and benefits of wānanga as well as learnings.

Wānanga is a methodology and method, similar to a focus group or workshop, founded in Tikanga Māori that fosters critical thinking and “normalises the importance of emotion, nuance, oral traditions, and the co-creation of both new and inherited mātauranga” (Mahuika and Mahuika 2020 369). Tipi haere were an important element to each of the wānanga held, the following section introduces and discusses the application of the method.

The section ‘Tipi haere: Travelling talk together’ focuses on the way in which group conversations were inspired through tipi haere. In this research tipi haere are group interviews similar to mobile focus groups, walking interviews or go-alongs where participants come together to move between spaces and places that are significant to them (Botfield, Zwi, Lenette and Newman 2019, Riley and Holton 2016). In this section I discuss the places we visited and the ways in which we moved between spaces to reveal a method that invoked bonding between human and more-than-human participants, fun and meaningful conversations. Tipi haere extends mobile methods of data collections through the application of Indigenous values, principles, practice and ways of being.

The second wānanga is presented in the section ‘Wānanga two: Pūrākau reflections.’ This wānanga was an invitation for participants to review, discuss and analyse the ways in which pūrākau are presented in iwi publications and the thesis. The section unpacks the one-day wānanga as an opportunity to engage participants in analysing the way knowledge is

collected, stored and shared. This wānanga allowed participants to deliberate on the processes, challenges and possibilities of Ngāti Kuri authorship.

In the following section ‘Research conversations: Whakawhiti kōrero’ I reflect on my approach to whakawhiti kōrero. Whakawhiti kōrero are similar to semi-structured interviews, however, they are cloaked in tikanga Māori (Māori protocols) and the perspectives and personalities of the participants (Pihama et al. 2019). Interviews with participants were prompted by a series of questions, however, the conversations that unfolded centred on topics that were relevant and important to participants.

Finally, I discuss the third wānanga in the section ‘Findings Wānanga: Returning with the findings and my daughter’. This wānanga was a time for me to take the findings and analysis back to participants for a final check and offer them an opportunity to add, modify and, again, engage in the research. One of the findings in the research was that mothers have a duty to return to homelands with their children. I planned this wānanga to coincide with my daughter’s time off work and brought her to our turangawaewae. This was an important personal journey for us both and it encouraged her to engage and contribute to the research. In this section I discuss the importance of the wānanga both academically and personally.

In Te Ao Māori, relationships are at the heart of the entire world – political, environmental, ancestral and metaphysical. Methods in this research were delivered through whakawhanaungatanga. This offers a guideline and platform for discussing one’s approach to participants and how relationships unfold during data collection. Not only is research decolonised through a restructuring of power relationships in research, whakawhanaungatanga also allows me to acknowledge the emotional, physical and metaphysical relationships embedded in the process of collecting information.

Whakawhanaungatanga in research connects “culturally conscious” voices to collaborate in

the development of research stories (Bishop 1995 ii). Whakawhanaungatanga as a fundamental research approach that speaks back to colonial powers.

Pūrākau: Portraying powerful grandmothers

Pūrākau are not considered to be fixed traditional narratives that only exist in the past. Pūrākau can, and should, be narratives that we continue to craft to provide the information and inspiration core to our identity (Pihama et al. 2019 140).

Pūrākau hold messages articulated and reiterated each time the story is told, enabling tūpuna wahine and the taiao to influence the future (Pihama et al. 2019, Lee-Morgan 2017). In the previous chapter I discussed pūrākau as a theoretical framework. Pūrākau are a vehicle for intergenerational transmission of knowledge that remains critical for Māori society (Pihama et al. 2019). In this chapter I discuss pūrākau as a methodology. Through colonisation Indigenous stories and story-telling are marginalised therefore knowledge and understandings of Indigenous places and relationships are at risk of being pushed to the periphery. This was often discussed by my participants and there was a feeling of urgency to record pūrākau. We all noted how many valuable stories have been diluted, modified and hidden from us. Participants were concerned about their stories and deliberated at length on the ways in which we might recover them. In this section I reflect on the process of gathering pūrākau, the stories of our grandmothers as a methodology. Gathering, sharing and growing the pūrākau of grandmothers offers, not only unique material for analysis - it also propels our tūpuna wāhine (ancestress with continuing influence) presence and guidance into the future – transforming and decolonising the way knowledge is produced through research.

Pūrākau are both theory and method, a noun and a verb, a philosophy and a doing (Lee-Morgan 2017). Utilising and activating pūrākau help us to understand our lives and experiences as Māori and are an invaluable and transformational methodological tool for analysis and decolonisation. Pūrākau as a methodology enables us to reconfigure the way our

stories are told. Within the words and the messages of the pūrākau told in this research is evidence which is valid and robust (Lee-Morgan 2017). Wairua, mana and rangatiratanga of tūpuna wāhine, participants and te taiao are cloaked by pūrākau. Pūrākau encapsulate the essence and agency of participants, including ancestresses and te taiao (Sioui 2020). The following discussion focuses on the ways in which the pūrākau of Ngāti Kuri women were collected as data from which to better understand the portrayal, politics, power and provocation of Māori women's stories, identities and relationships (Lee-Morgan 2017).

Pūrākau contain philosophies, science, ethical and fit-for-purpose guidelines long before they were overwritten by patriarchal, Christian, Eurocentric colonisers (Archibald 2008, Lee 2009, Pihama et al. 2019). Pūrākau, however, became diluted. They were also commodified, mistreated and sanitised for a colonial audience to place judgement and validate the misinformed notions of superiority (Lee-Morgan 2017). Lee (2009 87)⁵ explains:

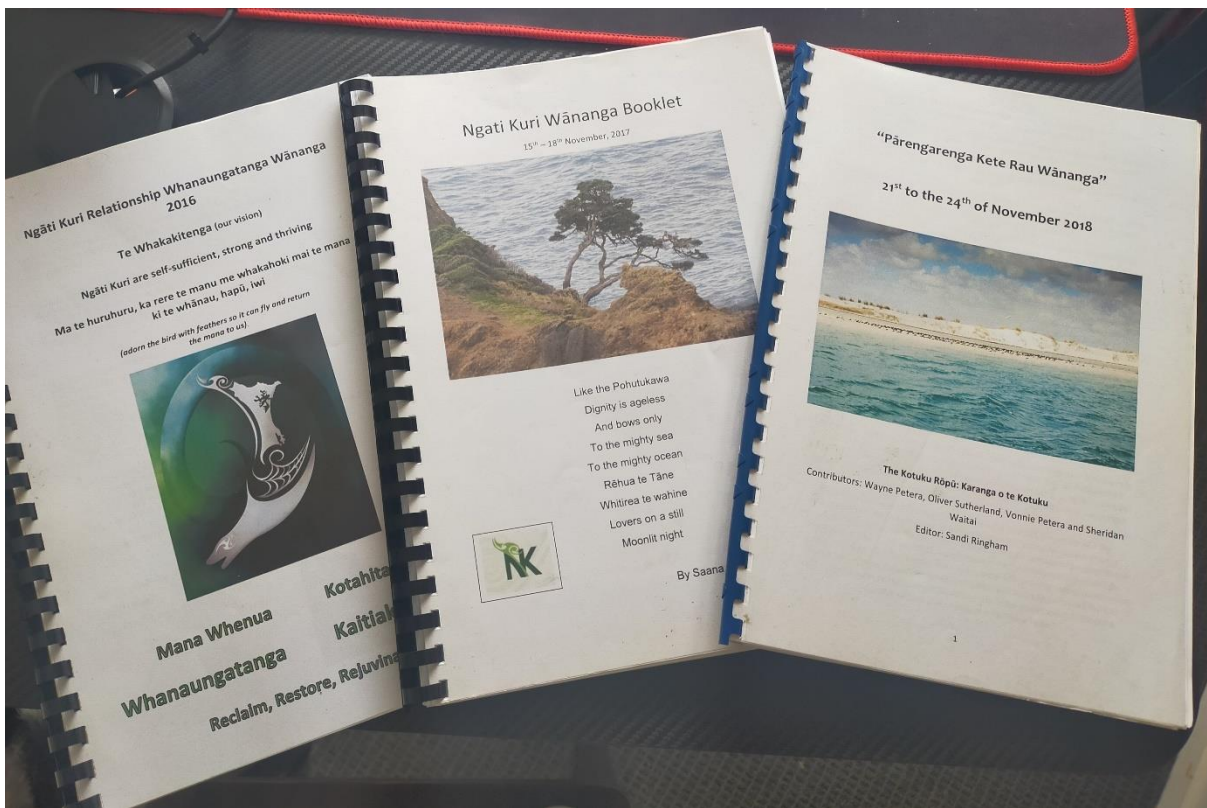
Identifying the colonial influences on our cultural traditions is an important part of the reclamation process of pūrākau as methodology. However, analysing the way pūrākau have been mistreated in the past, and charting the development of pūrākau in contemporary settings is only part of proposing pūrākau as methodology.

Pūrākau in this research are negotiated and positioned in the methodological context (Lee 2009). Cognisant of this I acknowledge that while I endeavoured to extend the power to participants, the final thesis is ultimately written by me. The responsibility of navigating philosophical systems to unpack the intricate meanings pūrākau hold for participants and then producing information about iwi and whanau is a huge weight and one not to be taken lightly (Lee 2009).

⁵ Professor Jenny Bol Jun Lee-Morgan's work focuses on Māori pedagogy, pūrākau and methodology. Lee-Morgan has changed her name over the years. In her earlier works she writes as Jenny Bol Jun Lee.

Through engagement in pūrākau, both storytellers, listeners and researcher are no longer participants in a single story but orators and receivers who enliven the stories of their histories and their present worlds. In many ways the researcher becomes both the listener and then the scribe. To take on a task such as this is a great responsibility, one that I consider to be an honour and a privilege. Traditional pūrākau were co-authored and published in NKRWG wānanga booklets that were written for iwi-led conferences held for visiting scientists and conservationists.

Figure 4.1: Ngāti Kuri wānanga booklets, 2016, 2017, 2018



Source: Sandi Ringham

These booklets are unpublished and the information contained in these booklets maybe be used in the future as Ngāti Kuri develop a more concise iwi narrative. This is in line with the autonomy of Ngāti Kuri and findings of this thesis. Ngāti Kuri are in the process of gathering, checking and reaffirming an iwi narrative that is consistent. Ngāti Kuri pūrākau and

narratives are diverse and varied, each tribal member will have their own version of a pūrākau which may be shared in different spaces. Each version is valid and may be developed to fit an event and/or situation.

The stories were discussed and negotiated initially with three women and one man, each a participant in this research. The pūrākau were discussed in person, over phone calls and in emails as different versions went back and forth between us for editing. It was crucial that the Maieke and Moehau pūrākau were able to send a message to visiting scientists that was meaningful and fit-for-purpose. Up to 60 scientists have been gifted the booklets that hold Maieke, Moehau and taonga species pūrākau. These pūrākau were written and then re-written and then discussed again during a wānanga with seven wāhine to ensure the pūrākau were a robust representation of Ngāti Kuri women's roles, responsibilities and relationships. The taonga species featured in the thesis, apart from Rātā Moehau (endemic to Ngāti Kuri lands), are also significant taonga for other iwi and the kuaka is also connected to other Indigenous peoples in the Northern and Southern hemisphere. I acknowledge that there will be vast and diverse stories regarding these species globally and nationally. Pūrākau presented in this thesis are Ngāti Kuricentric and are employed here to understand better how participants transform their identities, relationships and sense of belonging through engaging with the taonga species and their pūrākau.

Methods for the research kete

The following methods were used: whakawhiti kōrero; wānanga (workshops); and tipi haere with participants. Ngāti Kuri women participants were invited to take part in the design of the research and analysis of data. These women shaped the research topic, theories, methods and analysis throughout this thesis. This meant that the knowledge making processes was shared and elements of theory and methodology were developed collectively.

A total of 21 Ngāti Kuri – 19 women and 2 men - shaped this research alongside me.

Through various networks and the work of NKRWG approximately 40 people from the iwi and scientific community have influenced the research in a variety of ways. Each participant, formal or informal, contributes to the mauri (life essence) of the thesis.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the way in which participants took part in the research methods. Two of the women have taken part in all methods offered: whakawhiti kōrero; information wānanga; tipi haere and the analysis wānanga. This has meant that their experience, knowledge, values and principles have flowed in a continuum across not only collected research material but also theory, method and analysis. This illustrates some of the ways these Ngāti Kuri women are decolonising te taiao and, indeed, research.

Table 4.1: Participant engagement whakawhiti kōrero, wānanga and tipi haere

Participants	Whakawhiti kōrero	Wharekapua Wānanga	Tipi Haere	Analysis wānanga	Findings wānanga
Betsy Young	☘	☘	☘	☘	
Vonni Petera	☘	☘	☘	☘	
Catherine Murupaenga-Iken	☘				
Sheridan Waitai	☘				☘
Bethany Matai Edmunds			☘	☘	☘
Awaroa		☘	☘	☘	
Tangirere	☘				
Caroline -Hempel-Ringham	☘				☘
Hine (Ashley) Waitai-Dye	☘				
Kohine			☘		

Tihe		✿	✿		
Lillian Karaka	✿				
Jen Le Lievre			✿	✿	✿
Pani Petera	✿				
Debra Brown	✿				
Ian Kaihe-Wetting	✿				
Coral Wiki					✿
Wayne Petera	✿				
Huia Murupaenga		✿	✿	✿	
Savanah Watkin	✿				✿
Ngāti Kuri tūpuna wāhine	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿
Te Taiao	✿	✿	✿	✿	
Sandi Ringham	✿	✿	✿	✿	✿

All my participants, including ancestresses, te taiao and myself, shared whakapapa with Ngāti Kuri. Tūpuna wāhine and te taiao are contained in the table above to ensure the contribution from these more-than-human participants are fully recognised in my methods discussion. We are uri of Maieke and Moehau, we are whanaunga and all who touched, spoke and listened during this research did so as a collective and as co-producers of knowledge. My participants did not merely participate, they drove, mobilised and theorised about not only the topic but also the methodology that informed my research practices.

Participants were invited to be involved in the research through the work I was doing with the NKRWG. I had been working with the group for two years prior to starting my PhD and was building relationships within my iwi. Through this, I was getting to know researchers from

the Auckland War Memorial Museum, the University of Auckland, and the University of Canterbury. I was also involved in the building of working relationships with researchers from the scientific community such as Crown research institutes, such as NIWA (National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research) and Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research. We came together for meetings at the Auckland War Memorial Museum as well as conferences held in Ngāti Kuri's tribal lands.

Some Indigenous scholars who research in homelands often have either grown up or had always had a close connection to their tribe and their homelands. This was not the case for me. The work I was doing in the NKWRG and this thesis has brought me closer to my whakapapa. At the start of the research, I was unfamiliar to the many Ngāti Kuri people, and it took time to build relationships. I was travelling to Te Hiku three times a year to attend wānanga and meetings. In between visits north, I was going to meetings at the Auckland War Memorial Museum and with Ngāti Kuri women based in other locations who are working for both the iwi and the museum. Across these events I had contact with approximately 100 people from Aotearoa, Hawaii, Tahiti, Rapanui, Tonga, Pilau and Australia. Interaction with knowledge holders were located in boardrooms, marae, museums, universities, and on land, water and ecological hotspots. I met with people at meetings, conferences that were held in taiao, marae and urban institutions. The locations where NKRWG were working were numerous and complex.

Participants played a significant role in deciding on the research locations, suggesting places of interest where we could meet and stay together. Te taiao also had agency in the decisions made around where and when information collection would take place. Accessibility, weather, terrain and distance shaping where we could and could not go. To decide where wānanga and tipi haere for this research would be held, participants were asked which

locations they would like to visit via email, phone calls or social media messages. Tipi haere locations were dependent on accessibility and distance. Many of the culturally significant sites for Ngāti Kuri are remote and can only be accessed with a four-wheel drive vehicle or by foot. Distance and time played a factor in choosing locations - the length of time it took to travel between places limited the number of places we could visit in one day. Interview locations were decided by participants. All interviews took place in the homes of participants. During one interview I received a ta moko (traditional Māori tattoo), the artist Hine (Ashely) Waitai-Dye, agreeing to be interviewed as she worked. The result was an in-depth conversation about her connection to people and place and a beautiful Ta Moko that recorded my whakapapa, connection to people, place and taonga species and my journey to my homelands.

Figure 4.2: Sandi's ta moko, interview with Ta moko artist Hine (Ashley) Waitai-Dye



Source: Sandi Ringham

Te taiao in this research included physical landscapes and the institutions that held and produced knowledge about nature, ecosystems and taonga species and how it should be protected. I met most Ngāti Kuri women kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) talked about my research on a number of occasions before I invited them to be participants in my research. I met with Sheridan Waitai and Huia Murupaenga before I had chosen my PhD topic in February 2016. I had been working with both Huia and Sheridan within NKRWG. This was an informal meeting in which we discussed topics that would be of interest to Ngāti Kuri. Ngāti Kuri women's experiences, relationships and leadership in conservation spaces were at the centre of our discussions and this guided my choice of topic. I met 15 of the participants during NKRWG wānanga, 1 at the Auckland War Memorial Museum and 2 through the other participants. These two women were whanaunga and invited to attend the first wānanga held at Wharekapua. Three of the participants were members of my immediate whanau, my mother, sister and daughter. Below are two tables that present information about where participants contributed to the research material and the locations where methods were put into practice.

Table 4.2 shows the locations in which research methods were implemented and how many participants were involved. The majority of research material was gathered in Te Hiku o te Ika. All the women who attended the wānanga and tipi haere offered intimate knowledge of our places, histories and mātauranga. Place played an important role in the ways in which knowledge was gathered and constructed. In this thesis place is a participant with the agency to shape the research experience and the knowledge produced (Sioui 2020).

Table 4.2: Mapping locations: participants, methods and place

Location	Whakawhiti kōrero	Wharekapua wānanga	Tipi haere	Pūrākau wānanga	Findings wānanga
homes	13				
boardrooms				7	
Iwi accommodation		6			
Waiora Marae			4		
Kapowairua			5		
Te Hāpua	1		4		
Te Paki	1				6
Rarawa Beach			7	7	
Ngataki	5	6		7	
Ahipara	1				
Kaitaia	4				
Whangarei	1				

Wānanga one: Connecting with participants and te taiao

To wānanga is to practice an inherited tradition of learning that centres Māori ways of knowledge-making (Mahuika and Mahuika 2020). Three wānanga were held during the research. The first wānanga collected data and information at the beginning of the research and the second wānanga was held near the middle of the research where participants were invited to take part in the analysis of pūrākau and a third was held to report on findings back to participants. Both the information and analysis wānanga were held in Ngātaki and the

findings wānanga was held at Te Paki (see Mapping the research, Figure 2.1). As a research method wānanga encourages a collective production of knowledge, shared learning and participatory practices (Simmonds 2014, Smith 2020). Mahuika and Mahuika (2020 369) define wānanga as “dynamic living tradition that has developed across generations”. Both wānanga became a space for Ngāti Kuri women to deepen their understanding of pūrākau, their geographies and decolonisation. The reciprocal quality of wānanga enables co-production of a research story that is rich and inclusive and embraces the concept of ako (shared learning) (Simmonds 2014).

Six women came to the information wānanga held on the 16 - 18 February 2018 that focused on collecting data and information. The wānanga was held over the course of a weekend at Wharekapua, an iwi owned and operated tourist accommodation in Ngātaki. I chose this place because I could rent it for the entire weekend so that participants that lived elsewhere could stay with me for the two nights I was there. It also meant that participants could come and go as they pleased. While most turned up on the first night, one woman joined us on the second night, while another joined us for a meal. Participants were not confined to attending the whole weekend and were able to attend when it fitted in with their whānau and work commitments.

While most women lived in Ngātaki, some homes were located some distance from Wharekapua, the wānanga location. One participant had come from Auckland and I had driven up from Hamilton. Wharekapua is located high above Rarawa Beach and boasts a fantastic view of the landscape reaching from Houhora to Exhibition Bay and out over the Pacific. The location and landscape played a role in setting the scene for the wānanga we looked over our oceans and coastlines, we had beach access, and we were firmly rooted in iwi lands (Johnson and Larson 2013, Sioui 2020).

Figure 4.3: View from Wharekapua wānanga



Source: Sandi Ringham, Wharekapua wānanga, 17 February 2018

We ate, talked, sang, slept, walked and travelled together as a wānanga group over the period of the weekend. This was an invaluable way for us to: build whakawhanaungatanga; discuss the research; te taiao; our histories; experiences and to learn waiata (song). Through this, the wairua of the research gained momentum. The wānanga was not restricted by time limits which fostered meaningful conversations about Ngāti Kuri women and their relationships to te taiao throughout the weekend, over breakfast, in beds and over cooking.

Figure 4.4: Wharekapua kai and accommodation



Source: Sandi Ringham 16 February 2018

Recording all the information was, at times, challenging during this wānanga. I catered for the event and found that this meant I missed out on some of the conversations that took place because I was in the kitchen. At times, there was more than one conversation going on at the same time, therefore not all material was captured. I put this down to learning and while I provided manaakitanga through my cooking, I would organise a whanau member to help with the catering in future wānanga.

Despite the challenges of capturing all the material we were still able to discuss, collect and assemble our grandmothers' stories, our current stories and our aspirations. Mana Wahine mātauranga and pūrākau were shared in, with and about place bringing the challenges and successes of the women who came before us to life.

Tipi haere: travelling talk together

Participants took part in tipi haere in conjunction with wānanga. Tipi haere means to 'roam about' or to 'call into places'. In the research it was a term my participants used to talk about

the excursions we went on to collect information in our taiao. Initially I was using terms such as hikoī (to step, walk, stride) or haerenga (journey, trip) but as we travelled together it was suggested by one participant using ‘tipi haere’ was an excellent way describe the level of spontaneity, mobility and fun that took place during our time together.

The term tipi haere was used by Witi Ihimaera in the book *Māori boy: A memoirs of childhood* to describe the way in which he travelled the world. Shelley Marie Arlidge used the notion of tipi haere in her creative writing master’s dissertation (2020) in a chapter title *Tipi Haere: Excursions 1958 – 2020* which featured the poem *Karanga nō Kororāreka* where tipi haere was included in the final line of the poem: “Maybe it’s time to up sticks, tipi haere, become a nomad for a while” (Arlidge 2020 84). Tipi haere has been used to describe the ways in which people travel the world (Ihimaera 2014, Te Whata 2021), however, has not been developed as a method to collect information. Tipi haere in this thesis is utilised as a research method that roams across a tribal landscape, participants calling into places to engage people and place in the collection of knowledge.

Tipi haere is a mobile place-based method. Geographers and social scientists are beginning to use walking interviews/groups or go-along interviews as a method that captures participants’ experience within place (Botfield et al. 2019, Lee and Ingold 2020, Riley and Holton 2016). In Aotearoa, Māori and non-Māori scholars have further extended mobile focus groups through haerenga kitea (go-along visual records) to draw from participant experiences (Moewaka Barnes et al. 2017, Wetherell et al. 2020). Haerenga kitea allowed for the study of wairua during commemoration days and how lived embodied experiences are articulated by participants (Moewaka Barnes et al. 2017). Tipi haere captures the ways in which Māori experience, remember and create their emotional and spiritual memory of place. For some Māori, travelling together is a time when waiata are sung, pūrākau are told, there is laughter

and tears, sunshine and rain, roads, pathways and footprints. Tipi haere is more than an interview or moving focus group it is an enactment whakawhanaungatanga with place and people.

Tipi haere activated a wānanga moving through space that prompted participants to share further knowledges, pūrākau, experiences and thoughts in meaningful ways. While walking interviews are capable of eliciting rich and robust data as participants and researchers visit sites of significance (Botfield et al. 2019, Lee and Ingod 2020), tipi haere focuses on the embodiment of emotions and relationships for participants, researcher and place. I discuss tipi haere as a method in order to contribute further to Mana Wahine geographies and methodologies.

Walking interviews “generate richer data on experiences of the space, and perceptions of their current and potential configurations” (Botfield et al. 2019 3). Moving through space and place provides a research environment that prompts participants to communicate their experiences in a more authentic way (Botfield et al. 2019, Lee and Ingold 2020, Riley and Holton 2016). Gone are the walls that contain and maintain the power relationships between researcher and participants. Participants become less concerned with giving the ‘right’, ‘expected’ or ‘mediated’ answers (Botfield et al. 2019). Mobilising data collection triggers and facilitates a deeper less censored dialogue to take place (Botfield et al. 2019, Riley and Holton 2016, Smith 2020). Place provides a cue for discussion and walking interviews are noted as a method for building and maintaining relationships with participants (Lee and Ingold 2020, Riley and Holton 2016, Smith 2020). Walking interviews and, indeed, tipi haere, lead to a deeper understanding of place attachment and an “opportunity to unpick the complex, and potentially contradictory” layers within locations that participants occupy (Riley and Holton 2016 6).

Waiora marae

Tipi haere initiated multisensory place-based learning and gathering at Ngāti Kuri spiritual and cultural sites of our tūpuna. Our tipi haere began on 17 February 2018, day two of our wānanga. I had hired a University of Waikato van so we could all travel together. While our itinerary was to head directly to Te Hāpua, a marae committee meeting had been called and most participants were either members of the marae or they were on the committee. It was important that we attend. I rang participants we were meeting in Te Hāpua and let them know we would be late. Participants understood that iwi and marae matters of importance take preference and they agreed to meet us at a later time.

We got up early on day one to make sandwiches for the marae meeting. One of the women was training for a marathon on the beach and her energy and commitment motivated us all and shaped the start of our day. I had over catered for the wānanga, so we took our surplus food along and sandwiches to share at the marae. We headed down to the marae at 9.30 am and helped prepare the food. The marae meeting started at 10 am. While changing the itinerary meant we were not able to reach all our scheduled destinations, supporting the marae was more important and provided other interesting opportunities.

Lunches packed and five fun filled Ngāti Kuri women climbed into the van. My role in the research was further complicated as I ignited the engine. I was now also driver and navigator. While the marae hui was a diversion from the wānanga programme, it was still highly relevant to the objectives of the research which was to advance and support Ngāti Kuri women into positions where decolonisation can take place and relationships and identities are strengthened. As we arrived, we were greeted by haukāinga. Many haukāinga had seen us climbing out of a University of Waikato van and they were curious as to why we were in a van from a university so far away. Haukāinga asked what we were doing and where we were

going. This became an opportunity for inviting other Ngāti Kuri women into the research. From this I was able to share my research and secure another whakawhiti kōrero. For me it was also an opportunity to attend a marae meeting within my homelands. This was a first for me, as for too long I have been disconnected from my marae. As I sat in the marae listening to the hui I realised I had arrived one step closer to embodying my identity as Ngāti Kuri.

The hui was run very efficiently, and the committee moved through each item quickly. One of our participants was elected on to the marae committee. This was an opportunity for us as Ngāti Kuri women to vote, support and celebrate Mana Wahine positioning and leadership. I noted that the majority of people attending the hui were women, both in the meeting and on the marae committee.

Figure 4.5: Te waka



Source: Betsy Young, used with consent, 17 February 2018

Te waka: The van

Mana Wahine, positioning and the leadership of Ngāti Kuri women was discussed in the van as we drove to Te Hāpua. Participants agreed that it was obvious that it is women who are leading in Ngāti Kuri in a number of spaces, particularly marae and environmental spaces.

Our next destination, Te Hāpua, is the most northern settlement in Aotearoa. To get there you

have to drive a gravel road that winds around the landscape high above the coastline.

Focusing on driving and the sound of the gravel road under the wheels of the van made it difficult to hear what was being said in the back. I caught shards of conversations, snippets of memories. What was clear in my rear-view mirror was the whakawhanaungatanga that was growing over this windy bumpy journey.

We travelled remote gravel roads that wound their way up and over rises and valleys. The close proximity of passengers in the rolling bumpy van incited further excitement and laughter. The passing landscape provoked childhood memories about growing up on the land and some of the events that had taken place over the years. Many of the stories were joyous but there were also stories about injustices. The van became a vehicle that transported participants' emotions and a sense of belonging to place.

The van was a moving place where we learnt how we whakapapa to several mountains and hapū in the area and that much of this knowledge had been silenced. Kahuroanaki is the mountain that all Ngāti Kuri can whakapapa to, however, there are also maunga (mountain) that are unique to each hapū. It just so happened that we were heading to a place that held my whakapapa, papakāinga and tūpuna. In the van I learnt that my hapū Ngāti Waiora was once located in Kapowairua and my connection to this place was through the bloodline of my mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. The van became a place of deep and meaning learning, pūrākau, waiata and whakawhanaungatanga.

Te Hāpua

We arrived in Te Hāpua around 1.30 pm and parked by the wharf. As we climbed out of the van to eat our lunch, pūrākau unfolded naturally as we looked across the Pārengarenga Harbour to Te Kokota (Silica Sandspit). Here two other Ngāti Kuri women joined the tipi haere. I gave gift bags to the participants who had just joined us. I also received gifts. This

exchange of gifts brought with it an exchange of information. My gift contained a pūpūwhakarongotaua (pūpūkōrari, pūpūharakeke or the New Zealand flax snail) shell, pink shelly sand from Kapowairua, white silica sand from Kokota and some beautiful manuka oil that had been made by haukāinga. Each item also holding a story about place and Ngāti Kuri people. The pūpūwhakarongotaua⁶ is a taonga species that symbolises our kaitiakitanga and whakawhanaungatanga with whenua and moana. The sand from both Kapowairua and Te Kokota symbolising Crown treaty breaches and injustices. The manuka oil was an indicator for future possibilities and opportunities.

⁶ Pūpūwhakarongotaua translates to the snail that warns of war parties. A taonga species (kaiao katoa) of Ngāti Kuri the flax snail has three different Te Reo Māori names that the iwi commonly uses – pūpūharakeke, pūpūwhakarongotaua and Pūpūkōrari. During the Findings wānanga participants and I had a discussion to decide how I might use all three or whether just one should be chosen. The result was to use all three. One participant noted that the pūpūharakeke was a common name given to the snail by DOC and did not convey the significance of our relationship to the snail. The correct kupu was determined by the context in which the kupu was used. All five participants present were sure this was not the kupu the thesis would use. The use of ‘pūpūwhakarongotaua’ relates to the sound the snail makes when disturbed. Harakeke (flax) was planted on the perimeter of pā (fortified village). If the snails were stepped on the sounds they made would warn sentinels that a war party was at the palisades of the pā. The snail is considered to be kaitiaki and taonga species of Ngāti Kuri and when spoken about in this context they are pūpūwhakarongotaua. ‘Pūpūkōrari’ is used when discussing the snail in relation to weaving flax. ‘Kōrari’ is the word used for flax in Ngāti Kuri dialect and should be used in relation to the plant, weaving and the ecosystem.

Figure 4.6: Wharekapua wānanga tuku (gifts)



Source: Sandi Ringham

Two of us on the tipi haere were not haukāinga: I live in the Waikato; one woman lives in Auckland, and another had only recently moved back to Te Hiku o te Ika. Hearing the stories of haukāinga provoked us to discuss what it meant to be displaced and to return. It was noted that the tipi haere was an excellent way to re-connect, re-establish and maintain our whakapapa to whenua and people.

It was a wild and windy day on the Pārengarenga Harbour which effected the quality of the audio recording that captured the kōrero. I did my best to detail each story in my research diary when I returned to Wharekapua. I summarised both the wānanga and tipi haere immediately which proved to be a practice that served me well as my research diary was stolen when my house in Hamilton was burgled a month later. I had also stored audio recordings on my computer and in an external drive that was stored in a safe location.

After our kōrero over lunch we visited the home of one our whanau living in Te Hāpua. As we arrived, whanau were clearing and maintaining some of the kōrari (harakeke, flax) growing on their land. Several participants, including myself, were avid weavers and the harvesting and propagating of kōrari was an opportunity not to be missed. During this activity we learnt the correct way to separate and propagate the plant and about the different types of kōrari that grow well in Te Hiku o te Ika. Again, the flexibility of wānanga and tipi haere allowed for us to make the most of any opportunities that arose. Harvesting kōrari was highly relevant and productive because it inspired conversations about how Te Hāpua and Ngāti Kuri women had played an important role in the initiation of the National Weavers Association and the Māori Women's Welfare League. It was also an interaction, a contribution from taonga species and te taiao (Campbell 2019). Harvesting kōrari to propagate meant digging into the land of our tūpuna. It meant touching, smelling and feeling the dirt and the roots of kōrari. It also meant stripping back the dead strands to reveal the fresh new growth and, in many ways, this was what we were doing on our tipi haere. We were touching, smelling, feeling and learning about our lands. We were stripping back the dead and dried up leaves of colonisation to reveal and wonder at the roots and new growth.

Kapowairua

The tipi haere was unfurling in ways that I did not or could not have planned. Our time was quickly slipping by. We had planned to visit both Kapowairua and Taputaputa but due to the distances between the two places we decided Kapowairua would be our last destination of the tipi harae (mobile workshop, to roam about, call in at places). Seven participants came to Kapowairua, the two women we met in Te Hāpua came with us. Here we parked at the foot of one of our mountains called Maungapiko. The wind had died down so audio recording became a little easier. What I had not prepared for was the way groups of people can wander off and have more than one conversation at once. I found myself and my audio-recorder

unable to be in different places at the same time. I vowed that on the next tipi haere I would ask participants to also record their conversations if I was elsewhere.

At Kapowairua, the wairua of tipi haere changed in subtle ways. The energetic excitement of travel and harvesting kōrari was replaced with a more quiet and thoughtful quality.

Kapowairua was once a populated papakāinga where Ngāti Kuri well-being thrived. Kumara gardens, ocean and a freshwater spring supplied the hapū that lived there with the capacity to sustain life through Ngāti Kuri environmental management systems. For Ngāti Kuri, Kapowairua, is a location where spiritual, cultural and taiao values are not only layered over the landscapes as some geographers would suggest, but the strands of intergenerational memory and relationships are intimately and intricately woven together linking our tūpuna wāhine with present and future generations within the landscape. Being, speaking, singing, working and walking in our wāhi tapu and mahinga kai is a continuation of that weaving. We were in the process of weaving Ngāti Kuri women's identities and relationships into the very fabric of the landscape.

Kapowairua has been managed by the Department of Conservation since 1987. Previously it had been managed by New Zealand various government departments, such as the Forest Service, Department of Lands and Survey and the Wildlife Service. The traditional papakāinga is now littered with campsites, composting toilets and overflowing rubbish bins. Participants talked about what the displacement of our tūpuna meant for them and for us. They spoke of the health and joy within the hapū and whenua before the Crown pushed the hapū into a settlement at Te Hāpua⁷ and they told of the declining health and wealth of the hapū that followed.

⁷ Ngāti Kuri wanted a school in Kapowairua but the government would only provide one at Te Hāpua. Te Hāpua Native School was established in 1896 Te Hāpua was considered an ideal port, however, it was mainly wetlands and there was very little fresh water. The high salt content in the soil meant gardening was difficult. Homes

Kapowairua was also a participant in our tipi haere. Taonga, like the rock formation ‘Ihamano’ featured in the kōrero that was taking place. Ihamano’s presence spoke to us further about kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga and the role of woman. Ihamano sits at the base of Maungapiko. The formation is shaped like the face of a woman, is balanced precariously on and over a thinner pile of rocks. One must hongī Ihamano before ascending Maungapiko as she is the gatekeeper of the wāhi tapu that is Maungapiko. Kapowairua and the landscape sends messages through stories of playing an active role in the way Ngāti Kuri women’s identities are woven into the landscape.

As we travelled through our rohe memories were mobilised and shared. Participants were able to talk not only about their experiences and tell pūrākau they were also able to show us where events took place - where papakāinga were once located and which plants, mountains and waters were significant. The places we visited were also participants and played a role in what we talked about and the stories that were told.

Tipi haere, wānanga moving through space, has become an important method used by the NKRWG to build and inform relationships with research partners. Travelling together helps people get to know each other, build and maintain relationships, and when we tell our stories in our places we feel and experience the unique wairua and mana of Ngāti Kuri taiao. We aim to create allies that hold a sense of belonging and connection to us as people and to our lands.

Wānanga two: Pūrākau reflections

Wānanga two was held on a Saturday 27 April 2019 in the boardroom at Te Manawa, the Ngāti Kuri Trust Board headquarters, Ngātaki, Te Hiku o te Ika, Aotearoa. Due to work commitments and the distances some of participants needed to travel, it was decided that the

were wet and mouldy, and diet changed with the lack of gardens. Tuberculosis set in and was reported infant mortality rose in the early 1900s (Ngāti Kuri Trust Board 2014).

wānanga would take place over the duration of one day. Again, I rented Wharekapua for the night to offer participants accommodation and the opportunity to enjoy more time together. Some of us travel many hours to be in our lands and with our people. Distance participants travelled to be at the wānanga ranged from 382 – 449 km. Some participants travelled the gravelled road from Te Hāpua in the north and others had come from Kaitaia. I lived the furthest away travelling up seven hours to get to Kaitaia. It was a further hour to get to Ngātaki.

I stayed in Kaitaia the night before the wānanga and arrived at Te Manawa, Ngāti Kuri Trust Board offices in Ngātaki at 8 am the following day. Participants were due to start arriving at 8.30 am. I prepared a light breakfast. This was a great way to start the day. Conversations developed as participants arrived one by one and through the familiarity of preparing food together (Johnston and Longhurst 2012). Wāhine, their mokopuna (grandchildren) and tamariki who came connected over breakfast. Participants, food and the children created an atmosphere that was relaxed and fun. Smith (2012) notes that during Kaupapa Māori research there are important moments of laughter and fun as we engage with respondents and during the delivery of methods. These moments are not often discussed in Western methodologies. These moments of fun and laughter over food and with children were a crucial way for us to practice and build whakawhanaungatanga.

Eating breakfast together gave us time to settle in and discuss the purpose of the wānanga. I put the wānanga schedule aside and let participants set the course of the day. We moved into the board room and opened the wānanga.

Figure 4.7: Pūrākau wānanga



Source: Betsy Young, Saturday 27 April 2019, used with consent

Mahi kōrero

The wānanga started with an exchange of gifts. I had prepared gift bags (horopito healing cream made by me, bath fizz, notepad, pens, pencils, highlighters) and was given a beautiful rimurimu (seaweed) woven kete (basket) that held – muka, pūpūwhakarongataua shell, albatross feathers and pīngao woven flowers.

Figure 4.8: Te taiiao taonga



Source: Sandi Ringham, 27 April 2019. Te Manawa, Ngāti Kuri Trust Board Headquarters, Ngātaki

These were meaningful gifts both for me and the research. The pīngao woven flower symbolised one of the pūrākau that featured in the wānanga and the thesis. The muka symbolised the whakapapa thread that ties us together, the pūpūwhakarongotaua, our kaitiaki, and the albatross feathers our flight path. The rimurimu kete a raranga (woven seaweed kete) where we can safeguard ourselves and weave knowledge. Participants were also given information, consent forms and copies of the three pūrākau booklets: Pīngao, Moehau and Kuaka.

Gifted the elements of whakapapa, kaitiaki and raranga (weaving) I began by introducing my research topic, theoretical framework and the intention of our wānanga. I informed participants that the schedule was a rough guide and that they were encouraged to speak their minds and shape our discussion and time together. We were there to analyse and discuss pūrākau as methodology, the ethics of sharing pūrākau and the ways in which our pūrākau are colonised and gendered. Whether we discussed or to what depth we discuss each topic was driven by the women. I listened for tohu as to when it was time to move on to the next topic.

I had brought with me two of the wānanga booklets NKWRG had edited and published between 2016 and 2018 and asked how these books may have transformed iwi spaces. NKRWG published pūrākau around our taonga species within these booklets. I felt the booklets were a helpful way to start initiating a conversation regarding the ethics of retelling, writing and publishing our oral tradition of pūrākau.

Participants saw the booklets as informing a larger publishing project. Past booklets needed to be constantly revisited and reviewed to ensure the pūrākau corresponds with our korero, our work within and for taiao. Discussing Indigenous methodologies such as pūrākau and storywork with participants highlighted the need for Indigenous to continuously gather, protect and portray their stories. Storywork, therefore pūrākau, is a powerful and beneficial research method capable of strengthening voices, relationships and political might (Lee-Morgan 2017). The need to finish and tidy our pūrākau was also noted as an important part of the process. This means that storywork is never entirely complete. As Vonni stated:

We must keep coming back to it – to reaffirm and check that we are consistent in our word, practice our intentions (Vonnī, Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

Wānanga as a method and space gave us the time and platform for participants to put our pūrākau methodologies into practice. Using the booklets as analysis material enabled us to review our past work. By reviewing our past storywork we could acknowledge the growth and development of both our written text and Ngāti Kuri voice in nature and scientific spaces. We could signpost which pūrākau might be missing and how we might gather them in. We could also signpost whose stories might be missing from our work. This method provided both the research and participants with a way to map where and whose pūrākau we might visit next. This is discussed in the following chapter.

A discussion on the portrayal of pūrākau was at the crux of this wānanga. I felt it was important to present research material and findings under the ethics of Ngāti Kuri women. To practice wānanga is to come together to discuss and deliberate on a topic of interest and importance (Mahuika and Mahuika 2020, Simmonds 2014). It involves an exchange of knowledge and learning that is diverse and multidirectional. Participants and their contribution to the way the method was applied is unpacked. At the front of this discussion was thoughtful consideration of which stories should be held back and protected and which can be readily proliferated. Each pūrākau was discussed for approximately 45 minutes. While we could have, no doubt, talked through the entire day the Autumn sun and tamahine (girls, daughters) were calling us to our tipi haere. As I drew the wānanga to a close a participant asked if she could offer us one more gift. She had composed a ruri while thinking about coming to the wānanga as she nursed and prepared her baby for sleep. For the participant, the pūrākau transformed into a ruri for her baby as she shaped the tune and the lyrics. The powerful outcome of the writing and singing of the ruri is discussed in depth in Chapter 7: ‘The fire whispers to our blood and bones: Sensing home’.

The ruri sits at the front of this thesis and brings wairua, aroha and mauri to our wānanga and the thesis. It represented the love we had for each other, te taiao and the work we did. The ruri gave tune, rhythm and sound to the spirit and life force of what we wanted to accomplish – to strengthen the voices and capacity of Ngāti Kuri women. It enticed and intensified our ihi about our work. Participants felt the ruri was a perfect and inspiring way to move us to the next stage of our day and in our work with and within te taiao.

Tipi Harae to Rarawa Beach

Following our analysis of pūrākau we prepared lunch together. Some participants had brought food to add to what I had supplied. Again, good food, laughter and tamariki

energised and brought fun and joy to the wānanga. After lunch, two of our participants had to leave for other commitments. The remaining 5 of us jumped into 2 cars and drove the gravel road to Rarawa Beach. We had decided that we had covered all we could in the morning and the time spent on the beach would be spent relaxing, rejuvenating and reconnecting with taiao through learning Bethany's ruri.

Here the tamahine were also able to engage with the work we were doing. As we walked the white sands of Rarawa Beach the tamahine listened as we talked, asked questions and told us what they had and had not known, what they had and had not seen. We finally settled in the sheltered dunes and sat amongst the pīngao and Bethany Edmunds taught us her ruri. We learnt each line and its meaning – we sang it to the ocean, land, sand and pīngao. We sang it to each other and the taiao.

The species named in the ruri, identifies and locates three Ngāti Kuri taonga species: pīngao, pūpūkōrari⁸ (pūpūwhakarongotaua, flax snail) and kuaka (bar-tailed godwit). The name of each species is sung in relation to its relationship with Ngāti Kuri and the places it lives. Learnt and sung at Rarawa Beach was a way for us to learn and connect with our taonga species. It was a way for us to initiate succession. Ideally the tamahine would pick up our mahi (work) when the time came. Through the waiata we learnt more about our relationships with people, place and taonga species. We imagined and hoped the taiao and all within it could hear our ruri and know that we were still there and, for some of us, returned.

As the afternoon faded, we headed up to Wharekapua. The day's work was complete, it was time to relax and enjoy each other's company without the research or work dominating the conversation. More food and more laughter followed by relaxation ensured we were all well

⁸ Pūpūwhakarongotaua and pūpūkōrari are interchangeable dependant on the context in which the species name is used. In this instance pūpūkōrari is used because the ruri was written by a weaver and represents her relationship with both kōrari and pūpūkōrari.

rested for our return to our daily lives in the morning. I, for one, had a seven-hour drive ahead of me.

Research conversations: Whakawhiti kōrero

Whakawhiti kōrero followed the course of conversation allowing participants to tell their stories and voice their concerns and aspirations (Pihama et al. 2019, Simmonds 2014).

Individual participant whakawhiti kōrero took place separate to wānanga allowing for participants to voice their thoughts privately. Five research conversations were conducted before any wānanga were held, 4 in between the 2 wānanga and 4 following the pūrākau analysis wānanga.

While whakawhiti kōrero in this research was much like an interview, the delivery of questions allowed for an open conversation to unfold (Pihama et al. 2019). Research conversations and interviews focused on relevant issues, aspirations and narratives of participants (Longhurst 2009, Mead 2003). Smith (2013) urges Indigenous researchers to move beyond reproducing Western research methods. The conversational aspect of whakawhiti kōrero sanctions a level of shared power to drive and guide the course of conversations. On the subject of interviewing, Smith (2013) reminds us to reflect on the two-way questioning that takes place and effects an interview might stimulate. Whakawhiti kōrero is not just a technical instrument for extracting information and data. It is a powerful human interaction that is an exchange of knowledge, memory and thoughts (Smith 2013).

Whakawhiti kōrero requires significant preparation and respect. When Indigenous researchers enter into whakawhiti kōrero with participants we become manuhiri (visitors) in their lives, homes and memories (Smith 2013). Both participants and researcher were able to uncover some aspects of our collective and individual identities, experiences and perspectives through whakawhiti kōrero.

Whakawhiti kōrero followed the flow of conversation. A set of questions (see appendix 2) guided the kōrero and participants were encouraged to discuss what they felt relevant and important to the research topic. This allows participants to determine and define what aspects of gender, taiao, relationships, conservation and or science they wished to focus on.

Whakawhiti kōrero were flexible and did not adhere to any strict temporal or spatial format. At times participants took me on a tour of their gardens and homes; at times we talked over a meal. Whakawhiti kōrero ranged from 20 minutes to two hours. This flexibility boosted the ability of the research to unfold meaningful material for analysis (Simmonds 2014).

Whakawhiti kōrero allowed the information gathering process “to hold fiercely to the lived and embodied experience of the participants” (Simmonds 2009 44).

Eleven women and 2 men took part in whakawhiti korero. As mentioned above whakawhiti kōrero were requested after several kanohi ki te kanohi meetings. Kanohi ki te kanohi encompasses more than just meeting an interviewee in person, it also requires a sharing of yourself which is an important aspect of engaging in whakawhiti kōrero. All thirteen whakawhiti kōrero were conducted in the homes of participants. Five homes were in Ngataki, 4 in Kaitaia and 1 each in Te Hāpua, Ahipara and Whangarei. Participants opened the doors of their homes to both me and the research allowing for whakawhiti kōrero to take place at a time that was convenient to them. This also meant that I was able to travel to some remote and interesting places in the rohe of Ngāti Kuri.

Participants were aware and well informed about the research topic and why I was requesting their time and knowledge. They were also aware that we shared whakapapa. While this aided my access to potential participants it also brought with it a responsibility on my part, as researcher and participants, to remain accountable and practice reciprocity (Simmonds 2014). One thing I learnt very quickly was to not book more than one whakawhiti kōrero in a day. I

was unable to forecast how long each conversation would take and often participants' homes would be an hour or more drive apart. At times whakawhiti kōrero with one individual would roll into another if a visitor arrived. I went into whakawhiti kōrero with plenty of time available, flexibility and openness. Whakawhiti kōrero allowed for participants to shape open conversations that are relevant and important to them.

Not all requests for an interview were granted and one woman preferred not to be a part whakawhiti kōrero but took part in other components. Another woman decided not to be a part of the research at all. I was very conscious of my identity as a researcher and the issues of power that might bring to the table. I understood my Ngāti Kuri identity did not guarantee women would grant me access nor trust. When whakawhiti kōrero were declined I was still welcomed into their homes and they shared some of their stories with me. I visited with these participants as I would any participants rather than just leave. I accepted their invitation to stay and found this personally and spiritually healing. We talked about our whakapapa and our experiences as Ngāti Kuri women. For me, these two visits have aided the decolonisation of myself and the research in subtle ways. Rather than just leave these two experiences to be defined as declined interviews, the interactions were vital components of my research journey.

One woman who declined to be interviewed showed me photos of our homelands from around 1940 -1990s and told be stories of cattle and horse mustering, fishing and schools when I visited her home. My grandparents' names were known by her and I was told who and where my hapū originated. On another occasion I ate takeke (piper/garfish) on the shores of Pārengarenga harbour cooked on a fire lit especially for my mother and I, spending time with a participant who declined a whakawhiti kōrero. The fire was a celebration and expression of this woman's role as ahi kā. It was also a celebration for our return to whakapapa and kainga

for my mother and I. It provided us with an intergenerational healing in place and an opportunity to practice whakawhanaungatanga beyond the research. While no verbal or textual data was gathered, I realised that this experience was critical to my personal learning and decolonisation. I was transforming my identity and learning what it means to be Ngāti Kuri – in my homelands; with my traditional foods and by getting to know and listen to the stories of our ahi kā.

While whakawhiti kōrero were delivered in English, Te Reo Māori was prevalent in throughout each of the conversations. Whakataukī were spoken to express Ngāti Kuri relationships and perspectives and a number of kupu were often used to describe values, principles and practises. While I have endeavoured to translate these kupu and whakataukī in text and/or in the glossary the deep meaning and context is lost in an English translation. Whakawhiti kōrero were transcribed and participants had the option to receive a copy or summary of their whakawhiti kōrero. Participant rights and topic information was recorded on a consent form and this was discussed prior to whakawhiti kōrero.

Whakawhiti kōrero were read and re-read to map any recurring themes and excerpts that revealed the way gender, colonisation and science shaped their experiences. While this offers contextual evidence, the focus of analysis was to search for themes that revealed notions and actions around decolonisation for Ngāti Kuri women and their places. Flexibility and reciprocity were built into the research process as were the cultural, social and spiritual values of the participants and I. My participants were able to determine and define how they wished to participate.

Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine ethical values and principles have enabled me to design whakawhiti kōrero rather than reproduce Western approaches to interviewing. In this research whakawhiti kōrero balanced the nuanced binary and power that exists between researcher and

participants. These boundaries became blurred: I became the participant; participants became researchers, theorists and analysts. At times we existed and communicated between these characters as both at the same time, as well as whanau and friends.

Findings wānanga: Returning with the findings and my daughter

In this section I discuss the final wānanga for the research. The intention of this wānanga was to return to my research community with our findings, offering participants an opportunity to not only check on what I had included and written but also to expand and discuss the findings. This was important to ensure the research is an honest representation of Ngāti Kuri women's identities, relationships and experiences with and in te taiao. The wānanga was a way for me to honour participant contributions and to ensure that I had represented their identities, relationships, experiences and voices in a way that they could be proud of.

The wānanga focused on my three findings chapters. During the wānanga I first discussed my findings and then opened the floor to participants in order for them to give feedback.

Participants were able to give feedback and ask questions during the wānanga or privately at a later date. During the wānanga there was much discussion and further feedback was given in the following weeks. All feedback was constructive and crucial to the robustness final thesis.

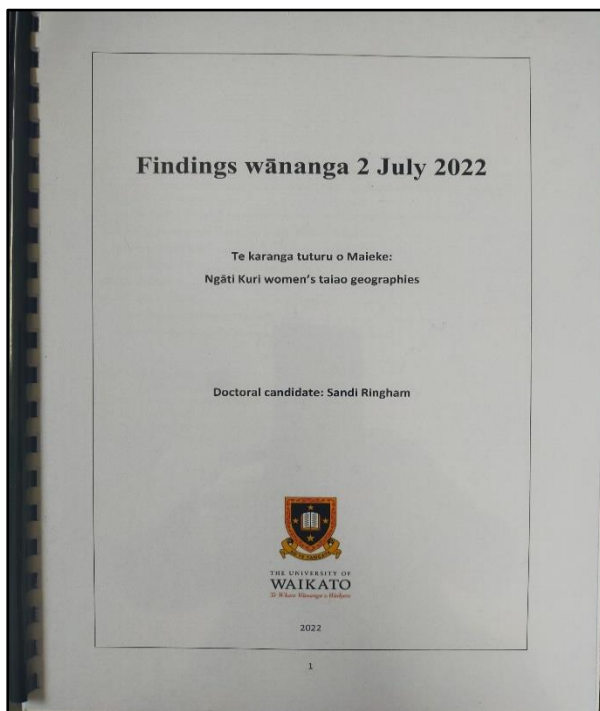
The wānanga was held at Ngāti Kuri's Te Ara Whanui Research Centre on the 2nd July 2022.

This was the third Ngāti Kuri institutional building where participants came together to deliberate on the research. Again, the Ngāti Kuri Trust Board supported the research and offered both the use of the office room and accommodation. Te Ara Whanui Research Centre was once a place where DOC Far North Headquarters were located from which Te Pahi Sand Dunes and surrounding conservation lands were administered. Ngāti Kuri through their Deed

of Settlement and the work of Sheridan Waitai has secured occupation of the site. Te Ara Whanui is now a site where iwi conservation, research and science initiatives are administered and actioned. [Te Ara Whanui Research Centre](#) was officially launched on 9 November 2022.

Six Ngāti Kuri women attended the wānanga. Jen LeLievre, Savannah Watkin and myself were able to attend in person and Sheridan Waitai, Caroline Hempel-Ringham and Coral Wiki attended virtually via Zoom. It had been three years since I had held a wānanga and COVID-19 had introduced new ways of working and connection with each other. COVID-19 also impacted on the attendance numbers with one participant unwell and isolating and others not wanting to risk travelling during a pandemic. I had prepared a wānanga booklet where participant excerpts and my analysis was presented. Participants were given petrol vouchers to cover the cost of travel from their homes to Te Pahi and lunch was provided.

Figure 4.9: Findings wānanga booklet 2022



Source: Sandi Ringham

An important finding in the research was a mother's responsibility to bring her children home. I felt this wānanga was an opportune moment to bring at least one of my two children home. My daughter Savannah was keen to make the journey home. Through this component of the research Savannah was, for the first time, able to meet a number of people from her iwi in her homelands. This brought an intergenerational element to the research that was both meaningful and emotional. My mother Caroline and my sister Coral attended via Zoom from my mother's home in Waingaroa Raglan. During the wānanga I was able to honour the women in my whanau, particularly my mother and my daughter.

Figure 4.10: Savannah at her great grandmother's unmarked grave, Mareitu Urupa at Te Hāpua



Source: Sandi Ringham, 3 July 2022

As with every wānanga held for the research a tipi haere was deemed important. This time it was a tipi haere for mother and daughter. Savannah and I travelled our homelands visiting the

significant sites for Ngāti Kuri: Te Paki Sand Dune; Kapowairua; Te Rerenga Wairua; Ngātaki and Te Hāpua. Moreover, we were able to see the places where my mother was born; the places she keeps fond in her memory and we visited the urupa (burial ground) where my grandmother is buried in an unmarked grave. It was an intimate *tipi haere* with *te taiao*, grandmothers and great grandmothers. I was able to tell Savanah our whanau pūrākau in our turangawaewae. The environment and taonga species giving depth of meaning through changing weather patterns, sunlight, birdsong and calm clear waters.

On the 3 July 2022, following the wānanga, I was also able to visit and deliver the Findings Wānanga Booklet to two participants who were unable to make the trip to Te Paki or access Zoom for the wānanga. This was an important part of not only the research but also to ensure that I maintained the relationships I had built with whanaunga. I visited Betsy Young who was out of isolation and recovering from COVID-19 and Bethany Maitai Edmunds who had written the ruri featured in the thesis. During the visit with Aunty Betsy Savanah was introduced to yet another whanaunga, we discussed the research progress and ate freshly caught flounder for lunch. I gave Aunty the findings booklet and she gifted me two woven pīngao flowers.

The visit with Bethany was also an important part of this trip to Te Hiku o te Ika. As mentioned earlier Bethany had written a ruri in anticipation of the Pūrākau wānanga and given consent for it to be used in the thesis to help develop an understanding of how participants might relate to *taiao* and taonga species. The ruri is featured at the beginning of the thesis and in Chapter seven where I unpack the ruri verse by verse. The ruri was also featured in the art exhibition *Tau Atu e* on the 12 February 2022. Bethany kindly gifted me a woven pīngao kuaka to commemorate the ruri and the thesis. It was crucial that I take this chapter, in its entirety, to Bethany for review. This proved to be a delightful visit where

Bethany and I, with our children, walked the perimeter of her property, shared food and laughter. The outcome of the visit and sharing of Chapter Eight with Bethany ensured I had read the poem right and my analysis sat well with her and offered Bethany an opportunity to extend on that analysis and her excerpts.

Figure 4.11: Findings wānanga gifts



Source: Sandi Ringham, pīngao woven flower Betsy Young, pīngao woven kuaka, Bethany Matai Edmunds.

The Findings wānanga was a significant part of this research. It enabled a co-production and analysis of knowledge where participants are engaged at the many different stages of a PhD. The experience of taking my findings home with my daughter was emotional, poignant and important not only to the research but personally. I have begun to fulfil my responsibilities as a Ngāti Kuri mother.

Conclusion

Mātauranga o Ngāti Kuri is at the core of this research, therefore method and analysis were developed and created with and by participants. This chapter engages with some Indigenous methodologies and methods for collecting and analysing research data. Pūrākau as a methodology was employed to explore the capacity of tūpuna wahine and te taiao to influence the ways in which participants in this research shaped their identities and relationships within conservation spaces (Ens et al 2021). Research locations and participant engagement is discussed in this chapter unearthing the multiple Indigenous spaces and methods for collecting information and collaboration.

The methods discussed in this chapter reveal wānanga and whakawhiti kōrero are research tools that centralise Māori women's ways of being and knowing. The methods used in this research offer unique ways of collecting information about the ontologies and epistemologies of Ngāti Kuri women (Simmonds 2014). The methods activated in this research has allowed me to highlight more-than-human contributions and the ways in which tūpuna wāhine continue to influence the ontologies and epistemologies of Māori women.

Tipi haere is a mobile wānanga that incites and captures meaningful expressions of attachment to place. As a method it makes space for laughter and spontaneity, to be included in the research process (Smith 2012). Participants engage with te taiao when they travel together, stories are told, songs are sung and experiences are shared with land, waters and ancestors. Tipi haere in this research encouraged engagement between human and more-than-human participants across tribal landscapes.

In the following chapter the pūrākau of two tūpuna wahine are used to analyse and problematise the colonisation of Ngāti Kuri women's identities, roles and responsibilities. Participants' experiences reveal an intimate knowing that Māori women are much more than

colonial discourse would have us believe. Through these two pūrākau Ngāti Kuri women's identities, roles and responsibilities are brought back to the foreground as valued and crucial leaders of environmental protection and conservation (Ens et al 2021).

Chapter five: Because our grandmothers said so: Re-storying Ngāti Kuri women's identities, relationships and sense of belonging

This chapter investigates the transformation of Ngāti Kuri women's identities when Maieke's story is shared across a number of diverse spaces. The chapter attends to the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women's identities are created, layered and inscribed across tribal and non-tribal lands (Daigle 2016, Fisher 2015, Murphy 2019, Simmonds 2014, Simpson 2014, Wildcat 2013, Wilson 2004, Sious 2020). The pūrākau of Maieke brings to light the reclamation and transformation of Māori women's identities and geographies as defined by participants, including myself. Writing, speaking and listening to the pūrākau of our tūpuna wāhine enables a re-storying of the colonised landscapes of Aotearoa to take place. Telling, writing, reading and remembering pūrākau are acts of decolonisation and transformation.

Participant kōrero illustrates the ways in which some Ngāti Kuri women have experienced the colonisation of their identities and places. In this chapter centre the pūrākau of our earliest tupuna wahine, the source of our mana whenua. A Mana Wahine analysis of participants' interviews is used to bring Māori women's voices to the front and centre of the discussion (Pihama 2021). Ngāti Kuri women understand and create their identities and roles in relation to the protection and governance of tribal lands and taonga species. The chapter examines the shaping and articulation of identities as defined by participants and attends to the research question: In what ways do ancestral women influence the identities, taiao relationships, sense of belonging of Ngāti Kuri women?

Pūrākau and participant narratives in this chapter illustrate three main themes that uncover the way in which participants not only embody the stories of our grandmothers but also their identities, responsibilities and sense of belonging (Campbell 2019, Johnson 2012, Johnston,

Longhurst and Ho 2009, Kana'iaupuni and Malone 2006, Murphy 2019, Pihama 2020, Simmonds 2014). Ngāti Kuri women are leaders and conduits of change (Szászy 1993, Waitai-Murray 1974). The first theme in this chapter explores Ngāti Kuri women's identities as understood and lived through the founding chieftainess Maieke.

The first section, 'Identifying Maieke: Identifying ourselves' explores the power of pūrākau to decolonise Māori women's identities and roles. A Mana Wahine framework is built around the discussion to work past the colonial manipulation of Indigenous women's identities through participant narratives (August 2005, Brown 2008, Murphy 2019, Simmonds 2014). Participants' narratives illustrate the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women's identities are reconfigured and transformed through telling the story of Maieke (Campbell 2019, Pihama 2015, Seed-Pihama 2017, Smith 2013). Focusing on the pūrākau of Maieke and the silencing of her story also reveals a colonial splinter embedded in the geographies of Māori women that threatens the passing of inherited roles and knowledge to others (Szászy 1993, Waitai-Murray 1974).

The second theme destabilises colonisation by considering the potential of Maieke's pūrākau in the strengthening of identities through reading, understanding, and re-writing her story.

The section titled 'Inciting ihi: Honouring tūpuna' focuses on Māori women's representation through pūrākau as a tool for inciting passion, pride and perseverance (Campbell 2019, Daigle 2016, Fisher 2015, Hutchings 2020, Mutu 2018, Sious 2020, Wildcat 2013).

The third section 'Our women speak: Mana Wahine voices' examines historical and contemporary efforts of Ngāti Kuri women to maintain a powerful Mana Wahine voice. Indigenous women, both contemporary and historical, hold power, knowledge and relationships within an environmental whanau spanning over centuries and physical, political and metaphysical spaces (Hunt 2018, Kana'iaupuni and Malone 2006, Murphy

2019, Seed-Pihama 2017, Simpson 2014, Simmonds 2014). This theme reveals that gender is and has always been mediated, produced and articulated by the living and ancestral women of Ngāti Kuri.

Maieke gave birth to Ngāti Kuri and the telling of her story is presented through participants' voices. I am both participant and storyteller in this thesis and I acknowledge that the pūrākau are ultimately laid onto the pages of this thesis by me. This is a great honour and privilege and one I do not take lightly. During this research, both participants and I have become knowledge makers expressing our own intimate relationships with the stories, locations, characters and te taiao. Woven into the stories are individual and collective identities, relationships and knowledges.

Identifying Maieke, identifying ourselves

Pūrākau or, indeed, any Indigenous storywork provides a link to the philosophies, values and principles pre-colonisation (Archibald Q'um Q'um Xiem, Lee-Morgan, De Santolo 2019, Harmsworth 2020, Johnson 2012, Lee 2009, Simmonds 2014). Indigenous storywork also contains valuable geographical information about landscapes, relationships between peoples, their knowledges and identities (Simmonds 2014). In line with the politics of Mana Wahine, this chapter tells the story of Maieke, the chieftainess. Maieke's pūrākau offers a view into the past, offering evidence that contradicts the colonial and scientific imaginings of male dominance (Hutchings 2020, Murphy 2019). Maieke, her story, and the voices of participants are brought together to better untangle colonial imaginings from the diverse traditional and contemporary roles and identities shaped and embodied by Ngāti Kuri women. In the following sub-section 'Pūrākau o Maieke' is a version of Maieke's story where I have taken a creative and imaginative approach to writing her story.

The holding and telling of our own stories as Indigenous peoples is essential to the foundations upon which we can in a contemporary context ground our understandings and relationships both in our day to day lives and in our theoretical approaches to the issues that face us (Pihama 2021 353).

With the information offered from participants and gathered from Ngāti Kuri documents and archives I was inspired to creatively articulate the rangatiratanga and mana that Maieke would have held. Maieke was an ariki, a paramount chieftainess of an ancient tribe, who had lived in Aotearoa for 23 generations. She was one of two ancestors, the other being Pōhūrihanga, that are at the root of a Ngāti Kuri identity and was followed by a long line of women born into the tribe who continued holding mana motuhake as ariki. “Muriwhenua, Amongariki, Tihe, Kohine, Raninikura, Uru Te Kawa, Tangirere and Whakarua are among the many notable chiefly women of Ngāti Kuri” (Ngāti Kuri Deed of Settlement 2013 8).

The first time I heard Maieke’s story was when I started to work NKRWG in 2015. We were building a treaty partnership with scientists who wanted to conduct research within our tribal lands and waters. The severing of whakapapa through colonial forces impacting on my access to any Ngāti Kuri stories, was responsible for why I was only hearing about Maieke for the first time at the age of 51. Through colonialism, patriarchal forces and the silencing women’s voices of power and leadership continue to erase those stories from mainstream memories (Hunt 2018). This is not unique to Aotearoa, Indigenous women globally are increasingly resisting silencing by telling their stories through research, the arts and science (Smith 2020). One of my NKRWG roles was to collect and edit material to include in the first wānanga booklet to give to scientists attending the Ngāti Kuri Wānanga 2016. This was an excellent opportunity for me to find information and decolonise what I knew about my iwi and myself. I asked many questions of members about what we might include, particularly around Ngāti Kuri whakapapa and pūrākau. The group, at its beginnings, consisted of three women and one man from Ngāti Kuri. This was to be the first wānanga

with scientists since the late 1970s and the booklets we published needed to contain our knowledges and histories. Stories of Ngāti Kuri women's leadership roles within te taiao were shared and discussed alongside the men's pūrākau before publishing.

It was Maieke's pūrākau that inspired this thesis. I was drawn to Maieke's story because she represented what I imagined was a valuable depiction of Māori women's roles and identity from a tribal perspective. Maieke provided me with information from which to decolonise my own identity and understanding of not only who I am and who I might be, but who the future generations of Ngāti Kuri women can be.

Pūrākau o Maieke

Maieke was born at Takapoukura and later went on to lead the tribe living at Wakura (Tom Bowline Bay, Far North New Zealand). Maieke was a direct descendant of the first inhabitants and discoverers of Aotearoa. Maieke was born 23 generations after Kupe's first landing and was the uri (descendant) of Te Ngake who discovered Aotearoa alongside Kupe. Te Ngake settled on the Northern coast. By the time Maieke was born her people were thriving and had spread across the narrow peninsular creating many villages.

Maieke was selected for leadership at an early age. She exhibited great skills and leadership and held the iwi and te taiao at the centre of her being. She grew into a practical and intelligent woman who negotiated and meditated, planned and managed tribal affairs.

Maieke led Te Kari as a young woman. The tribe flourished while Maieke lead, and the waters were rich and teeming with life. Maieke and her people spent their time gathering, storing and trading resources. Wānanga with the elders and knowledge holders ensured the tribe held knowledge and created new knowledges in regard to changing climates, seasons and ecosystems as each generation passed.

Maieke knew her coastlines well. She knew each tree and insect. She knew the ocean life intimately and had a name for everything in her world. Her world was edged with sheer cliffs, surf pounded beaches and ocean swells that changed and rose in the blink of an eye.

Her world was constantly changing. Pahī moana were often arriving from or leaving for the islands and homelands that lay to the north. The coastal tribes kept constant watch for arriving vessels. Eventually word came to Maieke that there was a pahī moana under repair at Rangitāhua (Kermadec Islands) and soon it would make its way to Aotearoa. In the message she was told, Pō would bring the pahī from the east and that he would pass their rohe first. Te Kari lands were the most north-eastern.

Pō was the captain of the Kurahaupō. He was of the tribe Ngāti Kaha. This tribe was named Ngāti Kaha after the header rope of Pō's great seal net. The header rope, Kaharoa, was used to repair the hull of the Kurahaupō. Once the hull was repaired and Kaharoa the seal net was firmly in place, Pō and his people set out to make the last leg of their journey. Maieke placed sentinels at strategic points to keep watch on the horizon.

One day as Maieke and some of her people collected seafood in a sheltered cove, a call was heard from high above. One of the sentinels was signalling to look east and out to sea. There was a sail rising and dipping with a great swell. The sentinels lit the large fires so the smoke would guide the pahī moana, Kurahaupō, to safe landing. Maieke and her group ran to a rocky outcrop to watch as the Kurahaupō sailed closer.

The Kurahaupō was sitting low in the water, battling a surging swell when it came around Hikurua to Wakura. They had overshot Aotearoa and had had to turn the Kurahaupō around and make their way back to the mainland. This event led to Pō receiving a new name - he became known as Pōhurihanga to Te Kari, Te Ngake and Ngāti Kaha - this name is unique to Ngāti Kuri.

It was twilight by the time Pō and the crew were able to steer closer to land. As they looked for a safe place to land, the sky was darkened by a great storm following the swell. Visibility was fading fast. As the Kurahaupō neared the shore the crew noticed the dark silhouettes moving about on an outcrop of large jagged rocks. Pōhutihanga and his crew believed that the silhouettes were seals sent by the net 'Kaharoa' to guide them to safety.

As they were swept closer by the surging swell, they heard te karanga o Maieke, the call of Maieke which guided the Kurahaupō to follow a current that would bring them safely to shore. Maieke's impressive leadership skills and manaakitanga impressed Pōhutihanga. Her people were doing well, her lands and coastlines abundant. Pōhutihanga was keen to establish an allegiance with the tribe and secure a forever home for Ngāti Kaharoa.

Pōhutihanga and Maieke spent long hours and many days together trading news and knowledge of their homelands and waters. Eventually a union was formed and it is said that the two shared leadership putting their skills together to establish a new and strong people.

All Ngāti Kuri descend from the two ariki Maieke and Pōhutihanga. While it is this union that all Ngāti Kuri people originate, it is Maieke that provides the whakapapa to land and coastlines, flora and fauna. Ngāti Kuri's relationships, occupation of the rohe, their mana whenua status and rights come directly from Maieke: "The basis of our tangata whenua status comes from Maieke" (Ngāti Kuri Wānanga 1996 5).

More than just a story: Mana Wahine o Ngāti Kuri

Tangata whenua is a status that articulates 'of the land' and inscribes an identity with an intimate and long relationship and occupation within a particular place (Pihama 2021). The statement above records a landscape layered and inscribed with Maieke's mana, whakapapa and mana motuhake. It is Maieke who provides Ngāti Kuri with their tangata whenua identity and their mana whenua, not just their territorial authority but their relationship to the

land. This is a Mana Wahine identity and authority that Pōhurihanga could not make claim to. It is crucial to remember that the Mana Wahine claim (Wai 2700) was a response to the exclusion of Dame Mira Százy from the Muriwhenua Fishing Claim negotiations (see Chapter Two) and replaced with a male candidate nominee (Udy 2021). This resulted in a patriarchal version of events that reduced the importance of tūpuna wāhine that stand at the foundations of Te Ao Māori. Wai2700 was filed in 1993 and aimed ‘to bring a claim against the Crown for its ongoing adherence to the patriarchal values which have denigrated Mana Wahine, in breach of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Udy 2021 25). Waitangi tribunal-initiated investigations into the claim in December 2018 to determine whether the Crown has breached Te Tiriti o Waitangi in relation to Māori women’s access to: rangatiratanga; whenua; whakapapa/whanau and whai rawa (prosperity) (Udy 2021). The investigation is ongoing.

Storied landscapes are environmental libraries that hold the histories and the “narrative of collective identity” (Johnson 2012 834). For many Māori the storying of landscapes takes the form of oral traditions. In one such oral tradition is the pepeha. Pepeha are an acknowledgement of and introduction to one’s ancestral connections within the world.

Pihama (2021 352) defines pepeha as a way in which Māori:

locate ourselves in relation to our mountains, rivers, oceans and our collective to which we connect. Such connections define our positioning and inform our understandings of the world and the relationships that we have in this life. As a member of whānau, hapū and iwi we take a place in the world that is both individual and collective simultaneously. We have obligations, responsibilities and accountabilities to these collectives and in turn our relations have obligations, responsibilities and accountabilities to and for us.

Pepeha records our ancestral geographies and identity. The pūrākau of Maieke’s union with Pōhurihanga is told and published in a number of diverse spaces and places through different media. Maieke is identified as a primary ancestor alongside Pōhurihanga in the Waitangi

Tribunal Ngāti Kuri Deed of Settlement (Waitangi Tribunal 1997), the Muriwhenua Fisheries Report (Waitangi Tribunal 1988), on the Ngāti Kuri Trust Board website (See: <https://ngatikuri.iwi.nz/>), spoken in the pepeha of some Ngāti Kuri, articulated in homes, marae, during wānanga, published in information and conference booklets and while visiting tribal sites of significance.

While her position of ariki is acknowledged, Pōhurihanga remains centralised as the founding ancestor for many Ngāti Kuri. It is important to recognise the arrival of an significant tupuna such as Pōhurihanga just as it is crucial to identify Maieke as ariki, the source of mana whenua, who had already established authority and leadership.

The NKRWG published Maieke and Pōhurihanga's story in the 2016 waananga booklet. These were given out to haukāinga, visiting scientists and conservationists attending the first relationship building and information sharing wānanga held for many years. The places her stories are told emphasises political, environmental and social forces at work. While her story and identity are only lightly touched on in treaty claims as a chiefly woman and, at times, she is noted as Pōhurihanga's high born 'wife'. Marriage is a Western concept. For Māori, in pre-colonial times, Maieke and Pōhurihanga's union was far more than a marriage between two people – it was the joining of whakapapa, tribes and relationships. NKRWG has emphasised Maieke's identity as an ariki occupying the region before the arrival of Pōhurihanga, the holder and basis of mana whenua. Describing Maieke as chiefly and a high-born wife fails to acknowledge her status as rangatiratanga and ariki. She was not merely high-born or like a chief, Maieke was rangatira, a chief of her people and lands. Telling Maieke's story is an act of Mana Wahine.

The roles and identities of ancient chieftainesses are not lost on contemporary women, rather marginalised and silenced through colonial and patriarchal forces (Hunt 2014). Ngāti Kuri

women have continued to strategise for tribal and environmental well-being. Maieke's story situates women at the physical and metaphysical conception of both territory and authority. Through the patriarchy brought to Aotearoa along with colonisation, those roles have been pushed to the periphery of tribal life (Hunt 2018, Pihama 2015, Murphy 2019, Simmonds 2014). In most accounts Maieke receives little attention and is identified as Pōhurihanga's high born wife, her status as the source of mana whenua overlooked and diluted through colonial understandings of the role and ownership of a wife.

Maieke is mentioned twice in the Muriwhenua Fishing Report (Wai22) (New Zealand Waitangi Tribunal 1988) and not at all in the Muriwhenua Land Claim (Wai45) (New Zealand Waitangi Tribunal 1997). In the Ngāti Kuri Deed of Settlement of Historical Claims, Maieke's union with Pōhurihanga is noted as establishing whakapapa and te kupenga tūpuna (the ancestral network) (Ngāti Kuri Trust Board 2014 8, Ngāti Kuri Trust Board 2013 49). In the listing of primary tupuna, Maieke's name comes second to Pōhurihanga yet is it she who holds the whakapapa to mana whenua for Ngāti Kuri (Waitangi Tribunal 2014). Maieke is mentioned four times in the Ngāti Kuri Deed of Settlement while Pōhurihanga receives 12 notations. In the Ngāti Kuri Ratification Guide, Maieke is noted along with Pōhurihanga as the tūpuna who connect Ngāti Kuri "to land through their customary tenure" (Ngāti Kuri Trust Board 2013 51). Maieke is not mentioned in the mihi written in the Ngāti Kuri Ratification Guide (Ngāti Kuri Trust Board 2013) nor on the Ngāti Kuri Trust Board website (See: <https://ngatikuri.iwi.nz/>).

Removal or an (in)convenient (patriarchal) forgetting and silencing of women's pūrākau has unbalanced the power and health of both social and environmental well-being (Pihama 2021). Maieke's identity within the landscape is derived from a prolonged Māori geopolitical and on-going interaction across time, land and waterways that has the capacity

to transform Māori women's positioning within research and tribal institutions. Overtime and through the patriarchal systems embedded deep within colonisation, her name and ariki status has been left out of the pepeha of most Ngāti Kuri, however, her identity is experiencing a resurgence through the voices and pūrākau of Ngāti Kuri women in particular.

Resurgence is occurring through various medium and in a number of different places and institutions. Some Ngāti Kuri, all genders, do this by naming Maieke in their pepeha either alongside Pōhurihanga or as a stand-alone founding tupuna. Maieke's identity and role as ariki is situated in the place-based learning taking place between uri and scientists. Her story is told when visiting her birthplace, Takapoukura, Wakura and Kapowairua, where she lived and led. Maieke's identity is also rejuvenated through the naming of Ngāti Kuri daughters. There is a new generation of children of all genders who are growing up knowing the pūrākau o Maieke and their intimate relationship with her.

Through pūrākau present and future generations can engage and deliberate with ancestors. Māori women's knowledges and practices can be restored, recalibrated and reactivated through this process. Maieke did not arrive on a pahī moana, she was born of the land that she governed. This a key point in claiming Mana Wahine and mana whenua for all Ngāti Kuri women.

Participants reported that they tell her story in: tribal lands; marae; vehicles while travelling; family homes and boardrooms; museums; local and global research institutions; universities and conferences. The transference of this pūrākau and knowledge informing uri o Ngāti Kuri, and at times, the wider scientific and conservation community. Five of the participants, myself included, name Maieke as their founding ancestor in their pepeha.

Below is an example of my pepeha. My pepeha is constantly growing and evolving as I decolonise my mind, spirit and body. My pepeha reads:

Ko Maieke te tupuna wahine
Ko Maungapiko te maunga
Ko Whitirea raua ko Rehua ngā moana
Ko Te Hiku o te Ika te marae
Ko Ngāti Kuri te iwi

Learning of Maieke's pūrākau and embedding her name within my pepeha has given me an alternative way to thinking about leadership for Ngāti Kuri. This is also felt by participants as Caroline says:

I'm so happy to have learnt this at my age! I like that we are a matriarchal people and I identify Maieke in my pepeha. I just wish I could speak better Te Reo. I get so nervous. But, I think it really important, we are so much more than just a bunch of submissive women led by men. There must have been a great balance back then. Wouldn't it be great if we could go back to that kind of leadership? It throws everything I was ever told about who I was as a Māori woman into disarray! (Interview with Caroline, interview, 31 January 2020).

Caroline's excerpt alerts the reader to the colonisation of people, knowledge and identities. At the grand age of 78, at the time of this interview, Caroline first learnt of Maieke's pūrākau. It has not only changed the way she understands herself and her tribal identity but also her experiences and the impacts of colonisation. Speaking, writing and listening to Maieke's story 'in' and 'with' place transforms identities, a sense of place and has the capacity to change mindsets and practices (Johnson 2012). When Maieke's story is told by participants and embedded into pepeha, the landscape and identities are decolonised and indigenised.

During the findings wānanga I asked of the five participants if they acknowledged Maieke in their pepeha. While three of us did, Savannah was in the process of learning hers and was clear

that Maieke's name would be included and Jen said that currently she did not but was keen to now include Maieke in her pepeha. Sheridan added:

Last year [2021] we actually redefined our pepeha at Kapowairua with Maieke so included old names of kainga and Maieke and then the coming of Pōhūrihanga and we actually did that for my niece who had passed away. She was all about the reclamation of spaces for Mana Wahine (Sheridan, Findings wānanga 2 July 2022).

She went on to say that her niece was always asking why Maieke was not included in Ngāti Kuri pepeha. A result of this was the whanau rewrote their pepeha to include Maieke and her kainga.

The telling of pūrākau of taonga species and tūpuna wahine also has the capacity to shape the construction of pepeha and identities. After a visit to Takupaukura the birthplace of Maieke I was able to take the shells of pūpūwhakarongotaua home to give to each of my whanau members for Christmas in 2020. As I told the story of Maieke and the significance of pūpūwhakarongotaua an interest was sparked in one of my grandnephews. He was fascinated by the pūrākau of both the snail as kaitiaki and Maieke and asked me many questions about the taonga species and Maieke from which his whakapapa was founded. This resulted in him asking me for his pepeha for a school project. He now also acknowledges Maieke as a founding tupuna and is clear about who he is as Ngāti Kuri and where his turangawaewae is located within the landscapes of Aotearoa. Two participants noted during the research that Ngāti Kuri follow a matriarchal lineage, breaking with the colonial tradition of acknowledging a male as the only identity worth mentioning. Sheridan Waitai states in her interview:

We are a matriarchal people; our women lead and can speak on the marae (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

This was reiterated by Harry Burkehart (Ngāti Kuri Trust Board Chairman) in his opening address during the 2022 Te Ara Whanui Research Hui. Sheridan went onto describe how that was embedded into her life from a young age:

So, I grew up in a space with nan (Saana Waitai-Murray), very strong leadership and she took her leadership from her grandmother and her mother. My nan would tell me many stories ... I can understand the legacy with nan, like the need and the speaking rights she had. The need to speak for our taonga because they can't speak for themselves. And that was part of my knowing, you can't ignore it (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

Sheridan's life experience is shaped by the legacy of Ngāti Kuri women who lead.

Leadership roles are passed down through the generations of mothers, grandmothers and great grandmothers. This knowing, the need to speak for taonga species is considered a legacy, not just a right to speak but a responsibility you cannot ignore.

Maieke's story is a strong assertion of mana whenua, Mana Wahine and mana motuhake. It is an expression of the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women have been and can again be positioned within the tribe and in te taiao. Her story and identity are an ideal I want for future generations of Ngāti Kuri people. The pūrākau gave me hope that Ngāti Kuri women might be acknowledged for achieving those positions again. Maieke and her pūrākau is embedded and active throughout this research, in the work I do with my iwi and as an Indigenous geographer.

Maieke's identity is manifested and shaped in the minds, bodies, geographies and landscapes of participants. Maieke's story is told to scientists and would be allies wanting to conduct research in tribal lands, during wānanga and through the publishing of conference documents. Scientists attending wānanga visit Ngāti Kuri lands and waterways where iwi stories, knowledge and science is shared through multiple exchanges with place and people. The creation, collection, authorship and dissemination of knowledge moves in a number of directions going between and around the many knowledge holders and landscapes. People

and place generate interactions and the recording of which becomes embedded into the landscape. Indigenous landscapes contain and present social, cultural political and environmental histories (Johnson 2012). The landscape can be understood as a repository for culture, philosophies and science that speaks to the consciousness of Indigenous communities and individuals (Johnson 2012). The following whakataukī, published in the *Muriwhenua Land Report* (Waitangi Tribunal 1997, 1) highlights the ways in which Muriwhenua iwi think beyond individual and/or gendered rights to collective responsibilities.

Hei ahau koe e whai piringi taku ūkaipō? Hei a koe ranei taua e pahuahua ai? Kahore, hei a taua tonu, paringa tai moana, tumunga tai tangata te purapura e ruia ai, te reanga tangata e puta ai, puta ki te whei ao, ki te ao marama.

Is it through me that you will gain a place at my mother's breast? Is it through you that we will be replete? No, it is only together as a single ebbing tide, a flooding tide of people that the seed can be properly sown and the new generation can emerge into the world of light (Waitangi Tribunal 1997).

It reminds us that our 'place' and 'power' are not given through association with our material bodies rather gained through collective effort and collaboration. It is an obligation to our tūpuna to re-story colonised landscapes. In doing so, Māori identities and relationships are strengthened and patriarchal dominance is disrupted. The landscape can be imagined as the skin and shape of Papatūānuku (Earth Mother). To re-story the landscapes of Aotearoa must include Māori women's pūrākau and Mana Wahine.

Inciting ihi: Honouring tūpuna

Re-storying the traditions and identities of Maieke and Ngāti Kuri women is an opportunity to reconfigure who Ngāti Kuri women might be in the future, the roles we might hold and where we might action our grandmothers' mana. This section reveals the power of pūrākau to produce ihi. Ihi is a concept that can be used to describe a person's potential to express

and incite excitement, passion and motivation. As mentioned in the above section Maieke's pūrākau is shared in varying spaces and institutions and has the capacity to transform and strengthen identities. The power of pūrākau also has the capacity shape the ways in which we, as Ngāti Kuri women, relate to each other, taonga species and allies. Storywork brings tūpuna wāhine and taonga species to life, their stories becoming a living document through the retelling of their stories.

Participants' kōrero from the Pūrākau Wānanga and interviews highlight Ngāti Kuri women's aspirations to retain, maintain and disseminate their knowledge and identities. Vonni Petera is haukāinga, fluent in Te Reo Māori and well versed in mātauranga o Ngāti Kuri, tikanga and kawa (protocols and customs). She is active in a range of initiatives for Ngāti Kuri working for the environment and, in particular, repatriating kōiwi (human remains) that were taken from our lands for scientific research. Of the voices of Ngāti Kuri women Vonni said:

Our voices are coming to light now, yet there's still reservation of how much comes to light but as Ngāti Kuri women we've got 'ihi' now whereas we didn't have that before, we are strong - case in point we are here today (Vonnī Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

'Ihi' describes the momentum of person's or a group's passion and efforts. Vonni uses the kupu 'ihi' to articulate Ngāti Kuri women's excitement, drive and power to be involved in the retainment and dissemination of our knowledge. Ihi between participants grew from the moment we came together in Te Manawa boardroom (Ngāti Kuri Trust Headquarters). We ate, laughed and talked about the day ahead over breakfast. Above Vonni identifies the wānanga as a place where we are 'strong' positioned as knowledge holders, knowledge protectors and knowledge makers.

The Pūrākau Wānanga became a methodological tool and space for inciting and galvanising Māori women's ihi. Through analysing and discussing the pūrākau and the ways in which

they are articulated, we were able to identify ihi as a useful concept for exploring Ngāti Kuri women's passion, excitement and energy that surrounds their relationships, knowledge and identities with and in te taiao. The level of passion and excitement they expressed through ihi indicated where relationships were positive and working and which relationships needed more work.

Participants felt pūrākau and ihi helped to activate the mauri of our taonga species. Through pūrākau and acknowledgement of ihi we were able to realise and discuss where we might direct our leadership and understand our relationships within taiao. Retelling pūrākau can be a useful tool to increase ihi, excitement and passion, in regard to the urgent need for the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity. Catherine, while discussing the work Ngāti Kuri women do for their environmental family, makes a connection between spirit and energy saying:

Put the wairua first and this physical meat suit second. This would give more attention to the wairua mahi (spiritual work). Mahi being like hi, this is what I was taught from my kaumatua (elder, a person of status within the whānau). So, hi is like referencing 'ihi' or 'hihi' which is that cosmic energy and 'ma' being about clarity. Mahi is about knowing where to make your contribution, knowing where to direct your energy (Interview with Catherine 31 August 2017).

Catherine makes a good point noting that attention is better balanced between the physical and the metaphysical. Here, Catherine makes a clear distinction between our wairua and our 'meat suit', our physical body as being intrinsically linked to an energy of knowing that reminds us that we are capable of directing where to focus mahi. Understanding that you are wairua first and 'meat suit' second brings clarity. Honouring sacred relationships with and the pūrākau of tūpuna wāhine affirms our place alongside atua, whenua and the importance of our roles and identities within whanau, hapū and iwi (Pihama 2021). In the honouring of wairua

there is a sense of knowing who you are and the work laid out before you (Moewaka Barnes et al. 2017, Pihama 2021).

Through our conversations, participants and I shaped the portrayal, politics and provocation of Māori women's knowledges and identities (Lee 2017). We discussed the ethics of writing and sharing our stories and I asked participants how they felt about transforming oral pūrākau into written text to share with others. Participants thought the practice provides a way for researchers and knowledge holders to check that the story and interpretation coincided. Betsy says:

our stories are all about the environment, our people were very clever, and when I think about these stories being told, you can tell many stories in your own words, it's certainly not wrong (Betsy Young Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

All things are interconnected in Te Ao Māori and Betsy, here, acknowledges that many Ngāti Kuri pūrākau cleverly centralise the environment. Betsy is also haukāinga and is a master weaver and an expert on pīngao,⁹ an endemic beach grass. She works tirelessly with both Te Hāpua and Ngātaki schools to educate the students on dune restoration, the growing of pīngao and other useful plants. Telling the story of pīngao helps Betsy to teach the children about the connection between the ocean and land and how pīngao is a crucial part of the ecosystem that binds the sand dunes. She is a trustee on the Coastal Restoration Trust

⁹ Pīngao is a beach grass that is endemic to Aotearoa New Zealand. Pīngao is a highly valued material for raranga Māori (Māori traditional art form and weaving practice). The leaves of Pīngao range from bright green and yellow to deep orange and/or gold. Once prolific in Aotearoa Pīngao has dramatically declined since the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi and is now listed by Aotearoa's Department of Conservation as 'at risk' (See: https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/?quick_search=Pingao). Pīngao is used to make prized kete (kits) and in tukutuku (ornamental lattice-work) panels. Tukutuku panels are an art form that line the walls of whareniui (house of ancestors, meeting house) on marae (the land or area in front of the whareniui). Tukutuku are created by two people working together. Tukutuku panels expresse whakapapa, whenua and purakau through art.

of New Zealand Board and Te Rōpū Whakaoranga a Te Taha Moana and a contributing tribal member of Ngāti Kuri attending and contributing to a number of initiatives.

The wānanga brought about a discussion on why we share our pūrākau. It is important to participants that each time a pūrākau is told it should be moulded to fit the audience and event in order to shape, send and signpost a meaningful message. Vonni, again, reminds us of the power of storytelling:

It's invoking context and ihi – it's speaking highly of a tupuna (Vonni Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

Vonni's statement gets straight to the core of intent in telling Ngāti Kuri women's stories. For too long Māori women have been marginalised and silenced by colonisation and, at times, the patriarchy of contemporary Māori men (Szászy 1993).

Aunty Miraka was way before her time, she was a break-through for women. She stood up in the National women's league and said "this is not about just the men going forward, they have to learn to stop leaving us behind" and every one would say "sit down Miraka". So, she just kept getting educated and then one day they turned around and she was more educated than the rest of us and everybody else (Vonni, Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

Providing written examples of pūrākau can be an opportunity to claim, protect and archive collective and/or tribal authorship of traditional knowledge (Lee 2009). Vonni is adamant that it is crucial to give careful and collective consideration to which stories, where and how they are analysed and interpreted. Authenticity or correct versions of a pūrākau were not what participants were looking for when thinking about the written word but rather a version that captures the essence, the mauri of a story. Retelling our stories is a way to breathe life into our stories and our tūpuna.

Time, place and telling of pūrākau also required careful consideration. Awaroa returned to Ngātaki (see Figure 2.1, Chapter Two) after many years of living in the South Island. She

was invited to the wānanga by Betsy Young and contributed in many ways. When speaking of when, where and how we share our stories Awaroa said:

I remember that my grandmother would only tell us half of the story. I would retell her stories and then find out that I was only telling a part of the story. There was always more and I'd go back and say to her (grandmother) what about this and she'd say "oh yeah, but you weren't ready for that kōrero then" (Awaroa, Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

After discussing this further, participants confirmed that how much of a pūrākau is told is dependent on the listeners' readiness and their capacity to understand the message held within the pūrākau. Participants also felt audiences' perspectives and intent play a large role in which stories are told, how many and what details are added and if the story is told in its entirety. This is to keep the listener coming back for more, but also a way of protecting certain details and knowledges.

During the wānanga we considered the pūrākau of Maieke but also discussed the stories Ngāti Kuri tell of two taonga species - pīngao and kuaka (See appendix 6). These stories are told in Chapter Six which analyses the representation of Māori women in conservation and science. We discussed the messages carefully woven into each of the pūrākau and how we might interpret and articulate them to create ihi and a drive to better understand and protect mātauranga o Ngāti Kuri and taonga species. Participants felt that these pūrākau were stories should be proliferated.

The telling of Maieke's pūrākau provokes change in the way Ngāti Kuri women are, at times, still portrayed through a gendered version of who Māori women have been and might be in the future. Participants felt that these stories have the power to transform the ways in which some Ngāti Kuri women imagined their identities and autonomy. Vonni says:

In my mind our pūrākau are coming together and in time will inform a larger publishing project. They just need to be corrected and re-worked to

ensure women voices and identities are heard and seen (Vonni, Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

Caroline is clear in the benefits in learning Ngāti Kuri pūrākau:

Oh, I'm so proud I come from such a strong line of women. I wished I known this earlier in life. It's changed everything I believed about who Māori women are (Interview with Caroline 31 January 2020).

Participants also felt that proliferating the stories of kuaka and pīngao were helpful in articulating mātauranga Māori as scientific knowledge and the relationships Ngāti Kuri have with the taonga species, land, waterways and atua (Ens et al 2021). Bethany believes:

the physical taonga is one thing but the mātauranga in the pūrākau that activates the mauri within those taonga (Pūrākau wānanga, Bethany 27 April 2019).

Bethany described Ngāti Kuri women's pūrākau as 'living documents' (Pūrākau wānanga, 27 April 2019) that relate to taonga species in dire need of protection. These 'living documents' also portray Mana Wahine politics and provocation. Huia is a Ngāti Kuri woman living in Auckland Aotearoa. Her work is in the well-being sector of the city helping Māori and Pacific Islanders to feel connected to communities. Huia also works for her iwi in an initiative for co-authoring taonga species names and as an event co-ordinator connecting Ngāti Kuri living in Auckland and Hamilton. Huia states that pūrākau give meaning, understanding and can explain our tikanga:

Once you hear it, or read it, you can make sense of and understand tikanga (Huia Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

During the wānanga we spent a time with the pūrākau of kuaka, pīngao, Moehau and Maieke and considered how gender, colonisation and marginalisation have manipulated our identities, roles and relationships over time (Pihama 2021). Sheridan spoke about Ngāti Kuri's relationships with the government and colonisation in Aotearoa:

We (Sheridan and I) grew up in a time, aye. We went to school and in all those books and maps, we weren't there. Only two iwi were written into

Te Hiku o te Ika. And when you look at the history of our whanaunga and their relationships with the missionaries, and then later the relationship with the Crown – that became ‘fact’ in a pōuri (sad, dark, disheartened) way. It was never, it’s not whakapapa based (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

When the New Zealand Government and the Waitangi Tribunal were negotiating the processes in which treaty settlements would work Ngāti Kuri was written off the map. The government was adamant that it would only negotiate treaty settlements with large natural groupings of people (Mutu 2019). Tribes were expected to consolidate into one large tribe before treaty negotiations could proceed. This was yet another ploy from the state trying to force more Māori to assimilate and forget their whakapapa, mana whenua status, their identities and their places. Ngāti Kuri, Ngāi Tokoto were to assimilate into Te Aupouri.

Catherine offers a metaphor to describe the colonial processes of identifying tribes in Aotearoa:

There’s so many stories, and before that (Ngāti Kuri having to assimilate into Te Aupouri) Te Aupouri would have to register as Ngāpuhi until they (Te Aupouri) got their identity ‘officially’ recognised. It’s like Russian Dolls, everyone has been through a terrible experience with colonisation. And it’s to what degree are we still going through that and to what degree we have or haven’t optimised a failed space (Interview with Catherine 31 August 2017).

Catherine uses Russian Dolls as a metaphor to acknowledge that colonisation has been detrimental for all. We have been stacked and contained on top and inside of each other whether we belong together or not. She also questions to what degree colonialism continues. Catherine is insightful in that she recognised that even within ‘failed space’ such as colonialism there are still opportunities to be optimised. In a nuanced way Catherine is acknowledging the failure of colonisation to categorise Māori identities within a Russian Doll because we, as a people are resilient, Māori have the capacity to optimise a failed space.

I remember these years well, as a youth learning Te Reo Māori at high school in the 1970s. All tribal maps published in our school textbooks made no mention or location of Ngāti Kuri. The entire rohe of Ngāti Kuri sat under the name of Te Aupouri in the maps. My teachers would tell me that I belonged to the tribe of Ngāpuhi and that Ngāti Kuri was ‘just’ a hapū (sub-tribe) of a larger iwi. I believed this for much of my youth. This was put right when I visited Te Hāpua in the late 1980s.

By then I was nearing my thirties and was wanting my political vote to be counted as a Māori vote. Aotearoa has two electoral roles, a general role and a Māori electoral role. This initiative was introduced in 1976.¹⁰ I wanted my vote to go towards ensuring Māori had seats within central government. I was having children and wanting to reconnect with my whakapapa. I knew my whakapapa four generations back and knew I was Ngāti Kuri. I also knew Ngāti Kuri was an iwi in and of itself and yet I could not officially identify as Ngāti Kuri. Ngāti Kuri was not listed in New Zealand’s census forms. My whakapapa was not to be included in an assimilated and colonialised version of myself. This discussion brought with it a conversation about how pūrākau can be linked to our experiences and our concepts of ‘home’.

Knowing the depth of a story, or the origins – one must know the story intimately (Vonni Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

Here Vonni acknowledges that ‘knowing’ a story - the where, how and who it began with - requires a deep level of understanding and intimacy. To have intimacy with the tangible or intangible, physical, metaphysical necessitates robust and respectful relationships. Building an intimate relationship with pūrākau also develops a deeper understanding and bond with Tūpuna, taiao and taonga species. As living documents, the stories of Ngāti Kuri women require constant

¹⁰ Māori, as with many Indigenous peoples, have faced oppression, marginalisation and racism through colonial government election processes. This thesis does not have the space to cover the detrimental effects of colonial election systems in any great depth. For more information see: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/maori-and-the-vote/twentieth-century>

engagement and work. While we attempted to untangle what it was we were wanting to achieve with storywork from the actual stories, Awaroa questioned:

Is it authenticity we're look for or is it the essence of the story? (Pūrākau wānanga, Awaroa, 27 April 2019).

This was an excellent question and one that received much deliberation from participants. As the question went around the boardroom table Vonni said:

I think the word we're looking for would be 'mauri'. When we tell our stories, we are not only creating ihi we are breathing life into those stories (Vonne Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

The pūrākau wānanga was an intentional act of breathing life into the pūrākau of Ngāti Kuri women. This section has discussed some of the challenges and possibilities of telling our stories. Despite colonisation and patriarchal manipulation of Māori women's identities and stories participants utilise Ngāti Kuri women's pūrākau to create knowledge and ihi. Participants understand the power of ihi and pūrākau to transform knowledges, identities and gendered roles (Lee 2009, Murphy 2019, Simmonds 2014).

Our women speak: Mana Wahine voices

I'm held accountable when my number is up and Io [supreme being] asks me "where are the sanctuaries, where did you look after my children" It's our kawa and our tikanga, we're accountable to a higher being (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

This section specifically explores how Ngāti Kuri women have maintained the autonomy of Māori women's voices. As noted previously some Ngāti Kuri people value the matriarch. This knowledge has been kept alive in the hearts and minds of Ngāti Kuri, both women and men. Māori women hold the whakapapa and this relates back to Papatūānuku. There is an obligation within mana to care for the environment, taonga species and people. As Sheridan notes we are accountable to hold up the kawa and tikanga of not just Ngāti Kuri but of

women. There are a number of Ngāti Kuri women who have made great progress in ensuring Māori women's voices are heard. Dame Miraka Szászy was but one such woman.

Dame Miraka Szászy (Ngāti Kuri, 1921 - 2001) ensured Māori women's voices were heard and was a leader for Māori, particularly Māori women, for much of her adult life. She pushed for educational, social and political reforms and Māori women's rights on a number of platforms. The work of Dame Miraka Szászy eventuated in her becoming Dame Commander of the order of the British Empire in 1990 (Williams 2018). This honour is an acknowledgement of service for her contributions to the revival of Te Reo Māori, her work in the National Māori Women's Welfare League, her public and civil service to Aotearoa. Dame Miraka Szászy was also the first Māori woman in Aotearoa to graduate from Auckland University with a Bachelor of Arts and a diploma in social science. In acknowledgement of her contributions to Aotearoa Victoria University granted Dame Miraka with an Honorary Doctor of Law in 1993.

Dame Miraka Szászy was involved in the creation of the league in 1951 was national secretary in and went on to become the president of the institution between 1973 and 1977 (Williams 2018). She was national secretary and president of the Māori Women's Welfare League. Dame Miraka believed it was through education that Māori would be empowered. She brought not only her expertise into the classroom teaching Māori studies at the Auckland University, she transformed and indigenised many institutions and lives. This message is realised in the Dame Miraka Szászy Research centre established in 1998 by the Auckland University Business School (Williams 2018).

She was a constant protector and enhancer of Māori women's rights during the 1950s through to the 1990s. On this platform she challenged non-Māori women to think deeply about their privileged, moreover, powerful positioning, exposing the multifaceted levels of discrimination

Māori women face. Stating that the feminist movement in the 1990s felt alien to most Māori women who grapple with daily discrimination at home, in work, in education and most institutions (Szászy 1993). Her message to Māori women was to gain higher education then search out and acquire decision-making roles.

As a young woman Dame Miraka Szászy was living in Auckland and became one of the first Māori woman social workers during the New Zealand Governments push to displace Māori and interject them into urban life saying she, “saw first-hand what Māori women were going through in their homes...and the way they were oppressed” (Szászy 1993 76). What she saw and witnessed drove her to step up and push for change.

Dame Miraka Szászy also pushed the gendered boundaries of iwi spaces. Over time colonisation, an imported culture, homogenised and disrupted Te Ao Māori social systems. Colonial, Christian and patriarchal systems saw to it that Māori women were restricted from speaking on marae and during formal occasions. This was foreign concept to Dame Miraka Szászy. Mana Wāhine exertion and the right to speak on important matters exertion was as old as Maieke herself.

Maieke, as an ariki, a chieftainess, would have spoken regularly on the marae, paepae (orator’s bench) or taumata (congress). She was a leader, decision-maker, negotiator and mediator. It is also likely that any of the other Ngāti Kuri chieftainesses, tohunga or kaitiaki would also speak in these spaces. It must be noted here that women speaking on the marae is not the case across all iwi, hapū or whanau.¹¹ Concepts around gender and the power to speak

¹¹ Marae are gathering places that are imbued with tikanga and kawa (protocols and customs). Marae practices and customs are varied across Aotearoa. For many years since colonisation it was understood that women were not to speak on the paepae or in open forums. While this may be true on some marae it is not always the case on others. Ngāti Kuri women are firm in their capacity and right to speak on the marae.

on marae varies between tribes. Betsy remarks on her experience seeing Ngāti Kuri women “stepping up”:

It’s mainly the women who are leading and it’s nice to have young women stepping up. Many of them lead like their grandmothers led. They are just born that way (Interview with Betsy 29 August 2017).

Betsy knew the grandmothers of some of younger women working for environmental protection and is familiar with the ihi and mahi Ngāti Kuri women bring to leadership. She also identifies this skill set as something to be born with. Leading dune restoration and environmental education in Ngātaki and Te Hāpua Schools Betsy also embodies her identity as a leader through ihi and mahi. As mentioned earlier Betsy is a trustee, educator and advocator for dune restoration. She has written books about pīngao and has presented at many conferences, wānanga and panels across Aotearoa. Betsy herself a born leader recognises the leadership skills she practices in younger Ngāti Kuri women.

Betsy identifies with what she understands as a set of values and practices created through relationships within and the embodiment of the whakapapa and the DNA of Ngāti Kuri women. Of her practice, Betsy is clear:

Just what I said, it’s about giving so if you can’t give I want to know why. If you can’t give then that’s useless. That’s what our iwi needs (Interview with Betsy 29 August 2017).

Sheridan also realises and merits leadership in young Ngāti Kuri women as ihi:

I see as our young women still developing, they have that drive, that ihi (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

Ihi is an important attribute for Sheridan, she can perceive it as something driving the development of Ngāti Kuri women. We also look back to feed into and maintain our ihi.

Below Pani talks about the Ngāti Kuri women she relates to:

Maieke was the founding chieftainess of Ngāti Kuri, she was the leader, and then look at Muriwhenua and then there's Moehau, the kaitiaki of the whales around Waikuku (Interview with Pani, 17 February 2018).

Pani was a trustee on the Ngāti Kuri Trust Board in 2018 and the Muriwhenua Incorporation. She is haukāinga and has worked for her iwi in a number of different roles including protection and conservation of the environment. Pani begins her kōrero with Maieke and her daughter, Muriwhenua. Coming back to the beginning Pani notes their importance. Pani is speaking highly of her tūpuna wāhine, her grandmothers. Pani locates Moehau at Waikuku stating her role as kaitiaki, the guardian and authority of that area.

She goes on to acknowledge more recent women who stood up to the colonisation and gendering of their roles, rights and relationships:

One woman I always remember is Taukiri Noho she was the one that led the ladies up at Te Hāpua to challenge the Crown when they (Ngāti Kuri women) cut the fence down at Spirits Bay in the 70s or 80s. The Crown put the fence up and they would cut it down, they (The Crown) put it back up and they cut it down again and that was led by women from Te Hāpua, not the men it was women (Interview with Pani, 17 February 2018).

These Ngāti Kuri women did not fade quietly into the margins. They have continued to speak up and out. Taking their role as authorities to the pinnacle of State interruption and denied access to their lands. Pani adds:

Aunty Miraka Szászy, Meremere Penfold and Saana (Waitai Murray). And the girls, so Hayley Taipa and a few others, they're Ngāti Kuri, and they were putting together our education and environmental strategy (Interview with Pani, 17 February 2018).

The environment and education remain at the top of many Ngāti Kuri women's agenda.

Below Pani speaks about the power of Nina Subritzky (Ngāti Kuri). Nina (nee Romana)

Subritzky (1908 -2008) was born in Te Hāpua she lived one hundred years, had ten children

and was a founding member of the Māori Women's Welfare league. The National Māori

Women's Welfare League began with Māori women from Muriwhenua tribes in the Far North

and was fully functional by 1951. Their aim and intention was to unite Māori women and to have a strong and valid voice in political and governing spaces. Nina Subritzky remained a life-long member of the league, contributed to the Waitangi Tribunal Muriwhenua Fishing Claim (WAI22) prior to 1988 and helped ensure that a new marae, Te Waiora, was built at Ngātaki in the 1970s.

Pani notes that Nina Subritzky would challenge and negotiate with men. Pani has first-hand experiences watching and working within spaces where women were seen and heard. Pani describes what she saw, that is men nodding and agreeing. Nina Subritzky was putting Ngāti Kuri's name as an independent iwi was put forward. Pani noted the names of other women who used their voices and mana to keep Ngāti Kuri women at the forefront of social, political and environmental issues:

Nina Subritzky she was the only woman back in the day - and she'd be the one that would be, no sweat for her - to go to the negotiation table and challenge the men. She would stand up and tell it to the men, aye! Our men would just sit there like little pussy cats and cower under her strength. Those men were just nodding and agreeing to whatever she would say. She was the one that would challenge the men and put Ngāti Kuri's name in there. She was totally Ngāti Kuri supportive and then there was Waerete Norman, there were a few women. Neta Wai Brown she was Taukiri's sister. Those women were strong (Interview with Pani, 17 February 2018).

In this excerpt Pani describes Mana Wahine as she has experienced it, a power and strength that had the capacity to render Māori men cowering 'like little pussy cats'. Pani has a relationship with the Ngāti Kuri woman that came before her and their stories. These women, both historical and contemporary, guide the way she understands the gendered roles of Ngāti Kuri women (Siouis 2021). All the Ngāti Kuri women – that Pani mentions - held the power to be heard in what was rapidly becoming a patriarchal space for 'men'. The pūrākau of Ngāti Kuri women playing a role in shaping the ways in which Pani understands her identity, the world and the social systems around her.

At the conceptualisation of my thesis a key informant, co-worker, mentor and whanaunga, Sheridan Waitai, discussed with me her understandings of Ngāti Kuri traditions. Her kōrero revealed multi-faceted ideas of a once shared leadership between Ngāti Kuri women and men. Through Mana Wahine this notion can be explored further. Sheridan was interested in the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women might lead alongside Ngāti Kuri men. She had experienced gender inequalities across many spaces and was keen to dismantle the powers that produce inequalities, she also felt it important to examine and discuss what she described as ‘mutual leadership’ (informal conversation with Sheridan, November 2015). She talked of how Ngāti Kuri social and gender systems pre-colonisation were not always patriarchal. There is evidence to support this at the very root of Ngāti Kuri beginnings with the pūrākau of Maieke.

Sheridan added to this during the findings wānanga saying:

Our women were at the forefront of that hikoi (1975 Land march), and from that followed the Wai262. So, there’s a whakapapa of our wahine standing up against the injustices. Another thing was that they (Ngāti Kuri women) used creative practice. So, the weaving and the exhibition pieces and everything they did was done in their reo (language) because they didn’t know how to fight the Pākehā way. So, they did things their way so all their kite (woven kit) all tell a story. That’s why we keep them (kite) together. That was their expression. So out of that weaving rōpū came the ability to feed their families, the ability to educate their children and the ability to go to all the hui and wānanga that were all about being able to share the story - very much with grace and poise – fighting those injustices (Sheridan, Findings wānanga 2 July 2022).

In this excerpt Sheridan further highlights the work of Ngāti Kuri grandmothers in resisting colonisation and the marginalisation of our people. These women used creative practices to not only resist further oppression of Ngāti Kuri ways of being and knowing but also to support whanau well-being and fund education. Noted by Sheridan is the grace and poise that these women employed in their resistance.

Exploring Te Reo o Ngāti Kuri (Te Reo Māori, Ngāti Kuri dialect) helps tease out and elaborates on gender further:

It's that concept around 'ia' and how that doesn't really determine gender in our reo, no gender (Jen Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

The kupu 'ia' is often used as a pronoun in Ngāti Kuri dialect and while it indicates a person, the gender of that person is not mentioned. Language holds cultural values and perspectives. The way one uses a particular language to speak to and about the world is an expression their social understanding. Using 'ia' as a pronoun shows evidence of a gender fluid society at the creation of its language (Johnston 2018).

Yes, here [Ngāti Kuri territory] we say 'ia', no gender. It's like we say "ko wai ia?" (who is that?), we say ia, and it could be a man or a woman we're talking about. No, we don't do gender – we don't say he or she, we just don't do gender. Ko wai ia? We're quite loosie, goosy on that, we do 'ia' thing quite hard up here (Vonni, Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

Vonni's statements 'we don't do gender' and we're a bit 'loosie, goosy' showcases the gender fluidity of Te Reo o Ngāti Kuri. She goes on to say however that she does not mean:

It's not that our men indulge us and just let us do what we do, it's just we just carry on doing what we do. But if we need them, they're there with their axes putting up the marae, you know suddenly they're there and they know what we want done before we do, it's like magic. Gender isn't that much of an issue for us (Vonni Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

Vonni subtly acknowledges that the men do not always sit quietly and cosset everything Ngāti Kuri women do. Dame Miraka Szászy's work is a testimony to the need for Ngāti Kuri women to hold fast to their autonomy and roles as a voice for tribe and land. Gender has been an issue for Ngāti Kuri women, however, here Vonni celebrates the magic that happens when Māori women and their initiatives are supported by Māori men. Bethany elaborates on her thoughts around gender within Ngāti Kuri:

The thing about gender roles is that if you're defensive about it then, it does become an issue. But if you just accept that women do these things

and men do these, it's not a problem it's just what we do – it's not about genderising, it's not about being disrespectful to the other gender. It's just about co-existing together. Tikanga is gendered because women need to have their mana exerted in certain areas and men have theirs in other places. It's not about dominating or trying to over-power someone. It's about finding a balance (Bethany Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

Bethany has returned to her homelands to raise and grow her family. Her kōrero bares light on her lived experience. Bethany's experience has been one of balance and acceptance. For many Māori women the power to insist on equality is far from their reach. She links her experience and thought process to tikanga stating that women and men exert their mana across many different spaces. For Bethany tikanga o Ngāti Kuri is about finding balance without gender rather than a claim to dominance. This is in direct conflict with the gendered values of Western cultures. For to colonise an empire must first dominate.

Bethany's experience informs the ways in which she understands gender from a Ngāti Kuri women's perspective. Vonni adds more to the discussion:

It's not so noticeable for us, because our women speak on our marae, they (women) are in whai kōrero (public discussion), they can speak on the taumata you know, we just don't do gender. Men can karanga (ceremonial call, welcome call). But you notice it the further south you go, there is definitely a distinction between men and women. There's less fight about our gender issues here (Vonnī Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

The variation across Māori regions and people is noted here by Vonni. In Ngāti Kuri traditions both women and men can take part and speak in important tribal forums, practices and tasks. Vonni's statement above offers us more evidence to support the argument that speaking up and being involved in whai kōrero and taumata at the marae is a lived experience for those who have the knowledge and skill set to contribute to a relevant topic. Rather than being denied a seat at the decision-making table because of gender: speakers; advisors; and knowledge holders hold space as a platform from which to speak.

Sheridan added more to the understanding of gendered roles during the Findings wānanga.

She said:

I think it's important to acknowledge what drives that (gendering) is tapu (sacred). While we might say there's no gender it's more around the protection of tapu. So, while women do some things and men do other things largely we (women) are protected in terms of our tapu. Like there's leadership spaces that our nannies will stand in, but I would never be able to put Hine into those spaces because she hasn't bared children yet. So, it's a tapu thing not so much about gender. So as an example, around why the women sit at the back and the men sit at the front and the kuia do the karanga. And it's not about women being beneath men so they have to take a back role. It's about it being an honour to sit behind our men because they protect us and our land. So, we just resume those roles confidently and quietly knowing that when they've finished their kōrero that we can whakaheke (to pass down/on, bequeath) their kōrero. We are dependent on each other in a process like that.

This also speaks to the value and sacredness of women in Māori society. As Sheridan has noted it is about protection rather than a back seat. Moreover, it is an acknowledgement of balancing roles – both men and women are dependent on each other.

Dame Miraka Szászy was one the first woman to speak publicly on Māori women's speaking rights on the marae and received very little support from her peers and colleagues. Dame Miraka Szászy bore a barrage of criticisms and abuse from within the Māori community, at home, work, publicly and politically. She fought on saying she would 'continue to open my mouth even unto my grave' (Szászy 1993 78). Challenging the status quo in this way has shaped and brought forward the questioning of when and where Māori women have a voice and the ways in which some Māori practices and protocols have been diluted through colonisation. Dame Miraka Szászy cleared the gendered and patriarchal pathways preparing a place from which future generations of Māori women could speak up and speak out.

Catherine has a background in law, has negotiated on several Waitangi Tribunal Claims and works for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights for Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Below Catherine discussed the inroads created by Māori women, and in particular the life work of Dame Miraka Szászy. During her interview she said:

Māori women make huge inroads despite the discrimination.... There's all these indicators of women stepping up. It's whether we have too, or we're just compelled, but there's a vacuum, you just feel there's something building. So yeah, I, whatever I can do to make my contribution and leverage whatever it is, whatever's going on! Somethings going on and I want to be part of it! (Interview with Catherine, 31 August 2017).

Catherine recognises that the pathways have been cleared and she has a desire, a drive to contribute. Catherine has worked in a number of different iwi, environmental, local and international institutions to secure the human and environmental rights of Indigenous peoples. The work of Māori women in creating these inroads is a compelling story for Catherine. She can feel Mana Wahine voices building and she not only wants to contribute, she does in powerful and meaningful ways.

She goes on to say:

Yeah, it's just mind blowing, I can see, on reflection you know, I can see how the universe lines you up, almost primes you up to do something. You know that push for justice (Interview Catherine, 31 August 2017).

Catherine understands that the women that came before her have primed her to push for environmental and social justice. She states that she can see that the universe 'lines you up' to work towards a just world. Catherine works for environmental and Indigenous justice on local and international platforms strengthening Mana Wahine voices and autonomy.

The geopolitical, spiritual and physical representation of Maieke as tangata whenua, mana whenua, Mana Wahine and rangatiratanga, shapes, strengthens and articulates Ngāti Kuri women's identities, status, connection to the land and with that their obligations. The term tangata whenua "captures the geopolitical and spiritual dimensions of Māori relationships and identities" (Hutchings 2020 48). Land is central to Māori ways of being (Harmsworth 2020)

and plays an active role in establishing identity and a sense of place and belonging (Johnson 2012, Smith 2020). Māori cultural, spiritual and environmental ways of being are born of atua, people and places (Harmsworth 2020, Hutchings 2020, Murphy 2013, Roberts et al. 1995, Szászy 1993).

Critically engaging with the traditions of Ngāti Kuri is a direct rejection of colonial interruption. The invasion of colonisation in Aotearoa has many ongoing impacts through the seizure of power, control and tribal lands (Mutu 2019, Smith 2012). This has interrupted the ways in which many Māori people are able to access, connect, relate and govern their landscapes and homelands (Coombs and Hill 2005). Re-storying is also an effort to acknowledge, critique and move beyond the suffocating power and control of Western governance and politics. In my final example I highlight the spaces in which names are positioned across many institutions and documents is explored.

In 1987, giving evidence in relation to the Muriwhenua Land Claim at Te Reo Mihi Marae, Te Hāpua, Dame Miraka Szászy explains:

We are the children of Papatūānuku, the Earth Mother, one of our divine Primal Parents. We contend that all of nature derives from her - our lands, forests, rivers, lakes and seas and all life contained therein (Muriwhenua Land Report 1997 14).

With attachment to land and people comes an obligation to regulate behaviour (Coombs et al. 2012, Siouis 2021). Vonni elaborates by talking about her understanding and acceptance of where “we” as Ngāti Kuri women exist in contemporary times, in leadership, politics and environmental management:

I sort of understand and accept where we are today. We’ve evolved to where we are now. 50 years ago, and back further it was mostly men in that environment but the change is with us now and we can bring in the kōrero of the likes of Aunty Miraka and Aunty Saana (Pūrākau wānanga, Vonni, 27 April 2019).

Here, Vonni recognises change is happening – “it is with us” - for Ngāti Kuri women and our grandmothers have already laid the foundational kōrero and identified education and the environment as being at the forefront of change. She notes that the dissemination of pūrākau has taken place in an environment that has been mostly populated by men. Interesting that she offers a timeframe of 50 years. This is evidence that the distribution of pūrākau has not always been solely in the hands of men. Vonni also points out that the re-claiming of power to tell women’s stories “is with us now”.

Vonni acknowledges ever shifting positionality. Aware of the changes brought about by the intersections of colonisation and patriarchy Vonni also notices another shift and that the shift is with us, the women of the iwi. She identifies Dame Miraka Szászy as a leader that paved the way for Ngāti Kuri women. A woman “way before her time” a “breaking-through” standing, speaking and educating in her world and beyond.

So, what I’ve seen is that so if you look back, because you’ve got some real strong Mana Wahine that we can relate to because they were there, you can relate to them because they are so close. I can relate to what I’ve seen. And then ahead of me ... I haven’t come across a lot of Ngāti Kuri women that are really hard around this stuff really, I haven’t. And I think that’s what our time is about aye Sandi, it’s trying to gather it again. So, coming across you and other women in that research space, that was heartening but I don’t think our voices are as strong as they were 20 years ago ... but whatever they’d (contemporary Ngāti Kuri women) done they had certainly left a real stronghold on what our principles are, what our position is, what our compromise is, well hell, we’re just not going to. And I’m fortunate to know what that feels like and what that looks like and taste like, I’ve seen that. And so, I’ll go so far and then I’ll just push back and say nah that’s it. So, I see it in Hine and she still developing. I see it in some, they have that drive, that ihi. I think we are scattered. I know there are lots of amazing Ngāti Kuri women out there and I know they are doing their little bit because that’s what we’re like. But I am yet to see us for fill our destinies (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2017).

Sheridan discusses looking back to the identities of the Mana Wahine o Ngāti Kuri that came before her. She acknowledges that she is privileged to have witnessed the “real stronghold” on

the principles and positioning contemporary women of Ngāti Kuri prepared. It is something she feels, sees and tastes, as a boundary from which to “push back” from.

Her kōrero also reveals she feels Ngāti Kuri women are scattered, our voices not as strong as they once were, we are yet to fulfil our destinies. Here she identifies the passion and drive that she sees in other Ngāti Kuri and the need to gather Ngāti Kuri women, ihi and drive again.

Catherine elaborates further:

women are coming to the fore, and their voices. Maybe they haven't locked down the actual turanga, the actual positions of authority or decision making yet, but their voices are rising ... women are stepping up and saying it's time. So yeah, I think it feels quite exciting, there's something happening, there's something happening amongst our women, but we do need to mobilise and galvanise (Interview with Catherine 31 August 2017).

Below, Catherine talks about an intuition that helps her to plan and get through what she describes as “chaos”. She describes her experience working for and with the environment is like much like motherhood. Her relationship with the environment shifts between being mother and daughter. Catherine identifies the earth as her mother but also sees her work much like “having a baby”.

Doors just open serendipitously. I don't believe in coincidences it's all part of intuition - like where to next, where's my next step and a lot of times you have to move through a lot of chaos and you just got to breathe, like having a baby, you just gotta breathe through the chaos until you get out the other side of it (Interview with Catherine, 31 August 2017).

Catherine imagines herself as a mother using her intuition to plan her next step in birthing. She describes this space and time as chaotic where she understands the need stay calm and breathe. She imagines the institutions and legislative policies she has to work through to have autonomy in the conservation as a chaotic space where one must be patient and calm.

When Catherine spoke about her experience in political and conservation spaces, she felt her tūpuna wāhine were guiding her. She feels that she is moving through chaotic spaces but at

the same time her intuition tells her doors are opening “serendipitously”. She understands that she is in the right place at the right time. Her work is like “having a baby” she knows what steps to take intuitively all she must do is breathe, watch and listen for her tūpuna. Doors are a metaphor for opportunities and, for Catherine, intuition, listening to her wairua and tūpuna ensures she is ready and aware. When thinking further on conservation Catherine says:

We don't have to yell at the world and tell them (conservationists) who we are, we know who we are – but if you're gonna, it's all about the balance. Everything is about nature and conservation and you've got to have that balance, you've got to have a bit of push as well as a bit of hold back and I think we held back too much. We should have been a little bit more forceful (Interview with Catherine 31 August 2017).

In this excerpt Catherine is clear about knowing who “we” as Ngāti Kuri women are and that there is no need to “yell at the world” to be secure in our identity as Ngāti Kuri women.

Balancing push and holding back is noted as a crucial strategy for negotiating and mediating conservation. In Catherine's mind there is a need to be more “forceful”. While we may not need to “yell at the world” about our identities as Ngāti Kuri women we do, however, need to express our environmental rights and concerns in a clear and powerful voice.

This is powerful in that it positions Maieke as one of the founding ancestors, and meaningful in that, women who whakapapa to Maieke and whenua as Māori women and land are interrelated. From this understanding Māori women can establish their identity, connection and politics. This makes space for and places value in tūpuna wāhine and Māori women's narratives.

Conclusion

Retracing the footsteps of Maieke unearths and untangles wāhine tupuna from colonialism bringing forth their legacies to our present and future. In this chapter the power of pūrākau to lift the voices and identities of Ngāti Kuri women is investigated. As a platform for Māori

women's voices pūrākau provides a vehicle for both teaching and learning Māori values, principles, science, histories and creation stories (Pihama 2021, Seed-Pihama 2017). I argue that through the telling of Ngāti Kuri women's stories ihi, identity, ideals and intergenerational knowledge is maintained and passed on. Moreover, decolonisation and transformation are galvanized for Ngāti Kuri women of all ages. Participants are empowered to re-imagine who Ngāti Kuri women were in the past, who they are now and who they might be in the future.

The ways in which Ngāti Kuri women understand, build and communicate their identities reveals ihi as a tool for not only strengthening connection to taiao, whanaunga and whenua but also in the reclaiming and decolonisation of our identities as Māori women, our relationships, roles and ability to carry out our responsibilities in protecting our environmental family. Pūrākau, storywork, in this chapter is employed to discuss the ways in which our tūpuna wāhine, our grandmothers, continue to participate, communicate and guide the way Māori women's identities, relationships and knowledges are mutually constructed and understood through a Ngāti Kuri women's perspective (Lee-Morgan 2017, Murphy 2019, Simmonds 2014). Participants' narratives and pūrākau provide evidence of not only the silencing of Ngāti Kuri women's voice but also the stamina and strength that remains in spite of colonisation and patriarchy.

Participant identities, landscapes and responsibilities are transformed through the telling and retelling of our tūpuna wāhine stories (Archibald 2008, Lee-Morgan 2017; Simmonds 2014). Woven into the layers of Ngāti Kuri women's pūrākau and participant narratives are messages and learnings intended to inform and transform future generations. Pūrākau as storywork, locates the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women embody identities across Te Hiku spaces.

Chapter six: Moehau tohunga ahurewa: Representing Ngāti Kuri women

But fundamentally it's the relationship. So, the issue is actually having that relationship post settlement of 'we're not in grievance we're actually in prosperity mode'. Ngati Kuri has transitioned but they (DOC) has not transitioned into Te Ao Marama (natural world of life and light). I'm really clear about this because nan was clear about that, like only the oppressed can liberate so we don't need the Crown for article two (in Te Tiriti o Waitangi) in terms of our rangatiratanga. However, treaty settlements were never about defining us (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

This chapter examines Ngāti Kuri women's representation within the creation of conservation knowledge iwi. Unequal access to political power is a common thread evident in the writings of Indigenous geographers (Johnson et al. 2007). It is important to critically examine representation and power within Aotearoa's conservation in order to better understand the experiences, roles and relationships of Ngāti Kuri women with te taiao. In this chapter the naming and representation of taonga species and Ngāti Kuri women is examined through a Mana Wahine lens to answer the question: How and where are Ngāti Kuri women resisting and transforming colonial and patriarchal conservation knowledge? Evidence in this chapter reveals Ngāti Kuri women pre-colonisation had the power to govern and provide environmental management for te taiao, taonga species and the iwi. This chapter also highlights the ways in which contemporary Ngāti Kuri women have responded and resisted the colonisation of te taiao.

As mentioned in Chapter One, in 2015 Ngāti Kuri Trust Board began working with research institutions in an official capacity under the Ngāti Kuri Treaty Settlement Deed. The discussion below is an inquiry into the work of the NKRWG. This group has been building momentum by securing partnerships in ocean and land-based research. The pathway to rangatiratanga for Ngāti Kuri women has been mapped out by our ancestral women. These pathways have been cleared and maintained by several powerful Ngāti Kuri women through the 20th century. Partnership and autonomy are at the centre of these women's experiences.

They have worked, spoken and pushed to guide and create a space for Māori, and in particular, women's rights, language and knowledge in education, governance and conservation institutions.

In the first section, Pūrākau o Moehau, I tell the pūrākau of Moehau, tohunga ahurewa. Moehau's story demonstrates that Ngāti Kuri women held authority and autonomy in the managing of resources and environments pre-colonisation. Her significance remains a constant influence for contemporary Ngāti Kuri people. Moehau is honoured as kaitiaki of the Pārengarenga Harbour and her name gifted to the rare tree, rātā Moehau.

Participants' kōrero offer an intimate view into the experiences, challenges and pūrākau of Ngāti Kuri women. The discussion considers participants' values and principles of kaitiakitanga and whakawhanaungatanga. The ways in which these concepts are practiced reveals that Ngāti Kuri women continue the work of previous generations of tūpuna wāhine. In this section Moehau and participants provide transformative guidance and examples of repowering Indigenous women's positionality, knowledge and authority.

The second section comes back to Te Ao Māori and te taiao through the values and principles of kaitiakitanga and whakawhanaungatanga. The way in which these concepts are practiced by Ngāti Kuri women and the outcomes are investigated. This provides a model and evaluation of what works and what does not work when building partnerships and relationships. Moehau and participants provide transformative guidance and examples of repowering knowledge and authority.

This leads into the third section where the power to create conservation knowledge is discussed through an investigation of media releases pertaining to rātā Moehau. While the power to represent Indigenous women, knowledge and perspectives has been temporarily

appropriated through colonisation, some Ngāti Kuri women remain resilient and retain the power to name their worlds. The power to name our world through scientific discourse is juxtaposed alongside participants' thoughts, opinions and experiences with colonial scientific systems. Naming our world is a claim to power and control over people, places and resources (Kearns et al. 2002, Smith 2012, Whaanga et al. 2013, Wehi et al 2019). Coombes (2007) notes that few governments in New Zealand's history have moved beyond giving token support to Indigenous governance, partnerships and knowledge.

Knowledge maker, negotiator and mediator: Tohunga Moehau

Moehau's pūrākau tells of a Ngāti Kuri woman and tohunga ahurewa who communicates, mediates and negotiates with people, place and taonga species. Moehau lives on through time as kaitiaki of the Pārengarenga Harbour with her identity and story giving further evidence of the power and positioning of Ngāti Kuri women pre-colonisation. In telling Moehau's pūrākau at the forefront of this chapter I position Ngāti Kuri women as a governing force in the daily lives of the iwi pre-colonisation. I then go on to discuss conservation as a colonial mechanism of environmental injustice through participants excerpts and examples of Ngāti Kuri women's responses and resistance.

Participant pūrākau reveal their understanding of kaitiakitanga as they critique how it is misappropriated by conservation institutions. Their experiences are saturated with intergenerational trauma and pain. This gives background to the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women are represented, or not, in conservation efforts. Indigenous access and governance over their lands is interrupted by hegemonic conservation practices (Ens et al 2021). Moehau was communicator for ecosystems and her iwi. Her location and occupation at the mouth of the Pārengarenga harbour can be imagined as both a space and as a body part (mouth) for communication between tangata whenua and ecosystems. Moehau was positioned at a

significant tribal site where she is ‘free’ to focus on the language of Te Ao Māori. The story of Moehau was gathered and co-produced by the members of the NKRWG and published in the *Ngāti Kuri Wānanga Booklet* in 2017 and Ngāti Kuri’s environmental management plan, *Pou Taiao* (Sanson and Clarke 2018). This wānanga booklet was given to iwi members, scientists, conservationists and other community members. *Pou Taiao* informs environmental authorities of the iwi’s relationships, rights and obligations to tribal territories.

Pūrākau o Moehau

Moehau lived at Waikuku and her presence there continues to be felt. Moehau was a tohunga ahurrewa and descendant of Maieke. Her sacred knowledge and abilities to communicate across all dominions meant she held authority. Her mātauranga guided and ensure Ngāti Kuri sustained a healthy life. Moehau practiced kōrero hinengaro to converse with many beings and te taiao. Her role and obligation to nurture the interrelationships between te taiao and Ngāti Kuri an important and fulltime occupation. Choosing to live in isolation she spent her days and nights listening, watching and communing with te taiao. Her mana reaching across lands and waters, ecosystems, physical and metaphysical realms. Her mātauranga and word guided tribal decision-making.

The people of Ngāti Kuri revered and respected Moehau. While her knowledge and guidance shaped daily life for the tribe her powers and protection was called on only in dire times.

Moehau was to be left in peace free to listen to the messages flowing constantly throughout te taiao. Seasonally, great migrations of tohorā (whales) would pass by Ngāti Kuri coastlines.

Their calls reaching Moehau through an oro (frequency) that only she could hear and understand. Ngāti Kuri would ask Moehau when it was time to bring in rawa moana (bounties of the sea). Moehau would listen and communicate with tohorā for many days and nights.

Only when the time was right and the tohorā agreed would she then exert her enormous

energies through karakia (ritual chants, prayer, incantations). With arohatanga and manaakitanga one of the whales would break away from their whanau and come to rest in the shallow waters of the Pārengarenga. Sacrificing themselves for the survival of Ngāti Kuri. The body, bones and spirit of the great tohorā honoured for many months.

Moehau continues to live on as a kaitiaki of the Pārengarenga Harbour. She inhabits the lands, waters and coastlines of the Pārengarenga, watching, listening and communing across physical and metaphysical land and oceanscapes. If you see Moehau standing on the shore when leaving the harbour to fish, it is said that your catch will be plentiful. Moehau's name was given to an extremely rare tree that can only be found growing in the tribal lands of Ngāti Kuri. The Ngāti Kuri naming of the rare tree rata Moehau highlights and honours the value and positioning of Māori women pre-colonisation and the reclaiming of that positioning in contemporary times.

Kaitiaki in spirit and body: Straddling time, dimensions and generations

Moehau holds and shares many messages that inform Ngāti Kuri's understanding of women's past and contemporary relationships with the taiao. Within Moehau's story is an example from which to explore the contemporary experiences of Ngāti Kuri women working with and for te taiao. Seed-Pihama (2017 75) argues "purakau make the actions of tupuna into teachable moments". Telling Moehau's purakau and the naming of rātā Moehau is an example of resistance to colonisation and a reconfiguration of Ngāti Kuri women's identities. When I tell Ngāti Kuri women's stories I am re-storying the landscape, both physical and political, and the minds and bodies of my audience. Pūrākau has the capacity to subvert Western ideals (Seed-Pihama 2017) including what is considered as rigorous, relevant and important alternatives to Western science, environmental planning and conservation (Ens et al 2021).

Stories like Moehau’s should be proliferated, these stories are good to tell. In particular, Moehau should go in to the tikanga for tohorā and how we deal with whales and when thinking about Moehau there is so much that we need to add to this pūrākau around our tikanga. This really could inform the undercurrent of our kaitiakitanga and all our work so that it’s productive in the future. This pūrākau is a living documents that we can keep adding to – we can add to our kōrero through a reading of science (Vonni Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

Moehau was a revered knowledge holder, leader, adviser, meditator and a kaitiaki that lived her physical life many centuries ago. Moehau was responsible for access and regulation of resources. Her significance noted by Vonni calling for her pūrākau to inform Ngāti Kuri kaitiakitanga and tikanga. Vonni considers Moehau’s pūrākau a “living document” that can enhance a reading of science. The “living document” that is Moehau’s story can therefore be activated to resist and transform the colonial and patriarchal creation of conservation knowledge (Ens et al 2021). Ngāti Kuri women have resisted colonial and patriarchal appropriation of knowledge creation in some interesting and powerful ways.

Saana Waitai-Murray (Ngāti Kuri) was an original claimant in the Waitangi Tribunal 262 claim (Wai262, as discussed in Chapter two) calling for the protection of flora and fauna, ecosystems and Māori knowledges. The Wai262 claim is New Zealand’s first whole of government claim and the first to move beyond historical treaty breaches. The Wai262 claim investigates treaty breaches and legislation that denied: Māori ownership and control over intellectual property and cultural works; and denied access to and protection of flora, fauna and ecosystems. Wai262 was lodged in 1991. The Waitangi Tribunal investigated the claim for twenty years and recommendations were published in 2011. The Wai262 claim is yet to be settled (see Chapter Two). Saana’s mokopuna Sheridan Waitai, NKTB trustee and NKRWG founder, is still at the forefront negotiating to settle the claim. In Sheridan’s memory of her grandmother are many learnings centred within Mana Wahine. Of leadership, Saana had

taught her that leadership was a collective effort, a weaving of people to create a strong foundation from which to speak, think and act:

Nan was a weaver, very much a weaver and her interpretation of rangatira was multiple people, like multitudes together and that all came from raranga and Hineteiwaiwa which is the, not so much the goddess, but like the priestess of raranga, you know, the weaving of people together (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

Hineteiwaiwa is atua wāhine, a principal tupuna who moves through time, realms and environments (Campbell 2019). She reigns over Te Whare Pora, the house of raranga, and Te Whare Tangata, the house of humanity, the womb and uterus. Hineteiwaiwa is renowned for her position in Te Whare Tangata at the birth of Māori people and the weaving of people together in humanity. While Te Whare Pora is a place and space for reflection, observation, problem solving and inspirations (Campbell 2019). These two intellectual houses hold social, cultural, political knowledges and environmental science, weaving humanity in with the natural world (Campbell 2019). Sheridan's nan Saana Waitai-Murray, was a weaver. Saana reflected on and discussed the social inequalities and environmental degradation she saw and experienced with her mokopuna Sheridan.

Sheridan learned from her grandmother that the ability to weave multitudes of people together was not only a symbol of rangatira but also a responsibility. Sheridan goes on to tell Saana's story and why she worked so hard for taonga species and the Wai 262:

So, the basis of some of nan's constant political whawhai (conflict) was really around the taking of taonga so when we say "kei hea te piringa mo ngā manu tipu?" And this is about "where are the sanctuaries for our birds?" So, not only were we struggling to say, hey we know how to look after own taonga, we have the work force here. We're here every day, look at all the people living here, they're quite happy to come out here and do all this mahi so why don't you just give us all the resources and we'll get the mahi done. Rather than pay for everyone else to come up and go past our marae and past our community and into our ngahere and have a tinker around because you 'know' better than us (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

In 1988 Saana Waitai Murray addressed an audience at an ethnobotany conference held in Christchurch. In her kōrero she spoke of the monoculture of planting large tracks of land with *pinus radiata*, farming and forestry development schemes that eventually replaced a natural landscape once covered in native flora and fauna freely accessed by Ngāti Kuri and the wider community (Sutherland 2018). She then identified farming and forestry development as schemes that alienated the rights of tangata whenua (Sutherland 2018). Sheridan also recognises, that efforts to conserve taonga species requires people on the ground to do the work and resources. She notes that Ngāti Kuri have the workforce and the knowledge to do the work but “resources” and “people” go past marae and community. Strangers, the scientists and DOC workers, to the land and community are paid to ‘tinker’ around in the name of science with an assumption of ‘knowing’ better.

The response of our grandmothers was to be mindful of strategies and positioning by applying for a ‘licence to occupy’¹² significant sites.

So basically, in the areas of land where they (whānau) got their licences to occupy, they positioned themselves all around the key points. It was all around occupation so that is probably the first thing I learnt is being on your land and occupying your land is the first thing you had to do (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

One of Sheridan’s first learnings from her nanny was the importance of location and occupation. Strategising about where Ngāti Kuri whanau would inform formal applications for a ‘licences to occupy’ from Māori land incorporations. Māori land corporations are institutions that sit under a land management system that is based in colonial, Western and capitalist world views (Coombs et al. 2014). Since conception, through these institutions, land

¹² Māori land is administered through Te Kooti Whenua Māori, The Māori Land Court. Te Kooti Whenua Māori categorises: Māori land; controls issues around the status of Māori land; records and archives proceedings, decisions and orders; holds a land registry function of all Māori land including a licence to occupy Māori land. A licence to occupy is granted by the owners, trustees or incorporation, granted and administrated through Te Kooti Whenua Māori. The licence does not give ownership of the land rather the land remains in ownership of the owners, trust or incorporation.

has been heavily layered with colonial policies that regulate and restrict the ways in which Māori occupy and share land. These policies remain foreign to Te Ao Māori and Māori land tenure systems.

As Sheridan talks about her experiences with her nan, she highlights the ways in which our grandmothers ensured they were positioned with tribal lands in both Māori and political spaces in Aotearoa. Ngāti Kuri women's identities are embedded and embodied at "key points" on physical, metaphysical and political landscapes.

Kaitiakitanga is rangatiratanga. Kaitiakitanga, when it's used in contemporary settings it's understood a bit differently, it's more like rangatiratanga, but kaitiaki you're born with that. It's your mana, and its mana tuku (the gift of prestige, authority) that's been given down to you. Like toku iho, like it's bigger than conserve, protect it's bigger than that it is. You know, when I think about conservation I think, some things are gonna die anyway. You might think you're creating a balance, but you're actually tutuing (playing around) with that balance and the (conservationists) they just don't realise it. I think they tutu with it a bit too much (Interview with Sheridan, 17 November 2018).

Sheridan understands that kaitiakitanga has been diluted through contemporary and mainstream conservation efforts and sees that version of kaitiakitanga as relating closer to the authority to lead, more like rangatiratanga. She also notes how she believes that conservation creates an imbalance stating that conservationists 'tutu' with the balance of the natural world. This power to 'tutu' leaches out beyond the natural world and into the social and political landscapes enforcing Western models of conservation, restriction and authority. Of kaitiakitanga, Sheridan goes on to say:

But with kaitiakitanga, I think that if you look at the line-up of all our taonga and you see yourself as one of them and with them. Then it allows you to see it in its fullness and then inter-relate with it so you can't not be involved cause because you're part of it (Interview with Sheridan, 17 November 2018).

When Sheridan imagines taonga species she imagines herself also present in the "line-up".

She is one of them (taonga) and lined- up alongside them, she sees herself as one of their

whanau members. This thinking and “being part of it” shapes her responsibility with the natural world.

Also interesting in her interview is her discussion about the responsibility and drive to be kaitiaki through “mana tuku” and “toku iho”. Like kaitiakitanga, mana tuku is an inherited gift and state of being that is more than just holding power. Through “mana tuku” she inherits the authority to speak and responsibility to protect. Through “toku iho” she knows the history, relationships and stories of her tūpuna, both human and more than human and that informs her passion and drive to do the work. It is embedded in her intergenerational memory and embodied through the work she does.

Catherine also discussed how she conceptualises kaitiakitanga:

So, what I was taught about kaitiakitanga is that only tangata whenua can be kaitiaki and to misappropriate the term and just mainstream it is disingenuous and ignorant, it shouldn't be done. DOC has tried it, and it's bad.... they just abuse the term and then it's not in its proper context anymore. It debases and denigrates the complexity what kaitiakitanga actually is. I mean it takes our obligations which are handed down to us from Ātua away from us. I don't think anyone in DOC or doing RMA [Resource Management Act] stuff or Pākēha really see it in the same way (Interview with Catherine, 31 August 2017).

Catherine calls out the dilution and misappropriation kaitiakitanga that has occurred through mainstream conservation and resource management in Aotearoa. Kaitiakitanga is complex and using the word kaitiakitanga in legislation, policies and initiatives is meaningless. The word is not a title wielding power but rather an inherited embodiment of; principle and practice, the tikanga and kawa: Whakapapa and whenua, ancestry and land; past, present and future (Kawharu 2000, Lyver et al. 2019, Roberts et al. 1995). Catherine is aware that the term kaitiakitanga is understood differently in conservation and resource management in Aotearoa. Māori scholars have been writing, publishing and speaking about kaitiakitanga in academic spaces defining the sacredness of the principle, role and responsibility drawing

attention to the problematic way in which the principle is fixed into government policies and legislation (see Hutchings et al. 2020, Kawharu 2000, Roberts et al. 1995, Walker et al. 2019).

In Catherine's words, this conscious colonial choice to reorganise the principle of kaitiakitanga to fit into colonial systems "debases and denigrates" the concept and any practice therefore becomes meaningless. In the article *Kaitiakitanga: Māori perspectives on conservation* Roberts et al. (1995) critique the ways in which Indigenous concepts are forced into colonial and foreign conservation perspectives and practices. The article addresses the concept of kaitiakitanga and the need to critique the way in which it is embedded into environmental management in Aotearoa. As Catherine mentions, there is a lack of understanding and a lot of misuse of the term within our environmental institutions.

Below Sheridan talks about her experience:

The government cut us from the land and our taonga species, they cut us from actually having a relationship with our whakapapa. So, they removed our whole place of being from the ecosystem. We didn't have fences, we didn't have gates. So, all of a sudden, it was all carved up with us wandering in between try to get through to the next bit of land. So, we spent, so I can understand the legacy with nan, like the need and the speaking rights she had, the need to speak for our taonga because they couldn't speak for themselves and that was kind of a big part of my knowing, like you don't, you can't ignore it (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

Sheridan exposes the violent and domineering forms of ecosystem conservation utilised over time in Aotearoa. The language Sheridan uses such as "carved up", "cut us" and "removed" from land expresses the intergenerational trauma of being left to wander between fences and gates. Denied access and the government's resistance to engage her grandmother, indeed all her people, was felt in violent ways. Sheridan says that DOC "cut us" from our whakapapa with fences and gates. I can attest to being "cut" from my whakapapa through being unable to officially identify as being Ngāti Kuri growing up (see Chapter Five). Metaphorically, I have

been fenced into a colonised identity constantly trying to climb the colonial gate that has denied me access to embodying my whakapapa. I acknowledge, for myself, the times when I feel like I am “wandering in between” metaphorical fences and gates of colonialisation.

Ngāti Kuri, however, were not successfully “cut from”, land or whakapapa nor their place with and in the ecosystem. This is embedded and embodied in Sheridan’s “knowing”.

Sheridan speaks about the cutting of gates in response to “carving up” of their traditional homelands. This again reiterates the focus on occupation and positioning.

We were locked off our land in a lot of ways [by DOC]. So, I experienced watching my uncles and great uncles cut gates. Occupation was really key, so where my grandmother positioned us ... basically in the areas of land where they pretty much got their licences to occupy, they positioned themselves all around the key points. It was all around occupation so that is probably the first thing I learnt is being on your land and occupying your land is, was the first, you had to do it (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

In Sheridan’s statement she speaks about resistance and how her uncles and great uncles cut gates installed by DOC that fenced the iwi out of traditional lands. Occupation as a key component to positioning Ngāti Kuri autonomy within landscape. As discussed in Chapter Two, many Ngāti Kuri kuia sat at the gates to protest the fencing off and illegal acquisition of their lands. Both men and women have worked tirelessly to dismantle the fencing-off and fencing-in of what is precious and valuable to the iwi.

These experiences weighed heavily on the hearts and minds of Ngāti Kuri women and continue to be a driving force behind the legacies of our tupuna wāhine.

When Saana’s mother was on her deathbed, she made Saana promise to ratify Te Tiriti. It was unfinished, there was work to be done and she said “whatever you do in your life, you do it with that purpose”. Nan (Saana) always knew that she was called for that work (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

Pūrākau and experiences have shaped Sheridan's autonomy and purpose. Through grandmothers, Sheridan understands her mana tuku and toko ihi as something that is passed down through the generations. Mana tuku, her inherent gifts of power and authority, and toko ihi, her passion and essential force, driving her to strive for environmental justice and a voice to speak for taonga species and her iwi.

This section began by highlighting the vital role Moehau held as tohunga ahurewa and kaitiaki before moving into a discussion on conservation as a colonial mechanism to appropriate power and control over lands and resources. In the following section I continue this discussion through an exploration of conservation of taonga and ecological hotspots in Te Hiku o the Ika.

Conservation: Lingered gate keeping

In this section, participants' excerpts shed on government-initiated conservation in the traditional homelands of Ngāti Kuri. Indigenous peoples have been pushed out of tribal lands in the name of conservation resulting in the severing of intergenerational connections with ecosystems (Ens et al 2021, Rarai et al 2022, Wildcat 2013). The following offers some historical context alongside the on-going work and struggle to once again inhabit and secure the landscapes of Ngāti Kuri ancestors.

The last ahi kā (home people who tend the fires of occupation, continuous occupation securing title to land) occupying Kapowairua were evicted from their papakāinga by the government to develop a camping ground for the nation and tourists visiting our shores in the 1960s (Waitangi Tribunal 1997). These last remaining ahi kā were forced to move from their homes where their ancestors lay and from where they had sustained their livelihoods and connections to te taiao for centuries.

Kapowairua, a principal papakāinga of Ngāti Kuri continues to be trampled on and occupied by national and international tourists. In the Ngāti Kuri Deed of Settlement (Waitangi Tribunal 2014) DOC was instructed to hand the management of this campsite and several others back to Ngāti Kuri. Since then, the iwi has been making progress and changes to the day-to-day running of the camping grounds, however, DOC has yet to hand over total control of the sites. While this is a move in the right direction for Ngāti Kuri, tourist behaviours around the disposal of rubbish and disrespecting wāhi tapu is ongoing. There have been many times when kōiwi, the remains of our tupuna, have been disturbed and rubbish left in the caves by tourists (Vonni, informal conversation, 9 November 2022).

Conservation sites are often commodified for tourism (Adams 2020, Ringham, Johnston and Simmonds 2014) and until 2014 DOC had controlled governance and management of many sites in Ngāti Kuri's tribal homelands. They also held, controlled and accumulated wealth from campsites and the selling concessions to tour operators who accessed and commodified those lands. With the signing of the Ngāti Kuri treaty settlement in 2014 DOC was, at last, required to honour the partnerships laid out in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Of this Sheridan says:

They (DOC) have to, but it doesn't mean that they want to and it doesn't mean they do either. Like what we've experienced in the two years of post-settlement¹³ they've done nothing – if anything they've gone backwards from pre-settlement. It's again them thinking that we're going to get something at the expense of the general public (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

Below Catherine discusses the resistance of colonial conservation institutions to accept and embrace education offered by Māori:

We [Māori], we're still educating them [governmental conservation institutions]. I mean how long is a piece of string? How long is an education - especially for a government department – forever it seems! It's

¹³ On February 7th 2014 Ngāti Kuri signed the Te Tiriti o Waitangi Settlement Deed with the New Zealand Government. The term 'post-settlement' is the time following the signing of this deed, pre-settlement is the time before.

just seems like they never learnt and having Māori in there doesn't guarantee improvement to the level that we would like. There is no guarantee that you're actually gonna make change because the culture of those places is so invasive, it just smothers you (Interview with Catherine 31 August 2017).

Catherine Murupaenga-Iken has extensive experience in fighting for the rights of Indigenous peoples both nationally and internationally. She has been active on a number of political platforms including: Ngāti Kuri and Te Rarawa mandates for conservation, environmental and human rights; technical policy and advocacy work; treaty settlement; National Iwi Chairs Forum on climate change and a representative for Ngāti Kuri and Te Rarawa in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Catherine has been advocating for the rights of Indigenous peoples and their environments since the early 2000. She understands the work that needs to be done and places it firmly in the education of “government departments”. She states that it feels like Māori have been trying to educate the government “forever”. From her position and experience as an iwi representative and advocate for Indigenous peoples working within political spheres, she is aware that her position does not guarantee she can make positive changes for her people. Catherine has experienced the culture of political and conservation “laces” as “invasive”. For Catherine, her experience with Crown engagement has felt like an aggressive intrusion, a smothering of her voice, the values of Indigenous peoples and te taiao. She questions how long it will take for governmental institutions to learn. It also requires an unlearning of colonial ways of being, power and control.

Sheridan shared another of her experiences:

I have submissions of my grandmother's and her brothers' writing to the Crown about accessing our whenua, because they [the government] were always locking us off and shooting our horses. I was there when they shot nana's horse. They [the government] culled our horses. Yeah, they did some pretty crazy things to us (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

An example of the violence deployed in the name of conservation is the culling of the horses that roamed free in the tribal lands of Ngāti Kuri. Free horses are still a common sight on Te Hāpua roads, at Te Reo Mihi marae and along the coastline. The horses roaming Muriwhenua lands represent a whakapapa link between Ngāti Kuri people and their tūpuna. Within the horses' bloodline are the horses that gave Ngāti Kuri ancestors mobility, contributing to iwi capacity to engage in the economy through the mustering and driving of cattle to market in the early 1900s. From the middle of the 1800 the horses carried Ngāti Kuri tūpuna long distances assisting in the access to the wider community and services well into the 20th Century. They took the children to school and health clinics. The relationship with these contemporary taonga is over 200 years old.

I say contemporary taonga because the horses had a place in time for us and then after a while we kind of just let them roam the land and some people just assume that they will naturally just mould into the ecosystem but they won't, you know they're not native to it. Something has to give for them to be there (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

The decision to cull the horses was driven by government intentions to “conserve” the environment and the pūpūwhakarongataua. In the 1980s DOC and the scientific community became aware of the unique biodiversity of Te Hiku o te Ika. Scientists flocked to the area and eventually the North Cape was fenced and gated to restrict access and protect the rare and endangered pūpūwhakarongotaua.

Pest control was an important part of the initiative. Not only were rats, possums and stoats to be eradicated, the cattle, pigs and horses and the people of Ngāti Kuri were also to be removed from the area. This conservation effort shut Ngāti Kuri out of mahinga kai, wāhi tapu, papakāinga and the economy. It also impacted on the relationships Ngāti Kuri hold with the taonga species, pūpūwhakarongotaua. The flax snail is considered a kaitiaki just as Moehau is.

Pūpūwhakarongotaua, the snail that listens for war parties, emits a high pitch sound when trodden on. Ngāti Kuri ancestors would plant the food of pūpūwhakarongotaua around the boundaries of pa and papakāinga. If there was an invasion the pūpūwhakarongotaua would alert the tribe to the threat when the attackers stood blindly on the snails who were feeding at night. Pūpūwhakarongotaua protected Ngāti Kuri by sending a tohu, a signal of warning to the tribe of invading war parties (Daly et al. 2021).

Conservation is a spatially organised social and political construct based on what is considered to be worthy of conservation (Adams 2020). Conservation is highly subjective to people and place. In Aotearoa conservation initiatives are populated with governing bodies as well as non-government organisations (NGO) pushing for funding, control and authority dominating the spaces and perspectives of conservation (Lyver et al. 2019). Māori have navigated and negotiated power and relationships within and between bodies both physical and institutional. Sheridan worked alongside her grandmother from an early age and remembers what it was like:

When I was about nine years old nan really started to ramp up the protection of pupuwhakarongotaua at that time I don't know what DOC was called back then but they were kind of getting on the scene and then you had all the tree huggers you know, the environmentalists, the dogooders, the greenies, and so they started this little 'save the snails' rōpū (group) and fundamentally what was missing was us! That Ngāti Kuri were kaitiaki of that taonga and we actually knew how to look after it and we know what needed to be done but they didn't want us to be part of the solution (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

Sheridan, at an early age, was well aware of what was missing from the conservation of pūpūwhakarongotaua. She felt invisible and that the role of kaitiaki was not wanted or acknowledged as part of the solution regardless of the knowledge held within the iwi. There were, however, allies to be found in the scientific community and relationships were built and fostered.

In the 1970s and 1980s Ngāti Kuri were working with scientists who visited Te Hiku o te Ika and were keen to continue to develop working relationships with researchers. Ngāti Kuri wanted to be involved in the protection of the snail, however, iwi engagement, kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga was pushed to the background of conservation. This was a direct breach of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This drove the response of Saana Murray as she joined in the Wai262. With the support of the scientists who had built relationships within the claimant iwi the Wai262 was lodged. For Saana Waitai-Murray this claim focused on treaty breaches that denied Ngāti Kuri of access to not only traditional resources and control over intellectual property rights but also an on-going relationship with pūpūwhakarongotaua.

For Sheridan, the fencing off of the north cape and pūpūwhakarongotaua represents the value, concern and understanding DOC, the government, conservationists and scientists held for Ngāti Kuri.

You know we were treated worse than the rats the Europeans had brought to our lands. They treated us like we were the pests and predators. What I really remember being a kid was we were not likened to the snails and stuff they (government, scientists and conservationists) wanted to protect. They wanted to protect those species for their own interests, but they didn't see us with them (taonga species), they never saw us (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

This powerful statement from Sheridan above expresses the deep hurt she experienced as a child watching her grandmother fight for the right to protect taonga species and Māori rights to be part of conservation solutions. She felt conservationists regarded Ngāti Kuri as worse than the pests they were trying to eradicate. Ngāti Kuri were not linked or “likened” to their kaitiaki, pūpūwhakarongotaua. The iwi was not included in the protection of the taonga species. Conservationists “did not see” Ngāti Kuri’s whakapapa and relationship with pūpūwhakarongotaua. Sheridan felt invisible and understood that DOC and conservationists wanted to protect the species for “their own interests”. She also understood that Ngāti Kuri

was not considered to be of interest to these people or institutions, therefore the iwi relationship and kaitiaki role was severed from the protection of pūpūwhakarongotaua.

Sheridan felt that Ngāti Kuri were considered nothing more than a ‘pest’. Her statement and experience can also be linked to Catherine experience within political spheres. While Catherine felt the culture of conversation and government institutions within Aotearoa’s were “invasive” and smothering Sheridan felt that Ngāti Kuri were treated as “pests” and not worthy of being “seen” let alone heard at the grassroots. The experiences of these Ngāti Kuri women reveal an invasive colonial culture where engagement is experienced as exclusion and marginalisation.

During the late 1970s and 1980s some scientists engaged with and extracted knowledge from Ngāti Kuri through visiting and spending time with haukāinga. Sharing protection and power, however, was not a partnership the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) was interested in. During this time Ngāti Kuri established a close working relationship with Dr Oliver Sutherland, a scientist who supported, encouraged and valued iwi participation. Aware of the ongoing treaty breaches and inequality occurring through scientific institutions Oliver Sutherland, an entomologist working for the DSIR and anon-Māori ally of Ngāti Kuri, wrote a report with other scientists critiquing the institutions ethics, engagement and treatment of the lands, taonga and tangata whenua during research. Here is an example of a non-Māori scientist who values Ngāti Kuri ways of working and Te Ao Māori concepts. The report (1980) *Social responsibility of DSIR at MARC (Mt Albert Research Centre): Social Responsibility of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research at Mt Albert Research Centre* was written by Oliver Sutherland, Beverly Holloway (entomologist), Norman Lodge (food scientist) and Lin Roberts (zoologist).

In short, the findings of the report discuss the DSIR and MARC institutional focus on “assisting major agricultural and horticultural producers, those who are already financially secure and often politically and socially advantaged” (p 2). The authors claim that the focus on these groups results in a “rather narrow definition relating to the economic state of the nation” (Sutherland et al. 1980 2). Furthermore, they note that “economic and social needs are not mutually exclusive” (Sutherland et al. 1980 3).

The aim of the report was to bring to the attention of DSIR the need for research to look further afield to address unemployment, rural decay, diverse groups and youth, particularly in regions north of Auckland. The report highlights that social harmony is crucial in maintaining Aotearoa’s quality of life as is economic growth. The report goes on to first critique colonisation and Aotearoa’s monocultural approach to science and technology. Here, the authors remind the DSIR that Māori and Pacific Islanders have “for centuries been successful horticulturalists” conserving and developing “named varieties of traditional and exotic crops” and that Māori remain successful farmers of traditional lands in 1980 in the face of colonisation (Sutherland et al. 1980 7).

Secondly the report critiques MARC’s performance up until 1980. The findings reveal that the DSIR failed to officially research the interests of New Zealand’s “ethnic minority unless it is of interest the ethnic majority” (Sutherland et al. 1980 9). Finally, the report makes recommendations to the DSIR that would enable researchers to offer more support to Māori and Pacific Islanders in remote lands offering skills and resources to develop: diverse crops; education and employment programmes; and diversify lifestyles and economies. In my correspondence with Sutherland, he noted that the report was never properly published.

Since the 1970s Sutherland has continued to call out racial injustices across many institutions in Aotearoa. Alongside his wife, Ulla Sköld, and a handful of other Pākehā fighting against

racism in Aotearoa, the Auckland Committee on Racism and Discrimination (ACORD) was started in 1973. Armed with their lawyer David Lange (who was to become the country's Prime Minister) they stood at the frontline of fighting racism in Aotearoa with Ngā Tamatoa and The Polynesian Panthers (Sutherland and Delalic 2021). Sutherland (2019) continues to critique and call out institutional racism and published *Justice and Race: Campaigns against Racism and Abuse in Aotearoa New Zealand*.

Sutherland worked with the iwi to identify potential crops that Ngāti Kuri could cultivate to enhance their economic well-being, however, more research was needed. The DSIR did not consider this to be important and refused to support further investigation. The report was never officially acknowledged and eventually shelved. Sutherland has continued his close relationship with Ngāti Kuri. He and Sköld travelled from Wellington in November 2018 to attend the Ngāti Kuri annual wānanga - Pārengarenga Kete Rau Wānanga 2017, Te Hapua. In his address to Ngāti Kuri, he spoke of the manaakitanga he was shown and the importance of his relationship with the Ngāti Kuri. He also expressed his immense regret that the institution he had worked for failed to honour the partnership declared in Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The detrimental effects of colonial, Western conservation has been felt and critiqued by both Māori and non-Māori (Ens et al 2021). Ngāti Kuri have been pushed out, gone unseen and their homelands, their mana trampled in the name of conserving nature and the development of tourism. Taonga species like pūpūwhakarongotaua are part of the ecological web embedded into the landscape as are Ngāti Kuri the tribe. Power to name and construct knowledge around taonga species and land has been stolen and misappropriated, extracted and exploited as revealed in the next section.

Misrepresentation of Moehau

The multiple relationships and perspectives that Ngāti Kuri navigate can be revealed through an examination of the ways in which Māori concepts and identities are represented and interpreted. This helps to identify who and where power is held. It also helps to identify how and where to aim our responses. Applying a Mana Wahine lens to analysis of the power to name and interpret the Māori naming of taonga species reveals the silencing and exclusion of Māori women's identities and bodies from institutions, land and oceanscapes. A discussion of representation through a Mana Wahine framework highlights the challenges and possibilities for Indigenous women as they work towards decolonisation and the reclamation of ancestral names.

In this section the power to represent, translate and interpret Ngāti Kuri naming of taonga species is analysed through an investigation of the ways in which national and international non-Māori institutions create conservation knowledge through media releases. The intention of this is to not chastise individuals attempting to translate and interpret Māori naming but to alert the academic, conservation and scientific communities to the importance of engagement, reciprocity and integrity.

For Ngāti Kuri naming is a way to reconnect, honour and remember whakapapa, tūpuna and te taiao. It is also a powerful way to inscribe one's identity and mana motuhake deep within the landscape. But what happens when naming is mistranslated and misinterpreted? Scientific and colonial naming of place, people and taonga species has been a devastating and effective tool that set-in motion the systems that denied Māori the opportunities to make informed choices about their identities, where they believed they belonged and what roles might be accessible (Smith 2012, Szászy 1993). Changing and/or reclaiming a name articulates the historical, political and cultural identity of those in power (Kearns et al. 2002, Stokes 1997).

Reclaiming naming is an act of decolonisation for Māori and provides a pathway to indigenisation (Kearns et al. 2002, Ringham and Nelson 2021, Smith 2012).

Māori women's identities, voices and bodies continue to be wiped from the landscape through Crown conservation and scientific communities. I investigate a number of media releases concerning rātā Moehau. The first is from the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network (NZPCN) reporting on the health of a critically threatened taonga species of tree endemic to Ngāti Kuri lands and second is from 'The Global Trees Campaign', which is an institution dedicated to protecting and conserving trees and their natural habitat. I then go on to briefly list other websites that produce, share and create 'knowledge' about the rātā Moehau.

Using Te Reo Māori to name newly discovered taonga species is becoming increasingly more common as treaty partnerships are acknowledged and forged. As noted by Whaanga et al. (2013 80) naming practices have been haphazard and "hybridisation is prevalent". There are many cases of incorrect linguistic context, there is a lack of understanding of Māori naming practices and the meanings of the words and names gifted to taonga species (Wehi et al 2019). Despite Aotearoa's goal to integrate Te Ao Māori and Te Reo Māori into policies and the everyday lives of New Zealanders, misunderstanding and misinterpretation of Māori naming continues (Wehi et al 2019). Unpacking the way Māori names are misinterpreted within conservation spaces highlights the work needed to be done in order for kaitiaki roles to be fully realised and actioned (Wehi et al 2019). Indigenous experiences and practices within conservation collide with Western perspectives (Ens et al 2021) which result in, at times, conflicting understandings and misrepresentation of Indigenous women's subjectivities. Nature conservation spaces are constructed by Western scientific and political forces which

affect the lives of tangata whenua (Ens et al 2021, Rarai 2022). In the following I offer some information about Rātā Moehau, the tree before media representations are analysed.

Figure 6.1: Rātā Moehau (*Metrosideros bartlettii*): Aotearoa New Zealand’s most threatened tree



Source: Pou taiao: Ngāti Kuri Environmental Plan (Sanson and Clarke 2018)

Rātā Moehau is categorised as one of Aotearoa’s most threatened trees. In 1975 John Bartlett, an Auckland school teacher and amateur botanist stumbled across a large white flowering tree while looking for liverworts in bush areas around Te Paki in Te Hiku o te Ika (de Lange 2016). The accidental finding of this tree was labelled a ‘discovery’ and in 1985 the tree was given the Latin taxonomy *Metrosideros bartlettii* and Bartlett’s Rātā as a common name.

John Bartlett’s name is forever embedded in the tree’s ‘official’ and ‘common’ name given to the taonga species (Galbreath 2021). Before the ‘official’ naming of Bartlett’s rātā Ngāti Kuri kaumatua had named the tree as rātā Moehau to honour the ancestress Moehau.

In an article written in 2016 it is noted that Bartlett’s Rata is the name most commonly used by people interested in the rare tree, however, the Ngāti Kuri name rātā Moehau is

increasingly used (de Lange 2016). De Lange goes on to claim that the name *rātā Moehau* was created for this species when it was ‘discovered’ in 1975, yet not officially named, *Metrosideros bartlettii*, until 1985 (de Lange 2016).

When I asked participants about *rātā Moehau* and her naming, no one could confirm what processes or engagement had taken place. Participants knew and told *Moehau*’s story, all but one knew of *rātā Moehau* and the relationship and meaning the tree holds in regard to our our *tohunga ahurewa*. Naming the tree *rātā Moehau* physically, culturally and politically rooted the powerful and important identities of Ngāti Kuri women into the landscape and the histories of Ngāti Kuri.

By 1990, only ten trees were located across two Te Pahi sites and Unuwahao forest near Piwhane, Kapowairua. A closer inspection saw that thirty-four wild trees were documented by 1992 (de Lange 2016). In 2007, however, DOC monitoring found that seven trees at Unuwahao had died from possum browsing and several more had been seriously defoliated. To conserve the species DOC understood there needed to be a better understanding of the genetics, lifecycles and ecosystems (de Lange 2016). Scientific research, data, seeds, propagation and conservation of *Rātā Moehau* has been ongoing and with the signing of the Ngāti Kuri Deed of Settlement (2014) these institutions became bound to Te Tiriti o Waitangi to partnership with *iwi* and *hapū*.

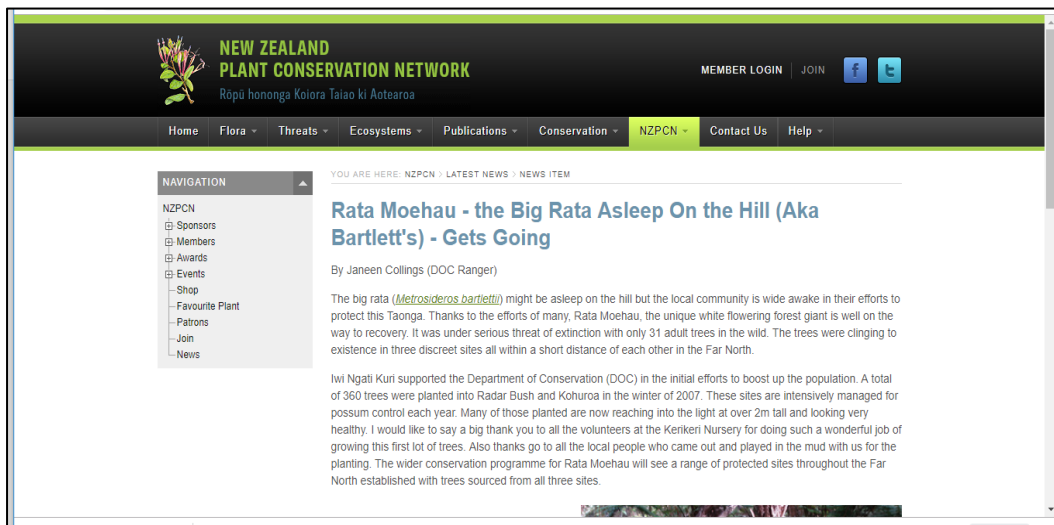
In an online article (2010) written by Janeen Collings for the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network (NZPCN) the name *rātā Moehau* is interpreted in the title: *Rātā Moehau: The Big rātā asleep on the hill (aka Bartlett’s) gets going*. In the title the reader is reminded of Bartlett. The apostrophe after his name claiming ownership and therefore authority. The title of the NZPCN media release is analysed in what follows.

The media release claims positive engagement with iwi and describes an example of iwi participation within the conservation of rata Moehau. The title, however, reveals a gap in understanding, representation and meaningful collaboration. The result, transmission and translation of Indigenous knowledges remain silenced and invisible within mainstream conservation spaces. The positioning and significance of Moehau's identity left out of the entire article and wrongfully interpreted in the title. This example reveals the creation of conservation knowledge remains a platform where Indigenous women's names, knowledges, identities and relationships are missing from the landscape.

For Ngāti Kuri, giving the tree Moehau's name symbolises Ngāti Kuri kaitiakitanga, tribal wellbeing and value in Māori women's roles. The naming of rātā Moehau intended to strengthen tribal positioning and relationships with our lands, taonga species and within conservation institutions (Wehi et al 2019). It was also a way to propel our ancestor, Moehau, into the future.

While the NZPCN discussed the participation and engagement with iwi on the ground and the "initial efforts to boost up the population" (Collings 2010 np) of the rare tree Ngāti Kuri were not present at the creation of conservation knowledge in regard to rātā Moehau.

Figure 6.2: New Zealand Plant Conservation Network



Source: Screenshot, 18 November 2018, http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/news_detail.aspx?ID=263

The screen shot above is from the NZPCN, an NGO that works to protect Aotearoa's indigenous and endemic plants. The [NZPCN](http://www.nzpcn.org.nz) website contains scientific and conservation information about flora and fauna found in Aotearoa. Media releases promote environmental protection and education. The title refers to a 'sleeping rata' and the author declaring the rata "might be asleep on the hill but the local community is wide awake in their efforts to protect this taonga" in the opening statement in the article (Collings 2010 np). There has been an attempt to translate the name 'Moehau' without returning to Ngāti Kuri to check that their translation, interpretation and representation is correct ensuring they understand the cultural, spiritual and political reasoning behind giving the rare and endangered rātā the name 'Moehau'.

In the article has failed to identify the significance of the name 'Moehau' as tohunga ahurewa, kaitiaki and Mana Wahine. Representation and interpretation is flawed. Of this flawed translation and interpretation Sheridan discusses her concerns saying:

My issue with this is that others (conservationists) are constantly talking about us but not with us when they tell our stories or talk about our taonga because it's always through a different lens. Because there are decades,

decades prior to this when our people signalled the decline of Rata Moehau. No one was listening (Sheridan, Findings wānanga 2 July 2022).

Sheridan’s statement identifies the issue quite clearly: “others are constantly talking and telling our stories”, “no one was listening”. Ngāti Kuri have never been silent when protecting lands, waterways and taonga species (see Chapter Two). Sheridan also understands that the lens, the perspectives, used in mainstream conservation is different to her own.

The author of the article has also failed at a literal translation of the name Moehau.¹⁴ While ‘moe’ means to sleep it can also mean to have sex, to be born, to die or to dream. As a verb ‘hau’ can mean the vital essence of a person, to be heard, to exceed or the ceremonial offering of food. As a noun ‘hau’ can be the wind, breath or air. ‘Hau’ can also be used to describe ‘prestige’ in which case relates to the valued status of a kaitiaki such as Moehau the tohunga. There is no link to a hill in a literal translation of the name. A literal translation of the kupu ‘Moehau’ is dependent on the context in which the word is used. ‘Moehau’ however, is not just a word, it is a name for a revered tupuna wahine. For Ngāti Kuri, the name Moehau articulates and communicates the essence and prestige of Moehau, wahine, tohunga ahurewa and kaitiaki and her power to sustain, protect and breathe life into people, landscapes, seascapes, flora and fauna.

When thinking about interpreting the name of our tohunga ahurewa we can identify her as influential. The kupu that make up her name send messages to future generations that Indigenous women can be imagined as a: mediator between birth and death; a decision-maker; speaker; translator and communicator of dreams; and the regulator of ceremonial

¹⁴ It is possible that the NZPCN has looked to a mountain named Moehau located in the Coromandel region for their translation. The mountain’s full name is ‘Te Moengahau-o-Tamatekapua’. I make no attempt to translate or interpret the name of another iwi’s mountain. Tamatekapua was the captain of Te Arawa waka.

offerings and resources. Ngāti Kuri's intentions in naming the tree Rātā Moehau was to propel this perspective into the future across their tribal landscape and its conservation.

Of her experience working for and with te taiao within the conservation space Catherine explains her experience:

You're working at it, day in day out, and to be a tūturu (honest, true, authentic) Māori is just like trying to fit a round peg in a square hole. So, the way I frame it is all we're (Māori) doing is just optimising failed spaces (Interview with Catherine 31 August 2017).

Catherine works at being tūturu Māori, to be permanently real, true and authentically Māori, and for her it feels like "trying to fit a round peg in a square hole". This metaphor offers an excellent example of how western conservation methods are an ill fit for Indigenous environmental management. Trying to make Indigenous environmental management "fit" within Western science and conservation methods does not allow for the cylindrical and diverse nature of Indigenous tangible and intangible ways of knowing (Coombs et al. 2014).

In the title of the article (Collings 2010 np) Moehau's name is taken and reduced to discuss a "rata asleep on the hill". By no means is Moehau asleep, she lives on through each Ngāti Kuri woman working with, in and for our environmental family. The NZPCN title raises many questions for me, such as if NZPCN was collaborating with Ngāti Kuri to re-name the taonga species how did they get the translation of rātā Moehau so wrong? Were they listening and taking in the information being shared with them or was their engagement a form of tokenism where they were only there to meet a requirement to consult with iwi? Were they selectively picking parts of Moehau's story that resonated with them and discarding the rest? The article quoted Wayne Petera who is one of the participants in this thesis. I sent the article to Wayne and asked for his thoughts, asking 'are they even aware of the significance of the name?'

Wayne elaborates:

That this wasn't discussed with Ngāti Kuri, well not to my knowledge, is indicative of how NGOs and individuals take licence and apply it at their whim. It brashes me off! I understand what they are trying to say and do but this doesn't appeal to me, in fact it detracts from applying our whaea tupuna name to this rākau completely. For us [Ngāti Kuri], it this marks a relationship to us and also marks the huge value that we place with our whaea tupuna. That others don't acknowledge or accept is no-never-mind to me and shouldn't be to all of us. This rākau is endemic to here and today we authenticate this with our ennobling of this rākau taonga where its whakapapa through to our atua Tane Mahuta (God of forests) is brought forward by us where it then is embedded in our narrative and psyche. Our people have begun to again form intimate relationships with this rākau we are taking steps to protect it through enhancing its value to us (Interview with Wayne 29 August 2017).

Here Wayne acknowledges how NGOs take 'licence' and with that the power to interpret Māori names given to taonga species. In taking licence to interpret the naming of rātā Moehau they have diminished the meaningful application of Moehau's name (Wehi et al 2019). I hear in his words what Catherine describes as "turutu Māori" and why it is important continue to "authenticate" and "ennoble" the intimate relationships Ngāti Kuri hold with rātā Moehau.

NZPCN are not alone in the exclusion of Ngāti Kuri women's names, identities and voices. Further investigation reveals that conservation institutions and NGOs sustain barriers and resist including Māori taxon in the projection and protection of rātā Moehau. In a DOC press release called *DNA profiling helping to save endangered tree* de Lange (2010) writes that Ngāti Kuri were 'consulted' in 2015 before data DNA sampling of rātā Moehau commenced. However, this is the only time the iwi is mentioned within the press release. At the very beginning of the article John Bartlett and his identity is firmly interjected into the minds of the reader as discoverer of the rare tree (de Lange 2010). The only information about the iwi's naming of the species is given in the comment section following the article. Here, de Lange states that the name was "iwi created" at the time Bartlett supposedly 'discovered' the rare tree (de Lange 2010 np). This was in 1975.

The tree was not officially named until 1985. In 2016, while Moehau's name is used, Bartlett remains at the forefront of the article.

De Lange engaged with the iwi in the protection of the remaining trees in several locations stating that: "saving the species will involve collaboration with other partners (such as botanic gardens and Project Crimson) to raise genetically viable plants in cultivation" (de Lange 2016 np). While the Ngāti Kuri are involved in groundwork protecting rātā Moehau, they are not identified as partners.

Third party influences are, often, problematic for Indigenous peoples and scientists attempting to collaborate and establish partnerships (Dunlap and Arce 2022). Colonial institutional perspectives and approaches have been constructed to exclude and eradicate Indigenous authorities from writing policies (Dunlap and Arce 2022). While some individual scientists are increasingly more willing to share the platform that is science and conservation, others are slow and unwilling to engage, collaborate and partner. Interest groups in the form of corporations and NGOs dominate the writing of conservation policies in Aotearoa. The casual grouping of tangata whenua alongside conservation groups reveals Crown institutional inability and resistance to accept partnership and shared governance written into and prescribed by Te Tiriti o Waitangi Treaty (Coombes 2007).

Global Tree's webpage names the taonga species as Bartlett's rātā, and then uses the name 'Cape Reinga White Rātā' before rātā Moehau is listed. Throughout the webpage only Bartlett's name is used in discussions. This is common across most media relating to rātā Moehau, nationally and internationally. Alarming, they go on in their blog to suggest the tree is also called the 'floral kakapo' because both the flightless parrot and the tree are endemic, rare and pushed to the "edge of extinction" (Wilson 2020 369). Only one of my participants had heard of the name 'Floral Kakapo' and of this she said:

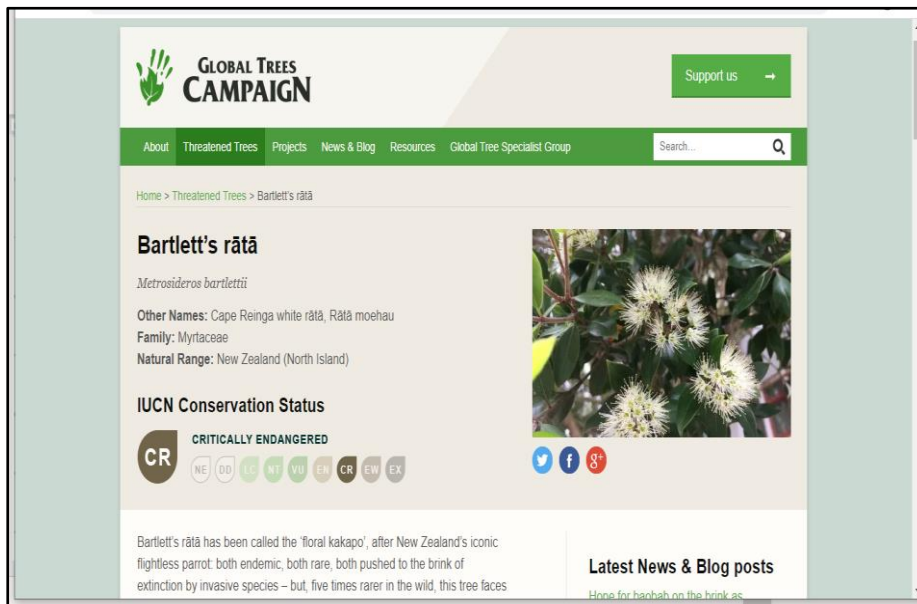
Yes, we heard this in all the research around the restoration of the rata Moehau. So, none of this is new, it's an identity thing which is one of the reasons why, and because of the decline, it was important that we had an active commitment to bring those (rātā Moehau trees) home to the Ngāti Kuri rohe (Sheridan Findings wānanga 2 July 2022).

Here Sheridan notes that identity and location is an important aspect in regard to the naming of rātā Moehau. The constant re-naming of the tree by people who do not understand the whakapapa and relationships the taonga species holds is another example of 'conservationists' trampling on the mana and whakapapa of Ngāti Kuri and Moehau. In 2021 over 100 rātā Moehau trees were returned to the territories of Ngāti Kuri. This has been an important step in the regeneration of rātā Moehau in her homelands – Te Hiku o te Ika. It also goes some way to returning those taonga species that were taken from the region in the name of science and conservation.

Also worthy of investigation is the name 'Cape Reinga White Rātā'. In this example location is used in the naming of the rātā. In 2014 Ngāti Kuri along with the other tribes of Muriwhenua officially made changes to the naming of the nationally important site. Te Rerenga Wairua was included as an official name by Aotearoa's National Geographic Board. Te Rerenga Wairua is the original name of the cape named by Kupe to mark the place from where the spirits of the dead departure on their journey to the spirit world (Waitangi Tribunal 1987). By continuing to use Cape Reinga in the naming of the rātā the reclaiming and rejuvenation of Māori relationships to place is further denied.

In the Global Trees example, conservation efforts to save the rata continues Indigenous exclusion. Moehau and her identity as kaitiaki and tohunga ahurewa are conveniently pushed to the margins and given to what the authors describe as the 'Māori name' of the tree.

Figure 6.3: Whose rātā, where?



Source: Screenshot November 2019, <https://globaltrees.org/threatened-trees/trees/bartletts-rata/>

In the New Zealand media outlet ‘Stuff’ article *Rare white rātā in Lower Hutt, rarer than the kākāpō* written by Nicholas Boyack (2019) likens Bartlett’s rātā to the kakapo as mentioned above but makes no mention of rātā Moehau or any effort to connect or acknowledge the tree’s relationship and significance to iwi. In locating the rare tree in the wild Boyack also fails to use another official Māori place name, Kapowairua. Anything relating to iwi or Ngāti Kuri is missed entirely.

In 2011 Shirley Stuart writes in the home and garden section of the *Otago Daily Times* newspaper suggesting we use ‘Bartlett’s rātā’ as a Christmas tree but makes no mention of rātā Moehau. She writes that in “the southern hemisphere we have developed our own traditions based on a summer Christmas” and that Bartlett’s rātā flowers look “like snow over the tree crowns” (Stuart 2011 np). When the article was written, Shirley Stuart was the curator of Native Plant Collection at Dunedin Botanic Garden and I question why she was either unaware of the name rātā Moehau or chose not to use it if she was looking to cement

“our own traditions in the southern hemisphere” (Stuart 2011 np). One can also speculate that there is a contradiction in wanting to develop traditions based on snow at Christmas while in living in the Southern Hemisphere to symbolise the event. Of the article Sheridan said:

Pākehā see our trees as decorations, they don't see them as taonga. They are just add-on decorations. They don't see their [the trees] whakapapa, and like the Rātā Moehau growing in Wellington they [Pākehā] don't know that rātā Moehau don't belong in those spaces (Sheridan, Findings wānanga 2 July 2022).

Jen added:

They [Pākehā] only see the decorative value. They are missing the bigger picture

Indigenous naming, relationships and knowledge are left out of the articles. iNaturalist NZ-Mātaki Taiao (2017) is a website where people can record, share and learn about Aotearoa's natural world and meet other nature enthusiasts. iNaturalist does, however, use rātā Moehau in the title but goes on to only mention Bartlett's rātā in its discussion of the tree. The website [CitSciHub](#) is a portal where “citizen scientists” can learn and contribute to knowledge the natural and physical world (2017). This website lists rātā Moehau as a common name and Bartlett's rātā and Cape Reinga rātā given macrons in each name, there are no macrons given to the naming of rātā Moehau. This changes the meaning of the kupu as ‘rātā’ describes a species of tree while ‘rata’, without the macrons, can be translated to mean doctor, friendly, quiet or tame depending on the context in which it is used. Rātā Moehau is not mentioned anywhere else in the discussion. Two websites which were selling the trees did not use the name rātā Moehau at all instead choosing to call the tree Cape Reinga White Rātā or Bartlett's Rātā (see [Greenleaf Nurseries](#) and [Tawapou](#)).

In an article by Warren Judd (2010) in the New Zealand magazine *National Geographic* Bartlett's rātā is discussed as one of New Zealand's rarest trees which is like “the Far North itself, it's a fragile, lonely and beautiful” (Judd 2010). The article uses only the scientific

taxon and Bartlett's rātā in the discussion of the tree. Rātā Moehau is not mentioned, perhaps if he had known Moehau's pūrākau he might have described the location as resilient, connected and powerful as are the women of Ngāti Kuri.

Rata Moehau has received attention because of past difficulties in propagation and recent successes. In a number of media websites, the name rātā Moehau is defined as the Māori name of the tree. Ngāti Kuri are rarely mentioned in the creation of conservations knowledge. In an extensive desktop investigation analysing eight media releases it was found that: 5 websites included the name rātā Moehau, 3 did not. One suggested a new name - the floral kakapo after an endangered bird and 3 renamed the tree the Cape Reinga rātā.

The Ngāti Kuri naming of rātā Moehau has been pushed to the background in media releases from conservation NGOs as evidenced in the analysis above. Late and accidental discoveries by non-Māori are honoured and recorded over and over. Power, ownership and control is maintained through representation, naming and claiming of rātā Moehau as Bartlett's. Mainstream conservation systems and interests drive the power to represent taonga species. Conservation NGOs and DOC are slow to realise the benefits of a treaty partnerships with Māori, however, Ngāti Kuri are pushing at the gates and fences that exclude them from the naming, representation and co-authorship of their world.

Ngāti Kuri naming our taonga species

This third section examines the values and principles of kaitiakitanga and whakawhanaungatanga when naming Ngāti Kuri taonga species. It is vital that the naming process is a product of the relationships and partnerships informed by Ngāti Kuri. Also discussed in this section is the shift within some of the scientific communities Ngāti Kuri work within.

As mentioned previously, through the signing of the Ngāti Kuri settlement deed in 2014 research institutions are required to enter into a partnership with the iwi. Ngāti Kuri initiated a partnership through several meetings at the Auckland War Memorial Museum. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Ngāti Kuri Trust Board and the Auckland Museum was signed in 2015. These interactions and the document set out the intentions and terms of engagement for each party. In the following year, 2016, the NKRWG held its first wānanga with Auckland Museum and science partners. This was held at Waiora Marae in Ngātaki. Scientists were treated as manuhiri engaging with us on our terms and within our rohe. Pūrākau were shared, knowledge was exchanged and learning was a two-way place-based exchange. Four wānanga have occurred since 2015 one of which included Indigenous peoples from across the Pacific. The outcome of these wānanga has been beneficial to both scientists and iwi. Scientists have become better educated in the ways of working within indigenous communities and iwi are better able to collaborate and activate their mana whenua status.

NKRWG works towards building partnerships, increasing Ngāti Kuri knowledge, re-storying, reconnecting, and rejuvenating historical and contemporary mātauranga and taonga species. The focus is to foster allyship, collaboration and cooperation between the Museum, scientists and research partners and create openings for uri to step up to and into. As mentioned earlier, a Ngāti Kuri woman was one of the original Wai262 claimants. Following in Saana Murray's footsteps, the NKRWG hopes to inscribe the perspectives of the Wai262 into the tribe's ethics and framework for working with partners. The work done by NKRWG is putting the WAI262 into practice, regardless of the resistance from the government to settle the claim. This is kaitiakitanga at the political level ensuring taonga species, culture, knowledge and our intellectual property rights are respected and protected nationally (Wehi et al 2019). Ngāti Kuri has increased their mana motuhake to prescribe what occurs within our rohe and

partnerships. The Ngāti Kuri Trust Board are in search of the possibilities, potentialities and openings (Pihama 2001) embedded in te taiao relationships.

Naming species is part of that mahi. Māori have a process and system for naming taonga species that is “founded on a whakapapa relationship that incorporates, amongst other things, many deities within Māori cosmology and the natural world as well as relationship between species” (Wehi et al 2019, Whaanga et al. 2013 79). Wayne (2021, personal correspondence) uses the word “taunaha” (to claim by naming, to pledge, promise, set aside) to describe the practice of naming saying that not only are we making a whakapapa claim to te taiao, we are also claimed by te taiao in return. Wayne went on to explain that tuanaha “is an indelible relationship that recognises whanaungatanga” (Wayne email correspondence 2021). For Ngāti Kuri, giving the tree Moehau’s name symbolises Ngāti Kuri kaitiakitanga and conservation systems, tribal wellbeing and value in women, their positioning and their identities within the tribe.

Ngāti Kuri women have been at the forefront of establishing partnerships with scientists since the 1970s. It was Saana Waitai-Murray with the support of Sutherland that started to use both Western Science and mātauranga Māori to explore and promote economic interests for Ngāti Kuri (Gibson 2018). In doing so, the pair, Māori and non-Māori, challenged the monocultural and homogenous culture of Aotearoa’s science institutions (Gibson 2018). In 2010, Saana was assigned naming rights for a new genus of stick insect she called the taonga *Tepakiphasma ngatikuri*. The taonga was officially named and Ngāti Kuri were acknowledged as kaitiaki in the etymology section (Buckley and Bradler 2010). Saana’s contribution, however, was not acknowledged.

This set the precedence for the work of NKRWG and since 2015 the working group has been partnering with scientists to name deep ocean rimurimu (seaweeds) found around

Manawatāwhi (Three Kings Island), Rangitāhua (Kemadec Islands) and the northern coastline of Aotearoa. Five seaweeds have been officially named (see: Nelson et al. 2019; D'Archino, et al. 2020; Heesch et al. 2021, Kessel et al 2022, Nelson et al 2022). The image below was taken in 2017 at one of the early naming hui (meetings).

Figure 6.4: 2017 Naming rimurimu hui



Source: Sandi Ringham

Dictyota korowai sp. nov was the first seaweed we named in 2019 and the common name Korowai o Manawatāwhi articulates Ngāti Kuri's kaitiaki status (Nelson, Sutherland, Ringham and Murupaenga 2019). Each kupu given to species is discussed and interpreted in the co-authored articles. This ensures that the narrative underlines the intention and purpose of the name given from a Ngāti Kuri perspective. A korowai is an intricately woven traditional cloak that not only protects us from environmental elements but is also a symbol of mana. Naming Korowai o Manawatāwhi is a metaphor for cloaking the species in under Ngāti Kuri protection and autonomy.

Ngāti Kuri were the first to install tribal co-authorship into a taxon. While tribal authorship and contribution was not foreseen in the development of the Code of Nomenclature, there is no restriction written into the code that excludes this praxis (Galbreath 2021). Through partnership and co-authorship with science partners Ngāti Kuri transformation, indigenisation and decolonisation is occurring within the Code of Nomenclature, the science community and the academy. The outcome for Ngāti Kuri is that tino rangatiratanga –self-determination and autonomy - is activated (Wehi et al 2019).

With each rimurimu name published, co-authorship of the initial article takes place. Ngāti Kuri people who contribute to the naming and narrative process are named as co-authors within each article, others are named and thanked in the acknowledgements. This ensures the Ngāti Kuri are forever linked to the taonga species – scientists and future readers unable to ignore our presence, narrative and naming. This also ensures we can track our knowledge. Each time conservation knowledge is created around rata Moehau Ngāti Kuri should be cited to avoid plagiarism. Understanding the Ngāti Kuri narrative of *Polycoelia kurariirapa* requires one to unpack the different words embodied in the name. While a literal translation describes a scarlet, feather like seaweed branching out at a wide angle there lies a deeper meaning. The name Kurariirapa signifies protection and is a metaphor for the binding relationships within our ecosystems (D'Archino, Ngauma, Norman, and Zuccarello 2020).

In the naming of *Ulva piritoka* Ngāti Kuri's spiritual, cultural, political and customary connections to Manawatāwhi are laid out (Heesch, Sutherland, Ringham and Nelson 2021). Naming the rimurimu 'Piritoka' signifies resilience and changing currents for Ngāti Kuri. Through colonisation Ngāti Kuri's world has experienced drastic changes socially, politically and environmentally. Ngāti Kuri remain resilient and we hold fast to our culture, language and environmental relationships in the constant flow of changing worlds.

Ngāti Kuri and our current science partners are transforming the capacity of Indigenous peoples to engage and contribute to knowledge making processes. There have been several positive outcomes for Ngāti Kuri and science partners. High trust is developed as time goes on and co-authorship continues. Relationships and partnerships are strengthened. Learning takes place for all involved. As allies, our science partners remind and encourage other scientists to engage and partner with Ngāti Kuri and several other naming opportunities have grown. NKRWG has grown to establish a taonga species naming group 'Tira ma te wa'. The group once small is continuously growing and stretches across generations connecting kuia and kaumatua with rangatahi. Each Ngāti Kuri person bringing with them their skills, perspective, knowledge and creativity.

The naming process has also created opportunities to present Ngāti Kuri methodologies and aspirations at national and international conferences. Figure 6.5 below was produced for the international conference the '12th International Phycological Congress' in Chile, March 2021. In presenting Ngāti Kuri methodologies to an international audience of scientists Ngāti Kuri are better positioned as kaitiaki, representing, interpreting and tracking the knowledge we share and in reconnecting with each other science allies and taonga species.

Figure 6.0.5: Ngāti Kuri methodologies



Source: Presentation ‘Where Indigenous knowledge and taxonomy meet: Discovering, documenting and naming rimurimu/seaweeds in Aotearoa, New Zealand (Ringham and Nelson 2021).

Through the naming process another opportunity has grown. Huia Murupaenga and I (NKRWG members) have started two groups, one Tamaki Makaurau (Auckland) and one in Kirikiriroa (Hamilton). These groups meet on alternative months creating a place where urban uri of Ngāti Kuri can come together and connect with each other. Both groups have their own Facebook pages where uri can also connect virtually, reaching across the oceans.

The development of the NKRWG and Tira Ma te Wa naming of taonga is an opening that has provided transformation of the possibilities and potentialities in reach of Ngāti Kuri. The relationship the NKRWG built with the Auckland War memorial Museum and science partners is an opening that must be not only grasped but also negotiated.

Conclusion

Ngāti Kuri have been naming taonga species for centuries and continue to do so regardless of the boundaries and barriers colonisation and science attempt to enforce. Naming is an act of decolonisation for Māori and provides a pathway to Indigenisation (Kearns et al. 2002, Ringham and Nelson 2021, Smith 2012). This chapter critiques the representation of Ngāti Kuri women in New Zealand's conservation institutions revealing the intersecting realities of Ngāti Kuri women. Mana Wahine analysis was employed to examine who is representing Ngāti Kuri women and continuing to mobilise dominant discourses. Through colonisation Indigenous identities continue to be marginalised within so-called collaborative relationships in conservation. The research found that while colonisation and exclusion of women's voices and identities continues in nuanced ways. Findings reveal the ways in which Indigenous women's roles, responsibilities and identities can be reclaimed and reconfigured through whakawhanaungatanga and naming.

Māori participation in the interpretation and administration of treaty rights, kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga within conservation sites is crucial to ensure interests and environmental and social well-being are protected for the entire population of Aotearoa, both present and in the future (Ens et al 2021). Ngāti Kuri women who contributed to this research negotiate many relationships with each other, the wider iwi and hapū, within whanau spaces, workspaces, institutions and sometimes within political and governing spaces. Often all of them at the same time, both nationally and globally.

The chapter not only exposes the ways Indigenous women's identities and relationships are marginalised it also provides examples of the ways in which some Ngāti Kuri women are building partnerships within the academy of science through engaging in naming, claiming and representation in powerful and meaningful ways. This chapter argues that learning,

knowing and speaking the stories of tūpuna wahine and naming taonga species, Māori women infiltrate and transform colonial and scientific spaces.

The following chapter elaborates on the importance of returning to homelands. Knowing one's pepeha is not enough. Uri must return home to truly know, feel, understand and embody their whakapapa, identity as Ngāti Kuri and their relationships to te taiao.

Chapter seven: The fire whispers to our blood and bones: Sensing home

My experiences with nan are like a long journey, so Mana Wahine in that sense, it's always been about land, and she'd say to me "man or your land, man or your land. There will come a time when you may have to choose between your man or your land. What will you choose?" And it will always be your land. I didn't know then, what I know now. I know exactly what she meant now (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

I start this chapter with a quote from Sheridan Waitai. Sheridan is a Ngāti Kuri Trust Board trustee who holds the conservation portfolio for the iwi. Her relationship with te taiao was established early in life through her conversations with her nanny Saana Waitai-Murray.

Important for Sheridan has been the realisation of what whenua means for Mana Wahine. She notes that there will "come a time" in which a choice is to be made between "your man or your land" and that for many Māori women they will always choose their land. This chapter considers how and why participants choose "their land".

Indigenous research is a "construction of humanness" centred and interconnected through bodies, ancestors, land and all living things (Morton-Robinson 2013 335). At the foundation of this interconnectedness is an Indigenous sense of belonging (Morton-Robinson 2013, Smith 2020). In what follows is a glimpse into the hearts, minds and places of participants. Revealed are the multiple ways in which te taiao is an active participant in forming and maintaining relationships and Ngāti Kuri women's identities (Sioui 2020). The chapter focuses on participants' reflection and understanding of the ways in which they sense place. The sensory exchanges that occurred between participants and te taiao during tipi haere is explored alongside participants' experiences and feelings at home. In this chapter home is understood as a tribal landscape in which the whakapapa of Ngāti Kuri is founded.

Homelands are embodied through the senses, memories and identities of the participants (Kearney 2009, Ormond and Ormond 2018). This final empirical chapter highlights the ways in which participants engage with te taiao through singing, storying and sensing place.

Centralising homelands offers a view into the ways in which environmental relationships are formed, understood and expressed. This chapter explores participants' relationships with te taiao and seeks to answer the question: How and in what ways are environmental *tohu* re-centring Ngāti Kuri women within tribal homelands? This chapter is an exploration of the mutually constitutive relationships between place and people.

Participant conceptualisation of homelands is explored in the first section 'A stone in my throat brings me home'. Analysis delves into the complex and deep relationships participants have with homelands. Untangling the excerpts, memories and experiences of participants reveal the nuanced ways in which homelands is "fundamentally spatial in character" (Wildcat 2005) and I argue that belonging is sensed through tangible and intangible bodies. Unpacking the complex ways in which the senses are felt and understood through *Mana Wahine* reveals the environment as an active agent in transforming, healing and re-centring Ngāti Kuri women and their relationships in and with place.

The second section 'Sleeping by the water' explores the sensory geographies of Ngāti Kuri women. Findings illustrate the complex ways in which the environment sends *tohu*, cues or signals, to participants that help them to understand and transform their relationships and identities within tribal landscapes. Place and te taiao is an active agent in forming the conceptualisation of home and relationships with it, within it and without it. Environmental *tohu* reinforce not only a sense of belonging for participants it also informs a sense of responsibility and care for the environment within participants (Kana'iaupuni and Malone 2006, Smith 2020).

The final section 'He *tohu* o Ngāti Kuri: Singing and writing to te taiao' considers a poem and a song to explore what happens when Māori women write and sing to, in and with place.

The song *He tohu o Ngāti Kuri* was written by Bethany Matai Edmunds the night before

attending the Pūrākau Wānanga held with participants on 27 February 2018. *‘He tohu o Ngāti Kuri* has a life force of its own growing and informing creative works and environmental and tribal relationships. The poem *Caught in her wake* was written by me while visiting my homelands. In writing the poem I was better able to analyse my sensory experience within my homelands and what it means to reconnect to people and place. Ormond and Ormond (2018) argue that the orientation of place-based knowledge and exchange creates a notion of ancestral place, relationship and connections and a sense of belonging. Findings discussed in this section focus on the ways in which participants respond to environmental tohu. This brings the chapter full circle in that not only is the environment sending tohu and signals to participants, participants are responding through travelling, singing and writing to place. The environment and participants are co-constructing each other’s identities and relationships.

A stone in my throat brings me home

Connection to homelands has a physical, social and metaphysical impact on the cultural identities and well-being of participants that establishes purpose and meaning to their everyday experiences in and with place (Abramson 2017, Kearney 2009, Ormond and Ormond 2018). This section speaks to the deep healing and ihi that takes place through reconnecting, rejuvenating and reconciling place-based relationships. ‘Homelands’ are interpreted from an Indigenous ontology that is both metaphysical and physical and understood as a “dynamic ancestral territory, landscape, place and community” member (Ormond and Ormond 2018 80). Participants’ sense of belonging and place-based exchanges is examined through exploring notions of homelands.

Aileen Morton-Robinson (2013 341) remarks: “Indigenous women’s ways of knowing are informed by shared knowledge and experiences, some of which we are conscious of while others remain in the unconscious” just below the surface of knowing, felt in the tinana,

wairua and hinengaro. While place plays an important role in the creation and understanding of Māori women's identities and relationships for some participants te taiao is 'a given', a 'taken for granted' everyday phenomena that is unconsciously embodied through the senses rather than something that is easily articulated. While for others homelands are an important site central to creating their tribal identity and connection people and place. Homelands become a destination, an on-going and far-reaching journey to be travelled, fostered and learnt (Abramson 2017). Applying a Mana Wahine approach to participants' understandings, relationships and articulation of homelands reveal home is a valued emotional place with its own language culture, life and history. Homelands are an active participant in connecting and bringing people together (Kana'iaupuni and Malone 2006, Kearney 2009, Ormond and Ormond 2018).

Homelands brought participants and I together. The whakapapa we share as people is also a genealogical link to place, that is, to te taiao, in other words, a holistic ecosystem where we feel we belong in or long to belong to (Smith 2020). Unravelling the ways in which participants conceptualise and embody their relationships and identify with and in homelands highlights the subtle transformation of place and people that takes place at home.

The research found that home coming was an important yet challenging process for many of the participants. Below Sheridan Waitai discusses why she thinks coming home is important. Bringing people home to protect and care for tribal lands is a key goal in her work for the tribe. Sheridan identifies that coming home is the first step to valuing the location of one's whakapapa and pepeha (tribal saying connecting one to ancestors, lands and waters). She says:

The first and most important thing is people must come home, like you, you have to come home. You can't go oh 'ko Maungapiko te maunga, ko Pārengarenga te wahapu' (statements within pepeha) but you have never

been there. Those are your birthing waters your atua At some point you have to value your relationships, your whakapapa enough to come home. That's the first step (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

Clear in her statement is the importance of coming home to visit your 'birthing waters and atua'. Ngāti Kuri are a people of the ocean. The tribal area reaches from Aotearoa to the outer islands of Manawatāwhi and Rangitāhua. Ngāti Kuri territory reaches across one million square kilometres, yet only 33,000 hectares of that is land (see Chapter two). Ngāti Kuri people are born with a whakapapa to both water and land. The concept of homelands is extended to birthing waters by Sheridan in her excerpt above. Whakapapa is at the foundations of conceptualising homelands, individual and collective identities. 'Homelands symbolise a meeting place where physical, human, metaphysical and ecosystems intersect (Ormond and Ormond 2018). Sheridan's inclusion of "birthing waters" also situates mothers into her understanding of homelands. For Sheridan, however, stating your mountain and waters in pepeha (as she notes above in the statement: "ko Maungapiko te maunga, ko Pārengarenga te wahapu") is not enough. Visiting homelands and moving back to homelands is a meaningful expression of the value one has in tribal relationships, whakapapa and whenua.

Māori women and their identities play an important role in establishing a connection to the environment. Earth is personified as Papatūānuku, the mother and giver of life to all living things, including humans. Māori women, therefore, are revered as whare tangata (the house of humanity) and many concepts relating to land and people are connected to the value in women and their living giving abilities.

The land for our people is known as whenua, which is also the word for afterbirth. When a child is born, the cultural process for our people is to return the afterbirth to the earth; it is buried within the Earth Mother. It connects us to our land. The whenua (afterbirth) is returned to the whenua (the earth) (Pihama and Cameron 2012 230).

In naming both land and placenta whenua Māori have epitomised the “intimate connection between Māori women’s reproductive body and the land as the primary source of sustenance for humanity in Māori thought” (Murphy 2019 36). When a Māori child is born the whenua are reconnected, the placenta is buried in the tribal homelands of the child (Simmonds 2014). This reaffirms the child’s whakapapa to Papatūānuku and is also an indicator of continued occupation of tribal lands (Murphy 2019). Land and Māori women are the source of mana whenua for Māori as both land and women sustain the future of the tribe.

Sheridan maintains and nurtures a close relationship and connection to the tribal lands of Ngāti Kuri. She grew up in Te Hiku o te Ika, Far North Aotearoa. She spent a great deal of time with her grandmother Saana Waitai-Murray who was an advocate for environmental justice and a kaitiaki for many Ngāti Kuri taonga species threatened with extinction.

Sheridan’s ihi for te taiao was established at an early age through her time spent with her grandmother visiting and engaging with place. Yet she understands that for some Ngāti Kuri home is a distant place they have never been to. Sheridan acknowledges the removal of whanau (extended family) from homelands and understands this is not always “their fault” but adds that it is “time” they returned. Sheridan is sending a karanga to the uri of Ngāti Kuri:

We know there’s a lot of our whanau out there that have never been home. They have never been home, no. And some of it’s not their fault because they’ve been removed. But I think it’s time they started to come home because if you walk the land and you hear the reo [language] it’s a different reo, it’s a different kind of experience and knowing. When you go home, you hear it, and I’m just thinking of home like, I know the smell of it. My nan used to come home and she would smell like manuka, you know she just smelt like home (Interview with Sheridan, 17 November 2018).

Here Sheridan asserts people need to “walk the land” to truly understand their connection to Ngāti Kuri tribal lands. Sheridan suggests that if one returns to Ngāti Kuri homelands they have an opportunity to hear a unique environmental language, a “reo” that holds and communicates a different kind of experience and knowing. For Sheridan homelands

communicate a Ngāti Kuri centric epistemology and ontology. This knowing and experience of home is embodied through the smell of mānuka (called 'tea tree' by Captain Cook)¹⁵ on her nan. The smell of her nan and manuka represent home.

The research conversations about homelands that unfolded between Sheridan and I encouraged me to share my own experience and conceptualisation of home. Her kōrero about the removal of our people from our homelands related to the ongoing intergenerational trauma caused by colonisation that my grandmother, mother, my daughter and I endure. My grandmother Emere Hamo and her son Richard died in 1942 of tuberculosis, a disease brought by the colonisers that ran rampant through Māori communities. My mother, Caroline Hempel-Ringham, was two years old when Emere and Richard died. Caroline's early life was spent within her homelands, the tribal lands of Ngāti Kuri. When she was aged three or four her Pākehā (non-Māori) father re-married and took her to live with his new Pākehā wife far away from her whanau and her birthing waters. In the interview I shared my story with Sheridan:

I am grateful to my mum [Caroline] because, even though she was far removed and taken, that lost generation, she still took us up there (Te Hāpua) every 10 years. She would take us to the urupā (burial ground) and she'd say 'this is your land, this is where your grandmother is buried'. There was no headstone for my nanny back then. She is now named on her sister's headstone. But my mum, she had been told, she remembered who her mother was and where was buried. So, I always knew where I came from and I longed for it. I always longed for it. I always longed to belong in a deeper more meaningful way and in a more secure sense. So, my mother did her bit as well I guess (Sandi, interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

In reply, Sheridan confirmed the role of women as mothers by saying:

Exactly, she just stuck at it. She made sure you knew where home was. All mothers, all Ngāti Kuri mothers, that bit, that drive to pass some knowledge on, that's the mana in the wahine. It's when they do that bit for their children. Because if they don't, they actually take the decisions away

¹⁵ See <https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-plants/manuka-kahikatoa-and-kanuka/> for more information.

from their children without realising it (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

Sheridan identifies the responsibility of mothers as being a “drive” to share knowledge that establishes Mana Wahine and the “sacred relationships generation after generation” (Pihama 2021 352). She states that if the knowledge and the whakapapa is not shared then ‘decisions are taken away’ from children. Without whakapapa knowledge those children are unable to return to the lands of their ancestors. As identified in Chapter five and Six, pūrākau play an important role in the creation of participant identities and relationships to an environmental family. Our mother’s stories underpin our relationships, connection and attachment to place. Passing the stories of Ngāti Kuri women to the next generation is important to participants. Long distances and remote gravel roads are travelled in order to tell the stories of our mothers, grandmothers and homelands.

My father would drive my mother, sister and I 576 kms in our old 1954 Morris Minor car from our family home in the Waikato to our tribal homelands in Aotearoa’s most northern region. We were not a wealthy family and in the 1960s and ‘70s the roads to Te Hāpua were rough gravel tracks. This was a huge effort and cost for my parents. It meant sacrifices and periods of saving money for a long trip. We did not know anyone in the area. My mother’s connection was long severed by years of colonisation. We would stay for as long as we could, visiting the urupa where my grandmother is buried and then turn around and drive back. My mother initiated coming home early in my life and had to face a number of challenges to do so. These early visits to our homeland are embodied through memories and emotions and manifested as a longing to secure a meaningful sense of belonging (Kearney 2009, Mokaraka-Harris 2017). Both my mother and our tribal lands shaped my idea of where I belong in this world and who I am.

My story reveals some of the complexity and challenges Indigenous parents face in maintaining tribal connection to lands and people. For my mother, returning home was the only connection she had with the mother she had lost so early in life. She remained connected to her own mother through visiting homelands and knew it was important for her children to know who they were and where they came from. She maintained her memory and her tribal connection to land and passed that on to her children in spite of, and in the face of, colonisation. When I asked her why she ensured we knew who we were and where we belonged, she said:

Oh, Sandi to come home! I just knew it was important. Sometimes when I'm between sleeping and waking I think I can hear her [her mother, Emere] and I can feel her with me And I just knew. I knew I had to take you kids home. My mother wanted me to go with my pākehā father, to walk in his world, but she said I would come home, and I did. And I brought you kids to her. Because when you stood there in that ururpā all your tupuna were under your feet, you were where you belonged. And each time I came home and brought you kids with me I was doing what my mother said I would (Interview with Caroline, 27 April 2019).

In the above Caroline focuses on the intangible messages she receives from her mother. The need to return to her homelands is heard and felt “between sleeping and waking”. The responsibility to return mokopuna to their tupuna and homelands establishing a sense of belonging.

Figure 7.1: Emere Hamo with her sisters holding her daughter Caroline Hempel- Ringham



Source: Permission given by Caroline Hempel-Ringham

My mother's feelings of home and attachment to her tribal place is fraught with memories of displacement, loss and trauma (Simmonds 2014). Of the experience she said:

It broke my heart being taken away like that. I just wanted to go home (to Te Hāpua) all the time. I remember when the letter saying I was to be taken came. My three-year-old self ate that letter. I didn't want to go. I can remember thinking, bugger that! I was raised in a Pākehā household. It was a very violent and traumatic childhood. There was physical and sexual abuse, racism, broken marriages and broken people all around me. I was loved but there was lots of violence. And I was always reminded that I was brown, not belonging, not the daughter of my step-mother and the fond memories of my tribal lands ... well, I just wanted to return to that place and time (Interview with Caroline, 27 April 2019).

Caroline's memory of her homelands has stayed with her throughout her life. At the time of the interview, she was 79 years old yet remembers eating the letter that changed her life forever 76 years earlier. Fond memories of her tribal home provided her with a sense of belonging when she was singled out as not belonging in the Pākehā household of her stepmother's family.

Similarly, the journey home has been long and arduous for many other participants. Some participants explain that, at times, they feel that while they know they are home, they still experience feelings of disconnection. Awaroa says:

So, when I came back, I didn't know anyone, and I didn't know where I could stand (Awaroa, Wharekapua wānanga, 26 February 2018).

Awaroa had grown up in Te Hiku o te Ika but moved away many years ago. Connections to people had dissolved over time yet connection to place had remained and pulled her home.

Debbie also found the move home difficult:

It's very hard when you come home and you're actually living here. When we first moved back it was a really hard thing to do. We had to get up there and prove ourselves, put our foot out and say "well we're here!". It was hard to prove ourselves (Interview with Debbie, 26 August 2017).

Debbie - who had also grown up in the area - found the move home difficult in that she and her husband felt the need to "prove" themselves. Debbie's statement reveals that while getting there was a hard thing to do, she also had to negotiate their value and worth. They felt they had to prove themselves. Debbie did not elaborate on how proof of her worth was provided. While Awaroa questions where her place to stand might be, Debbie created her standing in her tribal lands through putting her "foot" out and standing firm in her turangawaewae.

Both women have settled and found their turangawaewae. Debbie explains how she feels:

I'm quite happy the way things are now. There are things I'm concerned about in the environment but life has improved a hundred percent. I mean look at the land [and] what we have around us. I'm just so grateful. I wouldn't even look back the other way (Interview with Debbie 26 August 2017).

Life has improved while living in her homelands. When Debbie looks to the land, she feels gratitude. There is no regret and looking back the "other way" (away from her homelands] is not something she would consider. Awaroa felt that through reconnecting with place she can

“stand here and know this is my whakapapa” (Awaroa, Wharekapua wānanga, 26 February 2018). Her sense of turangawaewae is strengthened.

During the wānanga Awaroa elaborated further on what moving home means to her by relating the story of Kuaka to her own experience. The kuaka is a migratory bird that visits the shores of Aotearoa and then flies as far north as Siberia and Alaska (Linscott and Senner 2021). It comes here to feed while the Northern Hemisphere is in winter. The small bird flies non-stop between the two hemispheres in large V-shaped flocks in which the flock members take turns in leading and ‘sleeping’ on the wing (uni-hemispheric sleep) (Linscott and Senner 2021).

Kuaka is an important bird for many iwi across Aotearoa. Kuaka was one of Tane Mahuta’s (deity of forests and birds) favourite children. Tane Mahuta was entertained by Kuaka who was a great storyteller. Kuaka travelled the coastlines of Aotearoa collecting stories.

Eventually Kuaka got tired of telling the same stories and went to Tane Mahuta asking if it was possible to venture beyond Aotearoa’s shores in search of new stories. Tane knew that it was and sent Kuaka offshore in search of new stories but first placed a stone in Kuaka’s throat. The stone would let Kuaka know when it was time to come home. Kuaka ventured far beyond the Pacific Ocean. On the journey Kuaka fell in love and established a strong bond with another kuaka from the Northern Hemisphere. Children were born but after many months the stone in his throat started to vibrate. It was time for Kuaka to return to Tane Mahuta. Leaving partner and children behind Kuaka set off once again on the long and arduous journey home bringing home news and stories from distant shores.

Awaroa relates this story to her own experience saying:

This pūrākau about kuaka and the stone in his throat and having to return home and leave his wife, that’s like me with my tane and coming home

without him and some of the kids. I felt this need to come home and I did (Awaroa Pūrākau wānanga, 27 April 2019).

Awaroa embodied Kuaka's story to discuss her experience being mobile and leaving her partner and children in the South Island. She can see the similarities between her own experience and the pūrākau of Kuaka. She makes a connection to leaving her partner and her children behind. She imagines a 'stone in her own throat' was pulling her home. This was something she felt strongly enough to leave her family to go to her homelands, to set a place to stand, a turangawaewae for her children and whānau. This leads her to say more about her experience moving home:

I've had three kids come home since then. And they are finding out who they are. Similar to you Sandi, we had no-where to stay, we had the farm but that was all tied up [leased]. I was driven to come home when my brother came home to lie in the urupā. It was like "oh we've got nowhere to stay" so I was like, "right I'm going to move home". About a year later I moved home and now my other brother wants to come home and my sister who wants to come home – it's almost that migration home like kuaka. I totally feel that (Awaroa, Pūrākau wānanga, 27 April 2019).

Awaroa tells us what it was that inspired her to come home. For her, home coming has been about not only the living but also for those who have passed on. Her brother's death and return of his body to his homelands to lie in the urupā has "driven" her journey home. Her children have followed her and her siblings are wanting to do the same. Awaroa had lost contact with haukāinga over the years and had nowhere to stay at the time. Awaroa likens her experience to the migratory journey of Kuaka and the strongly felt "stone in her throat". She elaborates:

I grew up here and this is home. I have nowhere else to call home and so moving away for 26 years and not really having anywhere to come back to was ... Ngātaki was always home but I didn't know people anymore but I'm slowly getting to know them now that I live here. It's grounding. And that Kuaka story is cool it helps me to understand that (Awaroa, Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

The process of getting to know people in Awaroa’s tribal lands has been slow and dependant on “living” there. The experience has been grounding and Kuaka’s pūrākau helps her to understand and make sense of the driving force pulling her home. Expressed in Awaroa’s kōrero is an iwi ontology and epistemology that reveals a “network of relational living organisms’ (Ormond and Ormond 2018 81) defined and articulated through pūrākau. Ormond and Ormond (2018 81) describe this network as an ‘earthscape’ that creates a “collective cultural memory, a mooring for cultural identity and a mechanism for social order”.

The relationship between kuaka and Ngāti Kuri is strong. The pūrākau and the bird inspire participants to make life changing decisions that require navigating challenges and the unfamiliar. In the following quote Jen, haukāinga, discusses her experience seeing Kuaka arrive to the homelands of Te Hāpua:

I been privileged to watch kuaka arrive home (Te Hāpua), as they flew into land they flew so low over the water it was amazing, like only inches above the water. Amazing to watch. I don’t karanga usually but that day I did. It just came over me. My skin was tingling, and I felt this energy and they brought this cool wind with them. The lead bird was just so strong bringing them in and they came in this big flock. Just amazing! To think about where they’ve come from, about that horrendous journey home was just absolutely amazing to see (Jen, Pūrākau wānanga, 27 April 2019).

Jen’s experience with kuaka inspired her to do something she does not usually do. She had a multisensory embodied experience, that “just came over” her (Hickey 2019, Longhurst et al. 2008, Mills and Dooley 2019, Morrison et al. 2013). The tingling she felt in her body inspired her to offer kuaka a karanga, a ceremonial call, a welcome home for taonga species. The energy that the large flock brought with them was felt as a “cool wind” and they were led by the strengthen of the lead bird. She is aware of the long journey they make (coming each summer to Aotearoa from their breeding grounds) and imagines it to be a “horrendous” experience.

During the findings wānanga, Jen elaborated further on her experience saying:

That day I witnessed the arrival home of the flock of kuaka, what kicked off my karanga was because I heard the lead bird (first bird talking to the other two that flanked each side of the leader, they were strong, loud, clear, enough to send their message back to the flock. They weren't chattering over each other, it was like each bird made an independent call, they knew exactly when to call, the unison stood the hairs up on my arms and head. I interpreted that as a symbol of how important communication is and all those things. They were, clear, strong, precise in their own roles, in leadership. Truly exceptionally brilliant! (Jen, Findings wānanga 2 July 2022).

In witnessing the kuaka arriving home Jen recognises the communication between the lead bird and the others in the flock. She describes it as “strong, loud and clear” call in which each bird sends a response. In this experience Jen receives a message which she interprets as a symbol representing the significance of communication in leadership. The importance of being “clear, strong and precise” in the roles of leadership. It was an experience that spoke to her through the senses of hearing, seeing and feeling the communication and unison of kuaka as they return to their seasonal homelands in Te Hāpua.

When thinking about the journey kuaka make to return to their Te Hāpua home there are some resemblances to the stories participants tell about their own experiences coming home. While the journey is long, challenging, lonely and difficult, the pull, the vibration of the stone in their throats is strong. It is felt as a “longing”, a drive, a deep desire to belong to place and people.

A sense of belonging and connection to te taiao is crucial for the well-being and identity realisation of Māori and many Indigenous peoples (Johnson 2012, Ormond and Ormond 2018, Smith 2020) and has particular significance for women and mothers (Murphy 2019, Simmonds 2014). When participants connect to homelands it provides them with a location to embody their whakapapa and turangawaewae. Homelands offer context to the ways in which participants constructed their understandings of Ngāti Kuri women’s roles in their daily lives and in the future.

The geographies of some tribal women's homelands are emotional, metaphysical and sensory landscapes storied through place. In this section I have explored participants' notions of home and homeland. What has been revealed is a deep attachment to place that is established, nurtured and created by women and mothers. Written into our bones and DNA is the drive to return to homelands. When we return, hearts, minds and emotions are healed. Lives and identities are transformed through connection to iwi and te taiao.

Sleeping by the water

The ancestral landscape presents a cultural interface where tangata whenua connect, understand and experience their homeland (Kearney 2009 Ormond and Ormond 2018). The spatial orientation and a continued Indigenous commitment to engage with home, whenua (land), whanaunga and tūpuna wāhine has the power to "rupture colonial narratives" and mindsets (Hickey 2019 164, also see Simmonds 2014, Murphy 2019, Wildcat 2005). In this section the sensory experiences participants have while thinking, being and living with tribal homelands is explored.

Examining the sensory geographies of participants through a Mana Wahine lens is the second theme in this chapter. Sensory exchanges with and in place are embodied, felt and have the power to transform identities and create meaningful connections between people, place and ecosystems. Te taiao, the holistic environment, houses people and the more-than-human under the same roof. Te taiao plays an important role in shaping participants' sense of belonging, identity and connection to the wider tribe (Country et al 2016, Smith 2020, Larsen and Johnson 2016).

The section considers the embodied sensory interactions, experiences, memories and kōrero of participants. Some participants share memories of being in and with place, and other

participants discuss what it feels like to be physically in and with te taiao during tipi haere. Tipi haere in this research is used to describe a moving wānanga. (see Chapter Four). When participants and I discussed our moving wānanga it was suggested that we use tipi haere because it relates to the fun and fluidness of what we do when we travel as a group collecting data. We go where we are drawn or called, the wānanga is not fixed to a tightly scheduled programme.

A sense of belonging is established through environmental, social and metaphysical relationships, memories and narratives that enhances the construction of identities and connection to place (Kana'iaupuni and Malone 2006, Kearney 2009, Mocaraka-Harris 2019). For Indigenous peoples the prominence of these interactions and relationships is set upon the foundations of their unique values, belief systems and practices (Ka'ai & Higgins 2004, Kearney 2009, Mocaraka-Harris 2019).

Tuck and Yang (2012) argue that tribal lands extend beyond Western perspectives of land as nothing more than a site to own, a site where history and wealth is made, consumed and accumulated. Kawagley (2010 xiii) states "Mother Nature has a culture" and that culture is "Native". Sheridan's experiences illustrate that Ngāti Kuri ecosystems are "home" and they have a language, a reo, and within that reo is a culture that is native to the location. Te taiao sends tohu, signals and cues, to participants that help them to recall intimate and emotional place-based memories and experiences that have shaped their identities.

Sheridan describes the sensory tohu she receives from te taiao:

If you've ever slept by the water, you can hear the rhythm of it. You can hear the turning of the tide. You can hear which birds get up early. You might wonder - why that one is crying at night like there's something there. The different moons. The different smells between summer and autumn. All the seasons. But the reo is unique, if you stand there and just listen, it's a different sound to anywhere else and that's home (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

In the excerpt above Sheridan describes what happens when you sleep on ‘homelands’ and close to the ocean. She describes the experience as one that has a unique a rhythm that sends her a signal to listen more deeply to what is happening in the environment around her. Sheridan interprets auditory cues from the environment as a unique “reo”, a language that is different to anywhere else. Te taiao also sends signals to Sheridan letting her know that she is at home. The personification of te taiao articulates a “cultural interface” – te taiao a common boundary where communication flows between people and place that is distinct and stipulates a ‘homeland territory’ (Ormond and Ormond 2018 81).

Sensory experiences at home, for many, are not always comfortable to conceptualise and Sheridan recalls a range of experiences that are informed by the sounds that emit from te taiao. During the international symposium ‘Taiatia: The Gathering of Oceans’ (2019) Sheridan spoke of the sound of the silica sands being sucked from Te Kōkota (Silica Sandspit) feeling like “torture, you can hear it, it’s like a dripping tap” (Waitai and World Wildlife Fund 2019). The silica sand was extracted for the purposes of manufacturing glass.

Both examples indicate that te taiao informs Sheridan’s emotional and intellectual response to her environment. When te taiao is doing well she hears birdsong and the turning of the tide. When the environment is being exploited the sounds and the signals she receives are like a constantly dripping tap depleting the resources of our Earth Mother, Papatūānuku. These embodied experiences inform her responsibilities and her actions (Kana’iaupuni and Malone 2006). Her body “breathes life into Indigenous homelands” triggering memories and are often the stimulus for Indigenous ‘action and being’ (Kearny 2009 215).

Kearney (2009 218) describes Indigenous sensory encounters within Homelands as “sensual inscriptions”, a “language of sensory experience” that reveals and creates complex and meaningful relationships and understandings across the landscapes of home. Sheridan has

learnt the “reo” of her home through auditory signals sent by and from within the environment. Sheridan reveals the environmental messages she receives in tribal, national and international spaces of conservation and science. She also articulates what she conceives as a unique reo shaped by ecosystems and endemic species. For Sheridan, the language I “lives in” and “creates our world”. It also connects her and I as well as the other Ngāti Kuri people she meets. We belong to the reo and the ecosystem and that informs our relationships, connection and engagement with each other.

It’s different because we have our own reo and when I talk about own reo, that lives in our ecosystem and that’s our birds, our plants, our taonga, the endemic species creates our world and our own reo. So therefore, you and I belong to that so it’s natural that we will stop for each other (Interview with Sheridan, 17 November 2018).

Hutchings (2020 47) describes Te Ao Māori as a “cosmic family” where atua, ancestors and diverse lifeforms come to meet. Emotional relationships are informed and shaped through sensory exchanges and mutually constituted alongside te taiao. Seasonal changes are noted through not only a calendar or through seeing and feeling climatic changes but also through olfactory senses. Below Sheridan elaborates saying that te taiao relationships are reciprocal.

Taonga have life, therefore a spirit and each of those taonga have a name:

So, knowing and understanding that you have a reciprocal relationship with taonga (species and te taiao) and when you understand your role, how it speaks, how it moves, what it likes, what it doesn’t like, you know that is a relationship. It doesn’t have to be a human but it still has a spirit, it has a name and it has a life and therefore it has a place (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

Understanding one’s role and responsibilities in relation to te taiao is an important step for participants when reflecting on their identities and their relationship to te taiao. Kana’iaupuni and Malone (2006) argue that knowledge and stories reinforces an integral link between Indigenous ecosystems and identities. The recognition and actioning of Indigenous

engagement within ecosystems is pivotal in the transformation of roles, responsibilities and relationships.

The roles and responsibilities taken up by participants are often centred on te taiao. Debbie was the first Ngāti Kuri woman to take on the Ngāti Kuri camp manager role at Taputaputa Beach Campsite following the signing of the Ngāti Kuri Treaty Settlement (2014). The location is a significant site to Ngāti Kuri as a traditional papakāinga and wāhi tapu. The land has been controlled, regulated and commodified through New Zealand Government policies. The Department of Lands and Survey regulated the area from 1876 until 1987 (see Chapter Two). The whenua was then land banked and promoted as a camping ground for the people of Aotearoa. The site has become a popular recreational site for both national and international tourists. Ngāti Kuri's settlement agreement contained a legal agreement with the government that those lands held under DOC would be co-managed and then returned to the iwi. Debbie took on the leadership role co-managing the site. She was also the first Ngāti Kuri camp manager at Te Rarawa Beach in the summer of 2020 as DOC handed the site back to Ngāti Kuri control. There is a shifting of power, of visibility and Debbie's passion for the environment and her place in, with and protecting it is evident in the following statements:

It's really important to me, you know, making sure our lands are looked after and managed right. I feel really strongly about that! It relates to my whakapapa and our iwi ... I feel like I can practise kaitiakitanga freely, not only in my work but also as a person and as a member of iwi - to do my bit for our iwi. I can make sure we protect what we've got. I can make sure no-one is disrespecting our whenua and ruining it for future generations. Yeah, I can practice that freely and without being told, I don't need permission to do that (Interview with Debbie 26 August 2017).

Debbie is empowered through her role as camp manager. During the summer she is responsible for the land, coastline, campers, amenities, finances and services. Debbie is at the grassroots, her daily life spent within and with her whenua. Debbie feels strongly about her whakapapa connection to tribal lands. She has the freedom and capacity to exercise

kaitiakitanga in its many forms. The way she practices this is through picking up the rubbish tourists dump roadside and through holding people accountable if she sees them disrespecting her home. This she does regardless of whether she is working or not. The role and obligation is important to Debbie and related to her whakapapa and iwi. “Permission” to practise the role is not needed, it is a given. Debbie and te taiao relationships are co-produced and this affiliation challenges colonial and scientific systems of power where human and more-than-human beings are “balancing precariously but productively on the edges” of sovereignty (Hickey 2019 166). Debbie has the power and authority to exercise kaitiakitanga and yet she feels “quite humbled to be part of our whenua” (Interview with Debbie 26 August 2017).

Lillian describes a “wahine connectedness” to the land. In her discussion on the “ko au te whenua, te whenua ko au” (I am the land the land is me) whakataukī, she describes the connectedness as a “given”:

The whakataukī “ko au te whenua, te whenua ko au”, I am the land, the land is me, now that is crucial to the understanding about wahine connectedness to the land and Ngāti Kuri connectedness to the land. This whakataukī is a wisdom that has remained with Ngāti Kuri people and it’s a given (Interview with Lillian 18 July 2018).

This “given” connectedness to whenua is embodied through whakapapa. For Lillian it is a wahine connectedness and wisdom that is articulated through the whakataukī. Whenua can be translated as both land and placenta. Whenua communicating that women and land are of each other. Lillian embodies her connectedness to the land through the whakataukī and as a woman.

She goes on to say:

This whakataukī is really important! I asked kaumatua about the whakataukī and was told that it captures the tangible and intangible relationships Ngāti Kuri have with the environment. The whakataukī provides a visual perspective with underlying messages in a very concise way ... Our land refers to the tangible - land and oceans and all that resides

there. And the intangible is the mauri or the intangible essence of every living being. So, for me the whakataukī is a reminder for Ngāti Kuri people that they are part of the natural cycle of the environment, they have an obligation and responsibility to care for, protect and nurture the spiritual environment that is Ngāti Kuri (Interview with Lillian, 18 July 2018).

The whakataukī offers what Lillian describes as a “visual perspective” that provides Ngāti Kuri with a way to understand the tangible and intangible relationships with their environment. Here embodied senses are brought to the fore. A ‘visual perspective’ for Lillian could be about seeing herself and other Ngāti Kuri on the land, as the land and of the land. When she sees Ngāti Kuri she sees her tribal lands. When she sees her tribal lands, she sees a Ngāti Kuri landscape. This is but one of the underlying messages the whakataukī holds.

Debbie also spends her free time with te taiao. In the following statement she talks about what she does during time off work:

I actually spend a lot of time in nature both at work and when I’m not working. We like to go fishing and picking tuatua and just about everyone up here does that. We do it for fun and to put food on the table. I get a day off and we hang out in the same spaces just enjoying what we have up here (Interview with Debbie 26 August 2017).

Debbie acknowledges the fun that she has hanging out in the “same spaces” with other locals. Her days off are spent in and with the same environment she works in. Work, free time, fun and sustaining her life is blended and shared with other people and the environment. It is an enjoyable interaction between people and place.

Hine acknowledges how difficult her relationship to tribal lands is to articulate. She says:

It’s really important to me, aye. I don’t know, it’s sort of indescribable. I spend a great amount of time there and my mum always made sure we understood how important that is growing up. It’s important spiritually, physically, it (the environment) feeds us and we have to take care of it otherwise we’re pretty much screwed. When the lands not well then, we’re not well (Interview with Hine 18 February 2019).

Hine searches for words and actions to articulate her relationship and feelings with and for te taiao and her tribal lands. She was taught throughout her childhood how important te taiao is to her well-being and the well-being of the tribe. She understands that te taiao sustains physical and spiritual wellness. “Whenua-generated narratives” such as Hine’s reveal how te taiao is understood and related to as a “powerful and intelligent being able to give, sustain, guide and take life” (Ormond and Ormond 2018 81). Hine’s relationship to place is embodied and cemented through the time she spends at home working and looking after te taiao. Her sense of belonging also establishing a sense of responsibility (Kana’iaupuni and Malone 2006).

Hine is an avid and skilled hunter, Ta moko and whakairo (carving) artist. Hine was the only participant who hunts. She has the desire, drive and ability to step into roles that have are often relegated to men. Hine blurs the gendered boundaries of hunting as she targets pest species (possums, pigs, geese etc) within Te Hiku o te Ika. While she feels her relationship with whenua is “indescribable” she acknowledges how important it is. It is a physical and spiritual reciprocal relationship embodied through interactions in and with place and through her relationship with her mother. Her hunting practices are guided by the need to eradicate pests from te taiao. Obligations and responsibilities are negotiated and read through the ancestral and the living (Kearny 2009). This reading of more-than-human relationships and phenomena is triggered by tohu. She takes time out for working and looking after what she describes and “own lands”:

Me and my brothers we make sure we spend a lot of time going home and on our own lands working and looking after it. (Interview with Hine 18 February 2019).

The role and the responsibility is shared with her brothers. There is no gendered division as to whose role or responsibility it is to practice kaitiakitanga. Her experience reveals how her presence is questioned by others:

We had a run-in [an altercation] with DOC. They were going up there into the bush setting traps, but not really setting traps, just really mucking around, looking for rats, rats and stoats . . . oh yeah definitely. It's a strange one, it's sort of good in a way, sometimes when I'm out on land that borders other people's land or is quite close and I end up meeting up with others. Or, if I'm hunting on iwi land or public land that I whakapapa to I get the old "what are you doing here?" (Interview with Hine 18 February 2019).

Hine hunts on lands that she embodies through whakapapa. She is confronted by "others", mostly male farmers and hunters about her presence and her "right" to be there is questioned. She describes the experience as a "run-in" on the borders of other peoples' land. By "others" Hine is referring to DOC workers who are employed to set traps to cull pest species as well as people who do not know her or her whakapapa. Hine understands the DOC workers are there to set traps but what she sees is a "mucking around" just "looking" rather than evidence of traps being laid. She acknowledges the borders between "iwi lands" and/or "public lands" and continues to hunt both. The borders she refers to have been enforced through colonial and patriarchal land tenure systems that were once foreign to Aotearoa (Ruru 2004). When Hine hunts her tribal lands, she is not within nor outside of hegemonic colonial and gendered boundaries but rather blurring the edges of sovereignty (Hickey 2019).

Hine's tribal lands are held by others as conservation lands, forestry and private ownership. While she acknowledges that there are benefits to having DOC trapping and monitoring pests, she is aware that her access and her capacity to hunt tribal lands is contingent on relationships with 'other' people, systems and perspectives. Hine acknowledges that whakapapa alone is the only evidence she needs to cement her right to hunt those lands. Hine understands her whakapapa overrides colonial imposed boundaries and she continues to hunt and protect tribal

lands. Her right to be there and her identity informed and embodied through whakapapa, kaitiakitanga, mana whenua, Mana Wahine and te taiao (Wehi et al 2019).

Ngāti Kuri women have been pushing back at colonisation for generations not only “fighting for land and life” but also from within colonial educational, political and conservation institutions (see Chapter Six). Another example of this is from Sheridan who speaks of how she understands her identity as a Ngāti Kuri woman. She describes her connection with te taiao as the relationship “closest in” and as old as the “beginning of time”:

There’s a history of Ngāti Kuri women. Indigenous women have been fighting for land and life since the beginning of time and that’s probably because we are the closest in terms of our relationship with our mother Papatūānuku but if I was to think about women in leadership now, I would say, Ngāti Kuri women in particular, I truly believe that it’s right in their DNA, it’s actually right in their Indigenous bones. They will, at some point in their destiny they come forward, that DNA comes forward. It’s sitting there and it’s not just a spark floating around (Interview with Sheridan 17 November 2018).

Sheridan starts her by acknowledging the history of Ngāti Kuri women and makes a connection to other Indigenous women. Sheridan’s understanding of Indigenous women, their bones and their DNA allows her to blur both physical and temporal geographies and boundaries (Hickey 2019). Sheridan locates Indigenous woman as being the “closest in” due to the relationship to Papatūānuku. That of a relationship between mother and daughter. Sheridan is both mother and daughter at the same time. For Sheridan, Mana Wahine is a state of being and the autonomy of Indigenous women is and has always been about the “closest in” relationship women have with land and the environment. These relationships have been grounded and grown since the “beginning of time” and are embedded deep within Indigenous women’s histories and bodies. Indigenous histories are not separated from te taiao but rather the emergent wisdoms are learnt through “complex biological interactions” evolving over time and simultaneously shape the future (Wildcat 2005 334).

Sheridan's relationships within "land and life" are embodied within her DNA and bones. "Land and life" are inseparable. The lives, bodies, bones and land of Indigenous women become sites where leadership, relationships, struggle and power intersect. Sheridan recognises Māori women's relationships with "land and life" through a DNA connection to Papatūānuku, Mother Earth. She uses scientific terminology to firmly root in place her connection and relationship with te taiao. Sheridan imagines that DNA within Indigenous women's bodies as a forward moving spark or a "destiny" just "sitting there" waiting for ignition. The metaphor Sheridan uses "it's not just a spark that's floating around" extends further on the conceptualisation of DNA and the connection to land by blurring the physical boundaries of bodies, blood and bone suggesting that DNA is a spark, not floating randomly around Ngāti Kuri women, but rather a spark waiting to be ignited and fanned into a living breathing fire that will guide Indigenous women to "fulfil their destinies".

Savanah's experience of going to her homelands for the first time offers an example of how what Sheridan describes as the DNA of Indigenous bones is a spark just waiting for ignition.

Below Savanah describes her experience within her homelands saying:

I felt at home and so welcomed. I noticed that the majority of people working at Te Paki were young woman and I found that really inspiring and empowering (Tipi haere with Savanah 3 July 2022).

Savanah noticed that it was mainly women that were working at Te Ara Whanui Research Centre. For Savanah, this sparked feelings of empowerment to see women her age working for their iwi and in different roles. The young women held a number of various roles. One young woman was driving a digger constructing a driveway to the new research centre at Te Paki. Other whanaunga working were returning from working out in the environment in kaitiaki roles. The new Te Ara Whanui Research Centre was being populated and constructed by Ngāti Kuri women working alongside men.

Savanah went on to describe how her experience with human and more-than-human beings created feelings of connection:

When we went to the urupa at Te Hāpua it took us ages to find Emere [Savanah's great grandmother] but we did. That was cool. It was amazing to see all the names that I'm related to in there. And then when we went down into Te Hāpua and that random cat came while we were having a picnic. It just ran over followed by about 5 kids, all of them girls, all related to us somehow and none of them owned the cat. We shared chips and dip. When the cat and the kids left that dog came and sat by your door just before we left, and then someone else stopped to say hi. And then there were all those fish below the wharf! It was the calmest day. You could see right to the bottom and all the fish in between. I got a real sense of being at home and welcome. I felt related and connected. It was really welcoming and more than just people you know. Yeah, the people, the animals, the land really connected to us and the weather as well (Tipi haere with Savanah 3 July 2022).

Searching the urupa for her great grandmother's unmarked grave, enabled Savanah to connect to names of tūpuna who shared her DNA. As we picnicked in Te Hāpua sitting next to the Pārengarenga Harbour Savanah was able to connect to haukāinga, particularly children, cats, dogs and fish. She connected to the children through the names of her tūpuna in the urupa and with the more-than-human beings through sight, touch and taste. Savanah and patted and shared our food with the cat and the dog. She took photos of the fish so she could remember the calm, clear water of the Pārengarenga harbour. She embraced the opportunity to get to know her homelands more intimately.

Savanah made a comment about the weather playing a role in our experience. I was interested in what she had said so I asked her to elaborate. She replied:

Like there were shit moments in the weather, like cold and rainy, but it was never an inconvenience you know. It was like the weather was going along with our plan. And then there was that storm at Te Rerenga Wairua. It was getting late in the day and the storm was sitting really low over the ocean when we first walked down to the cape. You were filling me in about where we were and the significance of Te Rerenga Wairua. And when we glanced back and the storm was starting to come up over the hill behind us. As we walked back the cloud of the storm really engulfed us. It was chilly and a little bit spooky. Yeah, I found it exciting but was glad we got

back to the car when we did and then the weather got real bad on the way back to Te Paki. Every time we arrived somewhere the weather would just come right or it would pack up as soon as we left (Tipi haere with Savannah 4 July 2022).

Here Savannah's experience with te taiao was influenced by the weather and the stories she was hearing. While she found the experience at Te Rerenga Wairua chilly and a bit spooky because of the storm, it also made her experience exciting. She felt engulfed within the storm's cloud. She was also aware of the weather in regard to the timing of our visits to certain places. She sensed that the weather was working to our plan through the arrival of both good and stormy conditions. For Savannah, the environment and climatic conditions were connected and influential to her experience.

Ngāti Kuri women and their sensory geographies contest and blur colonial boundaries.

Participants feel a responsibility to te taiao which cultivates a deep sense of belonging.

Sensory embodied experiences from the environment are understood as a unique language that guides action and informs the identities of participants. The next section looks towards the ways in which participants respond to their sensory relationship to te taiao.

He tohu o Ngāti Kuri: Singing knowledge, activating ihi

In the above section Sheridan mentions sleeping by the water and uses the word destiny to describe the elements which encourage Ngāti Kuri women to protect and preserve ecosystems. This section looks to the creation of knowledge through singing and writing about tribal lands. The ruri: *He tohu o Ngāti Kuri* and was written by Bethany Edmunds a knowledge holder who participated in this research. Bethany is an acclaimed artist, musician and kairaranga (weaver) and fluent in Te Reo. Then, the poem *Caught in her wake* is explored to investigate the environment as an active participant in the decolonisation of identities.

I had invited Bethany to the pūrākau wānanga I was holding in Ngātaki on 28 April 2019. I had emailed all participants an information sheet (Appendix 5) which outlined the wānanga programme and listed some of the stories we would explore. Bethany wrote the ruri *He Tohu o Ngāti Kuri* in response to the wānanga invitation and as a ruri for her daughter Kapowairua. The writing, learning and singing of that song is discussed below.

Seven Ngāti Kuri women attended the pūrākau wānanga and had been analysing and exploring the stories of Ngāti Kuri all morning and were about to break for lunch when Bethany stood and announced she had a waiata that she would like to sing for us. She said:

In light of this hui and the hours I spend nursing my baby, this ruri intuitively came into my head and I'd just like to share it (Bethany, Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

Bethany said she had been thinking about the taonga species written about in some of pūrākau we were to analyse in the wānanga the following day and from that the ruri was composed and sung for her daughter to encourage sleep and was inspired by the pūrākau and wānanga. The ruri was a wonderful gift to all of us at the wānanga. She sang and taught us the song as the wānanga moved between boardroom and beach.

Participants, the children and I drove the five-minute gravel road to Rarawa Beach where we continued to wānanga, this time through tipī haere. What took place and what continues to take place when we sing *He Tohu o Ngāti Kuri* reveals the intimate connection between Bethany and participants, and the land and taonga species. The pūrākau, the stories Bethany knew of kuaka, pūpūkōrari and pīngao had manifested in her mind and heart and materialising in a song.

Sheridan added to the discussion of sensory geographies during the Findings wānanga when we discussed the various Ngāti Kuri names two names given to the flax snail (see Chapter Six) stating:

Is about the frequency, it's about being so in-tune that you can actually hear what's going on around you. It's an intimate knowledge. So, the pūpūwhakarongotaua has a role to play. The first role is its part in the whanau which is the ecosystem – to take care of the kōrari. The second role which it plays for us because we have a relationship with it. Then it becomes a frequency that we can tune into (Sheridan Findings wānanga 2 July 2022).

Here Sheridan highlights the intimate relationship Ngāti Kuri has with pūpūwhakarongotaua as a kaitiaki by acknowledging the sensory experience as a frequency that can only be tuned into through an intimate knowledge and relationship with the snail. She also identifies the role that the pūpūwhakarongotaua has with both human and more-than-human communities. This signifies the relationship Ngāti Kuri women have with the snail as a kaitiaki while the ruri expands on that narrative to include pūpūkōrari through a weaver's narrative.

The three taonga species and the places they exist were identified in the ruri. Place and taonga species brought to life through the pūrākau we had been discussing, the teaching, learning and singing of Bethany's ruri. Bethany had memorised the song she had composed the night before, it had not yet been transcribed to written words. Of the experience she said:

I was just lying there getting excited about coming and reading the kōrero and it just came, I was like “oh it's a waiata!” (Bethany, Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

The research activity, reading and thinking about the taonga species and the places they inhabit stimulated Bethany's creativity which materialised as a ruri. All participants noted the importance of the ruri and felt it a great gift to have shared with us. Huia described the ruri as “ataahua” (beautiful, pleasant, lovely), Jen, Betsy and myself saying it was beautiful. Vonni instantly saw the potential of the ruri saying:

This is something we could post on the Waiora marae page. We could all learn it easily (Vonni Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

The ruri eventually became a feature of an solo art exhibition in which Bethany's work was showcased. The making and exhibiting of art forms creates a pathway for not only the dissemination of knowledges, it can also be a platform from which science and mātauranga

Māori can work side-by-side (Yates et al 2022, Smith 2020). Part of the exhibition was to hold an online wānanga for tribal members of Ngāti Kuri where they would learn the song. This is discussed in greater depth below.

Personally, my heart felt full because the research and the coming together of Ngāti Kuri women had inspired such creativity. I was humbled by the intimate knowledge held within the words of Bethany's ruri. Bethany said she would teach it to us on the days scheduled tipi haere.

Figure 7.2: Tipi Haere to Rarawa Beach, Pūrākau wānanga, 27 April 2019



Source: Photograph taken by Betsy Young, used with permission

Amanda Kearny (2009) notes that singing to, with and in place is a cultural expression of sensory and emotive attachment to place and kin. In the ruri Bethany locates not only taonga species but also sites of significance for each taonga and for Ngāti Kuri. They are one and the same. Bethany's ruri is a cultural and geographical expression of her kin-based relationships and connections to te taiao, te tangata and taonga tuku iho sung into the lyrics. The melody provides a rhythm for singers to express their emotive attachment to people and place. Moreover, both singers and listeners learn environmental, scientific, cultural and geographical knowledge through the ruri.

After a hearty shared lunch, we jumped in our cars and drove to Rarawa Beach at Ngātaki. We walked a short distance along the beach with the children then found a sheltered spot to stop. While some of the children played amongst the bright orange pīngao and explored the sand dunes, Bethany taught us the melody, rhythm and lyrics to the ruri.

As participants and I nestled into the pīngao covered sand dunes of Rarawa Beach, a significant mahinga kai for Ngāti Kuri, we learnt the ruri *He tohu o Ngāti Kuri*. We sang to the coastline and ocean, tūpuna and each other with the taonga species present. We listened and sang to the rhythm of the ocean and tide. As we learnt the song we could hear the calls of the birds, the laughter of the children and the scent of salt, sand and air. The experience unfolded as a place-based exchange that deepened our intimate connections and relationships with taonga species, to each other and te taiao. Singing the ruri to te taiao was an acknowledgement and an effort to enhance the mauri of taonga tuku iho.

Figure 7.3: Learning the ruri ‘He tohu o Ngāti Kuri. Pūrākau wānanga, 27 April 2019



Source: Photograph taken by Betsy Young, used with permission

What was exchanged was a sensory interaction where both human and te taiao intersect to shape collective experience and relationships in and with place. I acknowledge that a research experience such as this may be uncommon for many Māori women, however, the focus in

this analysis is te taiao and the role an environmental family plays in shaping attachment to place. Te taiao in its entirety is more than a sense of place, memory of place or a location for experience (Johnson 2012), it is relationship with place. Te taiao drives, shapes, moulds and alters embodied experiences in and with place, tūpuna, species and people.

These interactions and intersections in and with place revitalise Māori women's relationships to te taiao and tūpuna. Place-based exchanges transform Ngāti Kuri women's experiences, identities and relationships. Te taiao is both the place and the spark that ignites the desire to work and protect land, oceans and taonga tuku iho. Place-based exchanges are a sensory interaction where tangata whenua and te taiao intersect to shape shared experiences and relationships.

Below I draw from the ruri lyrics to highlight the intersections of people, species and place. Rather than translate the ruri into English, I draw key kupu from the lyrics. The English language fails to articulate the deep meaning expressed in Te Reo Māori, hence through discussion I hope to give meaning and depth to Bethany's ruri. In the first verse Bethany sings about pūpūkōrari.

As mentioned in Chapter Four, pūpūwhakarongotaua, the snail that listens to war parties, is one of the kaitiaki of Ngāti Kuri. The snail once provided an alarm system notifying the pā (fortified village) community of intrusion. The snail lets out high pitch squeal if trampled upon. Ngāti Kuri would plant vast pākōrari (flax plantations) around the outskirts of pā. If pūpūwhakarongotaua were abundant the chorus of squeals from under the feet of enemies alerted the pā community to anyone trying to approach the village unseen. In return for this sacrifice, Ngāti Kuri would provide them with protection and an ecosystem in which they could thrive. This is evidence of Māori resource management working for both people and taonga species.

Embedded in the lyrics of the ruri below is a reminder to be aware of our sensory environment and to listen to te taiao. Bethany's lyrics identify pūpūkōrari as taonga tuku iho, placing high value on the snail and Ngāti Kuri's relationship to it:

Ko te pūpū kōrari, he taonga tuku iho

Ko te pūpū kōrari, he karanga ki te iwi

Ko te pūpū kōrari, kei raro i a Maungapiko

Ko te pūpū kōrari, he tohu o Ngāti Kuri (Composer: Bethany Edmunds)

In the song pūpū kōrari sends a karanga out to the iwi and is located at Maungapiko the mountain named in many tribal members' pepeha. It is a verse acknowledging the communication and protection from pūpūkōrari in tribal homelands.

The snail and Ngāti Kuri have a kaitiaki relationship. Ngāti Kuri provided shelter, food and protection for the snail and, at the same time, the pakōrari provided a valuable resource in the making of clothes, rope, storage, building materials and medicine. This relates to Sheridan's comments in the previous section about hearing the reo, the language of home. The snail's reo is, for Ngāti Kuri, a tohu. The reo of the snail is a sensory signal that was once a life and tribal saving signal. Bethany has also located and situated pūpūkōrari at Maungapiko. This is the mountain that features in the pepeha of many Ngāti Kuri people.

The next verse speaks to Kuaka and Kapowairua. As discussed previously Kuaka is a bird and a taonga species with which Ngāti Kuri identify. Kuaka is as an important member of te taiao and whakapapa. In the ruri kuaka is manu taketake, an ancient and native bird that comes and goes (rere atu, rere mai) from the shores of Kapowairua and Te Kokotā. The coming and going of Kuaka signals changing seasons. The population of birds that return each year communicating information about climatic and environmental changes that might

be happening across the Pacific. Kuaka send Ngāti Kuri tohu about changing seasons, environmental and climates beyond the shores of Aotearoa.

If the numbers of Kuaka were high, Pacific environments and the climates have been favourable. Kuaka are a valued delicacy for Ngāti Kuri and the arrival of the Kuaka signalled a change in season and a time for gathering and storing this precious resource. If kuaka numbers were low Ngāti Kuri read this as a visual signal that as a collective they must take heed and be economical with resources.

Te Kuaka, he manu taketake

Te kuaka, rere atu rere mai

Te kuaka, no Kapowairua

Te kuaka, he tohu o Ngāti Kuri (Composer: Bethany Edmunds)

The following verse is to pīngao (golden sand sedge). Pīngao is a brightly coloured sedge (grass-like) plant that grows on the beaches in the Far North. Like the other taonga, the story of pīngao was discussed at the wānanga. It is a beautiful and valued weaving resource and Bethany acknowledged its value in the weaving of kete and tukutuku panels in the ruri. Tukutuku panels are an artistic expression of whakapapa and identity. The intricate patterns embedded in the design record and articulate ancestral and historical knowledge. Tukutuku panels are informative art pieces and when woven with pīngao the panels are highly valued.

Ko te pīngao, no Tangaroa e

Ko te pīngao, he kete, he tukutuku

Ko te pīngao, mai Te Kokota kei Pārengarenga

Ko te pīngao, he tohu o Ngāti Kuri (Composer: Bethany Edmunds)

In the Ngāti Kuri story, Pīngao falls in love with the beautiful but land-dwelling Kākaho.

Kākaho is the stalk of the toetoe flower and is used in the weaving of tukutuku panels. Pīngao

was one of Tangaroa's (deity of oceans) children and was warned by Tangaroa not to pursue a union with Kākaho. Tangaroa cautioned Pīngao that to stray onto the beach and dunes would result in never returning to the ocean. Pīngao watched Toetoe from the shallows and decided to follow the graceful form up into the sand dunes. As the tide receded and drew back from the land Pīngao's long flowing roots sunk deep into the dunes and Pīngao became fixed forever along the coastlines of Ngāti Kuri. Pīngao stays close to the ocean and to this day Pīngao is the binding that holds ocean and land together. The rays of Tamanuiterā (sacred name of the sun, Sun god) kissed her leaves and turned her golden yellow. Pīngao and kākaho are finally united when woven together in the tukutuku panels within the whareniui. Kākaho are used for the vertical slats and raupō (reeds) for the horizontal slats construct the framework tukutuku panels. Pīngao is the binding that weaves and records history and knowledge.

The deep understanding of the relationship pīngao has with both the ocean and land reveals a science that informs the cultivation and protection of the taonga species. The network of roots binding the sand dunes, and the leaves providing a safe haven for small insects and spiders as well as nesting sites for birds and lizards. Pīngao is an entire ecosystem who retains and holds the sand to the land on Te Hiku o te Ika coastlines. Pīngao protects people from rising sea-levels. Pīngao if protected and proliferated contributes to the mitigation of biodiversity loss on the coastline and land loss due to climate change (Sanson and Clarke 2018). The very fabric of pīngao provides a visual expression and articulation of whakapapa and identity held in tukutuku panels. The vertical slats of kākaho and horizontal raupō slats in which the pīngao is woven through symbolising union with and the strong foundations of whenua.

Ko te pūpū kōrari, te Kuaka, ko te pīngao e

Mai tāwhiti ki te ao hurihuri

He tohu o Ngāti Kuri e (Composer: Bethany Edmunds)

In the final verse of the ruri, listeners are asked to reflect on the meaningful and long-standing relationships Ngāti Kuri have with pūpū kōrari, kuaka and pīngao. Bethany has embedded Ngāti Kuri science and knowledge within her composition. In the excerpt below, she describes the importance role mātauranga plays in activating the mauri of taonga saying:

The physical taonga is one thing, but the mātauranga that activates the mauri within those taonga is something else (Bethany 27 April, Pūrākau wānanga 27 April 2019).

Bethany discusses mātauranga around taonga species as an important phenomenon that “activates” mauri. As discussed in the previously mauri is the life-essence of all beings. Bethany’s ruri contains scientific, environmental and geographical knowledge and when this is shared, learnt and sung knowledge is passed on and ihi is activated.

The three taonga species - pūpū korari, kuaka and pīngao - are constantly informing, guiding and binding Ngāti Kuri: pūpūkōrari sends out a karanga to the entire iwi; the kuaka informing the iwi of coming seasons and climatic changes in the pacific; and pīngao recording whakapapa, knowledge and cultural expressions of identity in the weaving and lattice work of tukutuku panels, binding knowledge, people, land and sea. The taonga tuku iho featured in the ruri hold important tohu for Ngāti Kuri.

The ruri was featured in the exhibition *Tau Aatu e!* by Bethany Matai Edmunds at the Fresh Gallery in Otago, February - April 2022. The solo exhibition featured Bethany’s woven works of art and was an exploration of materiality, history and whakapapa as related to kaitiakitanga and te taiao in the Ngāti Kuri rohe. In the exhibition Bethany gathered, sculpted and presented native resources, to weave korero into her installation works that builds on the ground-breaking work that Ngāti Kuri are leading in conservation (Smith 2020). Her sculptures are the materialisation of her journey of returning home to the lands of her tūpuna and an expression of her identity as a Ngāti Kuri woman (Smith 2020).

As well as presenting woven sculptures, Bethany produced and performed a video that depicts the flight path of kuaka (to watch the video see: [Te Tau e!](#)). This artistic musical expression also featured the ruri *He tohu o Ngāti Kuri*. Through the exhibition and music video Ngāti Kuri women's pūrākau are told to a wide audience. Time and space for uri of Ngāti Kuri was made during the exhibition in the form of a virtual wānanga in which uri were taught the ruri further connecting people to homelands, taonga species and tribal environments. Much learning occurred during the virtual wānanga – the ruri and the depth of knowledge and the tohu providing new and meaningful ways to transmit knowledge through singing and learning in a virtual space.

Writing my mother home

In this section I offer a poem I wrote during the course of this research. The poem is an expression of healing that took place when my mother and I visited a whanaunga. Reflecting on the poem highlights the healing that takes place when we engage with home people and places. Much like the ruri above the poem provides a platform from which to further untangle colonisation and then reweave Ngāti Kuri women's identities, stories and places.

My mother does not often return to her homelands so, taking her with me on at least one field trip to Te Hāpua was important. The research is, after all, about Ngāti Kuri women and it was an opportunity to interview my mother in her homelands. During this field trip I had organised to visit a friend of my mothers. She was also Ngāti Kuri and a whanaunga. While she declined to be interviewed, she invited my mother and I to join her in lighting an ahi kā fire on the shoreline of Pārengarenga Harbour.

The experience was poignant for both my mother and I, so much so that I was inspired to write a poem. Research is far more than a disembodied academic practice, thesis and a

qualification (de Leeuw and Hunt 2018, Hunt 2014). It is also a journey of intergenerational healing, reconnecting, restorying and decolonisation of my body and the lives of my mother and I. The research experience is deeply personal, collective, emotive and informed by visceral and sensory embodied experiences (Longhurst et al. 2008).

Figure 7.4: My mother Caroline Hempel-Ringham, Rarawa Beach, 17 April 2019.



Source: Sandi Ringham

The experience took place at the home of the whanaunga in Te Hāpua. Writing the poem was a response to the powerful healing effect of the intersections between tangata whenua and te taiao. The location of the experience and the participants, both human and more-than human, shaped my experience, thoughts, words, memories and emotions. Incidentally, during the Te Ara Whanui Research Wānanga opening speeches (8 November 2022) Walter Wells, a Ngāti Kuri Trustee, described the wake of a waka (canoe) as a tapuwae (a ritual chant to ensure speed, footprint) that indicates not where one have been rather the direction in which one is

going. This for me, confirmed our experience with our whanaunga as meaningful and a tohu of forward movement.

Caught in her wake

The woman lit an ahikaa fire on the beach

The men throw their net wide out over the water

Symbolic of ahikaa

Lighting the fire

The feeling of home

Drifting around us is the fire's smoky message

The world blue, gold and silver

Like the fish in the net

The fire whispers to our blood and bones

Just be

As I help empty the net,

The fish and I listen

To her stories of land and water

The man smiles proudly

And tells the fish he is 'caught in her wake'

Her mana, her spirit and power

A recirculating flow of aroha and ihi

The wake of the woman draws us in, the man, the fish, my mother and I

Fin and paddle not finding resistance on the ingoing and outgoing tides

Found is a current, a flow, a wide stream of strength

And we dig our paddles deeper to stay in her wake

My mother sits on the beach, tasting, smelling, laughing and listening

Her hair as white as the Kokota Sands held in her blood and her bones

Together with the woman, the land, the fish and the man

I hear, smell, taste and see my mother's healing
In the whisperings of the fire
In the smoke and the flesh of the fish
Years of colonisation lift from her shoulders as she puts her paddle down
At home
Warmed by the fires of ahikaaroa

Figure 7.5: Takeke (piper fish) at Pārengarenga, 18 August 2018



Source: Sandi Ringham

Lighting the fire on the beach was a spur of the moment decision made by our whanaunga. The sun was shining between the cloud layers and the men were heading out to catch takeke in the Pārengarenga Harbour. The home we visited was located at the edge of the harbour with the mountain, Kaharoanaki, in the background. Kaharoanaki is another of the mountains some Ngāti Kuri people acknowledge in their pepeha. Seeing the landscape enabled me to locate and place our whakapapa from another viewpoint. There was little wind and the Pārengarenga Harbour was a calm silver mirror making it perfect for netting takeke. Before

we had even left the house te taiao was shaping our embodied experience. We felt a calling for us to leave the warmth and comfort of the house. The late autumn sun, land and waters coming together luring us outside.

Our whanaunga, the Ngāti Kuri woman we were visiting, wanted us to know and understand that lighting the fire on the coastline of Pārengarenga is a significant and symbolic part of our visit. It was to be a ritual of homecoming, a ritual of welcome for the kuia, my mother, who had been away for so long. It was a way for our whanaunga to welcome us through manaakitanga and whakapapa. Making her intentions clear ensured we would not miss the message and aroha she offered. She let us know it was a message from the many generations that came before us. Knowing this we were more open to receive and relate to the messages from tūpuna and te taiao. Donned with gumboots, puffer jackets and a cup of tea we headed down to the shoreline where we searched for dry driftwood for our fire. Before long, the air was filled with the smell and crackle of a fire taking hold of its place on the shoreline with us.

While we chatted on shore warmed by the fire, we watched her husband and son wading waist deep in the harbour throwing a fishing net to catch takeke. The fish were then cooked on the fire which we ate. The crackling of the fire, the smell of the smoke and the taste of the cooked fish all taking part in the healing of intergenerational trauma caused through colonisation. Pulling the bones of the fish from our teeth we laughed, told stories and enjoyed sharing in deep and meaningful kōrero, whakawhanaungatanga and manaakitanga with te taiao.

The experience became a place-based exchange between tangata whenua and te taiao. Te taiao guided and informed our experience and relationships with each other. As we sat in front of the fire tasting, smelling, laughing and listening sensory, emotional and visceral relationships were formed and strengthened. Through the senses we became cognisant of the

knowledges and shared experiences that are embodied through place-based exchanges (Moreton-Robinson 2013). This experience was an expression of our whanaunga's sense of belonging to place, her connection, value, identity and relationships in and with te taiao. For my mother and I the place-based exchange resulted in an embodied decolonisation and Indigenisation of ourselves. The whanaunga, the fish and the Pārengarenga harbour enhanced and deepened a shared sense of belonging and relationships to place (Johnson 2012, Longhurst et al. 2008, Moreton-Robinson 2013, Morrison, et al. 2020, Ormond and Ormond 2018, Simmonds 2014).

Meaningful experiences occur when land, water and taonga species are included in the homecoming and healing of uri that have been separated from tribal lands and their relatives. I honour and celebrate my mother's journey home and for the efforts and sacrifices she made ensure I knew who I was and where I came from.

An important part of the research was to take my own children home. When planning the Findings wānanga I was able to work within my daughters work schedule so she could come home with me. This was important to us as a whanau and added depth to the research in that it offered an intergenerational insight into the concept of homelands, decolonialisation and transformation. Three generations within our whanau were transformed through this research.

Of the experience Savanah said:

I felt at peace and in place which I don't always feel when I go somewhere new. For the first time I saw the lands that I whakapapa to. I've heard so many stories about those places, for the first time I was able to be in those places (Tipi haere with Savanah 2 July 2022).

Savanah acknowledges that she does not always feel like she is comfortable in new places. Being in the lands of her whakapapa and knowing the stories about the land and her tūpuna affected the way she felt at peace and "in those places". She went on to say:

The bird was hard case (funny). You were telling me about Te Aroha, the tree down where our spirits dive into the ocean when we die, then that little bird started singing a song right beside us in that bush. It just kept singing while we spoke. It made me feel really welcome, like I was home. It felt like it (the bird) was saying “yes that’s right, we’re here” (Tipi haere with Savanah 2 July 2022).

Te taiao and tūpuna wāhine influencing her experience through pūrākau. Taking my daughter home was an emotional and healing experience. Tears were shed when I thanked my mother for ensuring I knew where I was from and that I was Ngāti Kuri during the Findings Wānanga. Until this research and learning about the responsibility to take our children to their turangawaewae I had not realised the significance of my mother’s actions. In taking us home she was healing herself and future generations. She was providing a future for her children and grandchildren to be at peace and in place in their homelands. This was evident in Savanah’s excerpt above.

The significance of the occasion was also acknowledged by Sheridan:

I’m very, very proud of you for making that commitment to come home with your mother because it’s been something that she’s carried for such a long time darling. Just to bring you home. You have no idea of the meaning to you and your grandmother. And to acknowledge you Aunty Caroline and knowing that your up-bringing hasn’t been the greatest. You were disconnected from home but you did everything you could to let our whanau know who they were. So, aunty we just really love you. And Sandi we are so proud of you, this is such a good kōrero for our next generation to come and for us to heal (Sheridan, Findings wānanga 2 July 2022).

This acknowledgement lifted Savanah’s confidence to identify as Ngāti Kuri and healed my mother’s feelings of loss in many ways. To be loved and embraced by whanaunga throughout this research journey has empowered both my mother and my daughter to learn their pepeha and to be secure in their turangawaewae. For me personally this statement gave me the confidence and ihi to finish this thesis. Knowing that the contribution I was making had value and the capacity to heal and inform meant that I had fulfilled, at least, some of my responsibilities as a Ngāti Kuri woman, academic and mother.

Conclusion

At the centre of this chapter are participants' place-based exchanges and sensory experiences that enhance and transform notions, attachment and connection to homelands and people.

This chapter gathers and articulates participants' understandings of where they have once been, where they are now, and where their future extends in relationship and connection to each other and te taiao. The three themes examined in this chapter highlight the ways in which participants engage with each other and te taiao (Ormond and Ormond 2018).

Findings reveal that te taiao is a key participant in shaping Ngāti Kuri women's identities and sense of belonging. Place-based exchanges are embodied by tangata whenua in a number of different ways. Living, returning, visiting and connection to homelands is a crucial component in creating identities and a sense of belonging. Remaining at the centre of this embodiment is whenua, moana and taonga species.

Homelands 'remain a persistent theme' in the lives of many Indigenous peoples and a discussion about the "sensory triggers" reveals the power of both place and ancestors to cross physical and temporal boundaries and inform the lives and identities of Ngāti Kuri women (Hickey 2019, Kearny 2009). Participants' experiences and sensory exchanges in and with place reveal the ways in which a sense of belonging is negotiated, lived and embodied (Morrison, et al. 2020). -Sensory experiences are important to understanding health and wellbeing of Indigenous women. Being able to read environmental tohu, might on one hand, be an indication that people are connected to the environment and have the time, energy and emotional stability to notice and read the messages the environment is sending. On the other hand, if one is unwell learning about how to read environmental tohu might help people to reconnect to the environment and all that it holds. This chapter asserts that intergenerational healing takes place through the senses and a reading of tohu.

Finally, through poetry and song the chapter illustrates what happens when Ngāti Kuri women write and sing to place, people and taonga species. The three themes answer the question: How and in what ways are environmental tohu re-centring Ngāti Kuri women within tribal homelands? Place is an active agent in the transformation of participants' sense of belonging and their relationships (Kana'iapuni and Malaone 2006). The language and knowledge held in te taiao o Ngāti Kuri and the hearts and minds of participants breathe mauri, life, into people and taonga tuku iho.

Chapter eight: He Whakaotioti

Te Karanga Tūturu o Maieke: Ngāti Kuri Women's Taiao Geographies explores the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women's identities and relationships are shaped, articulated and transformed within and alongside te taiao. The research has centralised tūpuna wahine and te taiao whanau are also as intelligent participants capable of influencing the ways in which Indigenous women's sense of belonging to land and people is understood. The result is an intimate glimpse into participants', myself included, experiences of environmental colonisation but more importantly decolonisation and transformation.

This research identified that there is a gap in existing Indigenous geographies pertaining to Indigenous women's identities, relationships and connection to homelands. This gap is addressed within this thesis through an investigation into the experiences and ihi of Ngāti Kuri women who transform and decolonize iwi, research and conservation institutions and knowledges. This work is important in that it brings forward the voices of Indigenous women and re-positions them as drivers of change and weavers of people.

The thesis peels back the layers of colonisation from the storied landscapes of Ngāti Kuri to reveal Māori women as resilient and strategic in their responses to oppression and marginalisation (Murphy 2019). I argue that, given the power and authority of their tūpuna wahine, Indigenous women can and do infiltrate and transform colonial and scientific and spaces to create working partnerships and in doing so re-instate Ngāti Kuri women's traditional knowledges and co-create new knowledges.

The research asks three questions:

1. In what ways do ancestral women influence the identities, taiao relationships, sense of belonging and autonomy of Ngāti Kuri women?

2. How and where are Ngāti Kuri women resisting and transforming colonial and patriarchal conservation knowledge?
3. How and in what ways are environmental tohu re-centring Ngāti Kuri women within tribal homelands?

Despite colonial imaginings of Māori society as being ruled and governed by men, I argue that Ngāti Kuri women have and continue to hold leadership roles. Bringing the stories of Ngāti Kuri tūpuna wāhine to the fore disrupts colonial assumptions about Māori women and that Māori society has always been patriarchal. The above questions allow the research to delve into the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women are represented in conservation and science but ultimately looks at the current work Ngāti Kuri women are participating in to transform and decolonise collaboration processes and ways of working within te taiao in Aotearoa.

The thesis offers some historical context to Ngāti Kuri women geographies in Chapter Two, Te Ao Ngāti Kuri: Context, events and Ngāti Kuri women. Places of significance for Ngāti Kuri women and research locations are introduced and discussed, signposting the multidimensional spaces this research has visited. The research is grounded in Kaupapa Māori and guided by Mana Wahine, Indigenous and relational geographical theoretical framework. Chapter Three, He tohu o Ngāti Kuri: Guiding the Research, reviews those theories while weaving in pūrākau and Māori geographies. The interdisciplinary nature of the theoretical framework has made it possible for a uniquely Ngāti Kuri women's lens to blur the dichotomies of time (past and present), human and more-than-human, physical and metaphysical worlds. The intangible becomes tangible through a Ngāti Kuri women's theoretical framework.

Moreover, this theoretical scaffold provided a platform for methodologies and methods to be co-produced alongside participants. In Chapter Four, Tipi haere talk: Approaching method

and analysis, attends to the way in which information was gathered and analysed. The participants and I consciously framed the analysis of data through a Ngāti Kuri women's perspective galvanising participant autonomy in the sharing of intergenerational experiences. Methods and methodologies honoured Ngāti Kuri women, both past and present, and te taiao. Mana Wahine and pūrākau straddle both theory and methodology. Contemporary and traditional pūrākau provided not only material evidence of Ngāti Kuri women's identities, roles and responsibilities but also a thread from which to weave into a Mana Wahine understanding of Māori women's ontologies and epistemologies.

Chapter Five, *Because our grandmothers said so: Re-storying Ngāti Kuri women's identities, relationships and sense of belonging*, is the first empirical chapter in which Maieke's story is told. In this chapter I argue that ancestral women continue to influence the identities and relationships of Ngāti Kuri women through pūrākau. Lives, young and old, are transformed when the stories of our grandmothers who led are told. Participant narratives reveal intergenerational colonisation is experienced as deep hurts that have only served to cut us from the land and each other. This is then counterbalanced by exploring participants understanding of Ngāti Kuri women's identities – who they have been, who they are and who they might be in the future. Traditional and contemporary Ngāti Kuri pūrākau and identities deliver powerful narratives through which colonial landscapes are re-storied by and for participants and their future generations.

Through Mana Wahine theories and methodologies grounded in Kaupapa Māori, the research found that Māori women's identities and Māori naming of taonga species has been misrepresented and mis-interpreted. Māori women have been cut off from taonga species and fenced out of homelands through mainstream conservation media releases. In Chapter Six, *Moehau tohunga ahurewa: Representing Ngāti Kuri women*, explores the pūrākau of Moehau

- a revered tohunga ahurewa and kaitiaki. Moehau's name was given to a rare tree found only in the tribal lands of Ngāti Kuri in the 1970s. Moehau's pūrākau offers evidence of the authoritative roles of Ngāti Kuri women held and the enduring value in Ngāti Kuri women's identities. The pūrākau is juxtaposed alongside the ways in which conservation has mis-translated, mis-interpreted and mis-appropriated Ngāti Kuri naming of taonga species to highlight the need for greater and more meaningful collaboration with Indigenous peoples. The chapter then discusses the work of contemporary Ngāti Kuri women and their relationships within the science community to present evidence that Māori women continue to practice whakawhanaungatanga with taonga species and te taiao. The pūrākau of taonga species are permeated with Māori knowledges that speak to the ways in which Māori manage te taiao and conservation. I argue that through pūrākau and the naming of taonga species, transformation takes place while recording, restoring and evolving ancient knowledge. Ngāti Kuri women are often the conduit in building working relationships and collaboration. The chapter provides a decolonial model for the co-production of knowledge. This is a model where Indigenous women's knowledges runs parallel with Western, and often masculinised science.

The final empirical chapter, *The fire whispers to our blood and bones: Sensing home*, explores the environmental tohu that shape participants' notions of turangawaewae and their relationships with homelands. In this chapter I argue that an Indigenous relational geography is constructed through participants' senses and environmental tohu as they engage with taonga species and tūpuna wāhine. More-than-human beings play an active and intelligent role in forming a sense of belonging, knowing and being that is unique to place (Country et al 2026, Larsen and Johnson 2016). This is analysed through song and poetry written by participants, myself included. The chapter utilises an Indigenous relational geography framework to attend to the intimate communicative processes that take place when listening,

writing, and singing to our environments and taonga species. The reciprocal interaction of listening, singing and writing with and in place heightens environmental ihi, that is, the passion and drive to protect and enhance environmental well-being while strengthening participants' sense of belonging and turangawaewae. In this chapter taonga species and te taiao are centred alongside participants as active and intelligent mediators in the making of place.

The findings of this research showcase that the environment, ecosystems and taonga species are intelligent and active agents in the shaping of Ngāti Kuri women's identities, relationships and notions of homelands. Ngāti Kuri women and the sensory geographies of te taiao are co-produced. The environment shapes the way we construct our identities, our relationships with each other, our lived experiences and vice versa. Returning to homelands are important to many Ngāti Kuri women. Understanding the challenges and benefits of returning home is essential if we, as an iwi, are to provide a smooth and clear pathway for our people to return. Ngāti Kuri are in the process of developing papakāinga – research such as this can help inform Indigenous models for returning to homelands. Te taiao has agency and plays a significant role in shaping the lives and homelands of Ngāti Kuri women.

The thesis contributes to Indigenous geographies through the examining the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women relate and identify with place, ancestors and taonga species. The research is an offers an intimate view into participants' experiences and relationships with place as they decolonise and transform their identities, their knowledges and the spaces they inhabit. Colonial interruption and misrepresentation are revealed as a continuing barrier for Māori women working in environmental protection. An examination of Ngāti Kuri women's responses to the marginalisation of identities and voices highlights Mana Wahine and ihi as a source of tino rangatiratanga.

There are few accounts of the ways in which key relationships within Māori women's geographies emerge at specific sites. Through a Ngāti Kuri women's lens the research examines how Indigenous women's subjectivities are, at times, precast by colonial, political and masculine concepts, and then explores ways in which Māori women reconfigure discourse and spaces through building on traditional and contemporary relationships, engagement and Māori women's autonomy. There is a relationship between returning to homelands and health. Wellbeing is deeply embedded in experiences that happen when we go home – healing takes place for people, lands and taonga species when we return to our turangawaewae. Intergenerational trauma caused by colonization and displacement of our minds, bodies and lands is addressed in this thesis finding that reconnecting with pūrākau, te taiao and homelands provide not only a pathway for healing but also a framework for strengthening Indigenous communities and the health and well-being for both Indigenous peoples and their environments.

Future research

This research focuses on the identities, relationships and geographies of Ngāti Kuri women with and in the environment. What is presented in the thesis is a very localised and intimate exploration of the ways in which one particular group of Māori women engage with each other, te taiao, taonga species and homelands. It is a starting point to the wider question of Indigenous women's geographies of te taiao. Future research is needed to better understand how the intimate relationships some Indigenous women share with an environmental family can contribute to developing human and more-than-human resilience to increasing biodiversity destruction and climate justice.

I discussed future research with some of my participants, asking them what questions they would ask of their worlds. At the writing of my conclusion I would like to say that I was

motivated to think beyond the thesis to future research but to be honest I had run out of words. My head is both full and empty of ideas and words all at the same time. I struggled to imagine how this research could be extended. Yet, going back to my participants, my whanaunga, I found that inspiration. As always, the support and aroha offered spurred me on and planted the seeds of future research, hope and aspirations for Ngāti Kuri. What follows is a collaboration of research initiatives imagined by my participants. In what I was experiencing as a writing block was an opportunity to engage in a co-production of possible future research initiatives that are important to Ngāti Kuri women. These ideas are discussed in the following as I consider the future research questions posed by my participants.

To extend on the findings around homelands Bethany Maitai Edmunds and I discussed a research question that would examine the experiences of Indigenous women who return to their homelands to live. While the meaning and experiences of homelands have been considered within the geography, an investigation into the experiences of Indigenous women returning has received little attention. Ngāti Kuri people are increasingly mobilising to return to their turangawaewae. Why are uri returning to the lands of their tūpuna and whakapapa? The driving force may be related to New Zealand's housing crisis, or it may be a longing to be closer to tribal and environmental family. It may be a combination of different reasons. Understanding those reasons would be beneficial when planning for them to return. Bethany and I agreed that research into this topic would help to identify both the challenges and advantages of returning home while also providing meaningful and practical recommendations to help make the transition home a positive experience.

Environmental tohu were an important finding discussed in the thesis and participants were encouraged participants to think deeper about how their sensory experiences inform their geographies. Uncle Jerry Norman - who supported, mentored and inspired me through the

entire process of writing my thesis - offered valuable suggestions. We discussed the concept of environmental logic and how Indigenous sensory experiences inform environmental management and planning. Dwyer (1994) noted that mainstream or Western conservation ethics force a hegemonic environmental logic onto people and place. While there is some work that explores Indigenous environmental logic (see Berkes and Berkes 2009) there is little that examines the link between sensory experiences, place and the formation of environmental logic. How might Indigenous environmental logic be informed? Are the environmental signals Indigenous people receive and respond to a human and more-than-human conversation, negotiation and mediation of place and environmental practice? Research that investigates the link between environmental logic and environmental tohu would work to deepen the understanding of Indigenous environmental relationships, management, planning and knowledges.

Tohu from taonga species were also stimulating the mind of Sheridan Waitai. One of the initiatives Sheridan leads for Ngāti Kuri research is developing working relationships with our Indigenous whanaunga from across the Pacific Ocean. Māori share whakapapa within the Pacific region through the migration from some of those islands to Aotearoa. Connection with Pacific Indigenous has already begun through the 'Taiatea: Gathering Oceans' initiative (Waitai and World Wildlife Fund New Zealand, 2019). Sheridan and I talked about tohorā as our ocean mothers. She was interested to know how following the song lines of tohorā as they journey through the Pacific might enhance the reconnection between people and place. The conceptualisation of whales as ocean mothers needs further consideration. While there is much research into whale song during migration the songs of whale mothers and the human connection between islands has yet to receive robust attention. Questions in relation to this research topic might ask – How might female whale song inform Indigenous people knowledge in the Pacific? Are there links between understanding female whale song between

islands and people? Research into the songs of our ocean mothers as they visit Pacific Islands may provide pathways to reconnecting and rejuvenating Pacific relationships while also encouraging and promoting unity and collaboration across Pacific nations.

Final thoughts

Upon reflection on the PhD journey I can testify to the multiple experiences of completing a thesis. I have, as I'm sure many doctoral students have experienced, travelled between spaces of elation, excitement, desolation and stress. I have had to dig deep within my wairua to find motivation when I felt shiftlessness and blocked up. I have felt calm and confident then insecure in my knowledge and ability. I experienced inner conflict and found inner peace. I was presented with both opportunities and constraints in the writing and creation of knowledge. Navigation and negotiation of opportunities and constraints within both Indigenous and colonial worlds strengthening my determination to complete the task.

In the following epilogue I offer a piece of creative writing. The story was my response to the lingering gate keeping evident in Western, masculine and colonial hegemony in regard to environmental management and conservation. Creative writing has always helped me to shift the blockages within my mind that are driven by inner conflict and external constraint. There is freedom and healing to be found within creative writing and hopefully in the reading of my story as well.

Rather than an ending to the journey, the thesis is but one big step forward, yet to where I am unsure. I hope that the research is of use and beneficial to Ngāti Kuri and other Indigenous peoples. I am so grateful for the opportunities and people I have met and worked with. I am also proud of myself for finishing the task. What a ride this PhD has been!

Epilogue: Pūteretere are here

Two women and a dog walked the final stretch down into their ancestral home, their car abandoned at the top of the hill. Gas was now hard to find, people were lining up for hours and fighting to get the last few litres of the gas from the few gas stations left near the state highway. It had been nine days of dodging danger and Kuri the dog had scared off any threats along the way. Kuri also proved to be a good provider, bringing down sheep and goats the farmers had left behind when the farming industry crashed.

The world was shutting down. Climate change, pandemic after pandemic and the wars that followed had thrown life into chaos. Aotearoa had defended its coastlines for as long as they could. Now, the rest of the world was busy fending for themselves, no civilisation had the people or money to invade other countries.

Muriwhenua, Moehau's mother, was tired and anxious. It had been a long time since she'd been able to get home. Life just didn't involve travel like it used to, her home had been ransacked, her family lost to the pandemic. Muriwhenua and Moehau were the last standing. Muriwhenua had once had two homes. One was with her family in the centre of the island, the other here in the remote north, her ancestral home.

Moehau had never been to her ancestral lands, but she knew it intimately in her heart. Her mother had worked for the tribe when things were still good. She knew the names of the places, her grandmothers and wildlife. Moehau was excited, she couldn't wait. She'd been dreaming of this moment her entire life. Moehau ran ahead with the dog calling back to her mother "I can see her house there's no fire, Maieke would have the fire going, wouldn't she?". Muriwhenua frowned and looked down into the village. It looked bleak. There should be a fire going, it was cold and wet and wood was about the only resource you could depend on right now. "Hang on, wait, let's just watch the village for a while. We'll get a sense of

what's going on down there first" Muriwhenua called out into the rain, her voice carried back over the hills behind her. This time she yelled "Moehau!" and signalled her daughter to come back.

They waited all night, watching for life and lights. A few houses seemed to be occupied and shouts rose up the hill to the women as the people left in the village called out to each other. The women slept rough that night making a shelter under the scrub that cloaked the hills. They woke at dawn to the sound of the dog's black fat tail slapping the trunk of a Manuka tree. Dead leaves and seed pods fell into their eyes and hair. Muriwhenua jumped up ready to defend, in front of her a small agile woman patting Kuri on the head. She muttered intimately with the dog, the words just out of reach for Muriwhenua. Swiping the debris from her eye's she recognised her mother and called out her name "Mum, Maieke, we've come home". Moehau stepped forward ready to, at last, feel the arms of a thousand grandmothers all wrapped up in one powerful embrace.

Maieke turned and walked into the scrub calling "come on you girls, this way" Muriwhenua and Moehau squinted into the wet white fog seeing only the black silhouette of Kuri. Quickly the women gathered their things and followed the dog high up to the top of the hill. They arrived to a warm but empty house. "Where's grandmother?" Moehau asked. Muriwhenua knew where she was but didn't have the words to describe that place. "Oh, she's around somewhere. You'll see her sooner or later" she told her daughter. The women and the dog settled in and kept the fire burning waiting for Maieke to return.

Days and weeks went by. Muriwhenua had gone to the village to see how it was down there. People were cold and distant, they didn't want to know who she was or where she came from so they stayed away. They spent their days tending the garden and hunting the few animals that were left on their tribal lands. This place had always been a place of birds and sea

creatures but now the bush was almost silent and the coastlines littered with pollution and plastic. “Anyway, the coastlines are dangerous now, who knows what threats might be cruising up and down our coast” Muriwhenua told her daughter.

One morning Moehau was woken by the dog. He nudged and snuffled her under the blanket until she got up. She wandered out the back door and into the soft red light of her dawn. Muriwhenua slept on, she’d been up all night worrying about where the next feed would come from. Kuri was getting skinny, he’d eaten all the possums and rabbits he could find. Muriwhenua knew this because the bush was regenerating, the trees were thicker and taller, the undergrowth was almost impenetrable in some places now. “We’ll have to go inland and look for some geese, they must be here by now” she said looking around for the dog. The house was quiet, too quiet. As she glanced out the window she saw two small shapes standing on an outcrop of rocks in the harbour. Moehau’s voice drifted to Muriwhenua as she stepped outside. It was her and Kuri on the rock. Muriwhenua jammed her feet in her worn shoes and rushed down to the mouth of the harbour. She called as quietly as she could “Moehau, stop, what are you doing? Someone will hear or worse still, see you. There could be foreign boats out there. Oh, my dog, girl stop!”

Moehau dove into the water, deeper and deeper she went until she reached the bottom of the harbour’s mouth. She could see its white teeth gleaming and smiling back at her and in that moment, she took a scoop of the silica sand in her hand before pushing off the ocean floor to get back to the surface before she ran out of breath. Waiting for her was her mother and the dog. Kuri was pleased to see her wagging his black fat tail but her mother looked like a volcano about to explode. Moehau opened her hand to reveal the bright white sand. Her wet eyes red from the saltwater. “Mum, Maieke is here with the rest of our grandmothers, look it’s a pūteretere, they’re here” There’s fish down there and shellfish, mum, and earlier I even

saw a whale”. Muriwhenua looked out over the horizon and saw a small dark cloud in the sky, it moved strangely, too quick to be a cloud, and too slow to be a jet. “Hurry Moehau, get out of the water and back up to the house! Something’s coming, look to the sky, it’s flying towards you!” As they watched the dark cloud came closer they saw it was a flock of Kuaka. The birds circled a wide white sandbank with one mind and landed. Moehau sat down and said “It’s alright mum, we’ll be okay, Maieke is here now”.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Colonial Place names

Aotearoa – New Zealand

Hikurua - North Cape

Kapowairua/Piwhane - Spirits Bay

Kokota – Silca Sandspit

Kurahaupō Pōhatu - Kurahaupō Rock

Manawatāwhi - Three Kings Islands

Maungapiko - Maungapiko Mountain

Parengarenga – Parengarenga harbour

Rangitāhua – Kermadec Islands

Takapaukura - Tom Bowline Bay

Te Hiku o te Ika – Far North, New Zealand

Te Rerenga Wairua - Cape Reinga

Te Tai o Whitiāra - Pacific Ocean

Appendix 2: Interview script

Interview Script

- Introduce myself and my research
- Go through the information sheet, rights and responsibilities
- Go through the consent form _ signed or verbal consent
- Remind them that the interview is a conversation and they are free to talk about whatever they see fit

Interview questions

1. Whanaungatanga – tell me a little bit about yourself
2. How do you see/imagine yourself in nature?
3. Can you tell me about your relationship with the taiao/environment? If any relationship?
4. Can you tell me what kind of things you like to do in te taiao? Where? Fun? Work? Environmental protection? Pest eradication?
5. How do you feel about the taiao and its well-being?
6. Is that related to the well-being of Ngati Kuri? In what ways?
7. What is your favourite memory/story about the taiao?
8. Thinking about women in nature – how do you see Ngāti Kuri women in nature/taiao?

Appendix 3: Pūrākau wānanga, consent forms and information sheets

Te karanga tūturu o Maieke: Ngāti Kuri women's taiao geographies

This research contributes to Māori and Indigenous geographies by exploring the complex relationships wāhine (women) encounter as they negotiate the conservation of te taiao in the Far North of New Zealand. The research explores the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women continue to build and maintain relationships with land and within tribal affiliations, research institutes and conservation groups. The research examines the gendered power relationships that govern the te taiao of Ngāti Kuri. Ngāti Kuri lands and waterways hold unique ecosystems. This draws a plethora of scientific research initiatives and conservation groups to Ngāti Kuri lands. The overarching research question enables an examination of here, and in what ways, do Ngāti Kuri wāhine decolonise te taiao? Through this research Ngāti Kuri women's past, present and future positionalities, actions and relationships are brought to the fore in order to create a pathway to decolonise the taiao o Ngāti Kuri.

Pūrākau wānanga Schedule, Saturday 27 April 2017

8.30 – 9 am: Arrive Te Manawa office, coffee/tea/muffins

9 – 9.15 am: wānanga outline:

- Pūrākau as theory/methodology
- Colonisation and gendering of pūrākau
- Ethics – retelling, recreating, writing the ora

Materials:

- Wānanga booklet
- Harakeke, Ti Toe, pīngao for raranga
- Waiata – one that tells a women's pūrākau?

Publishing our pūrākau:

Wānanga booklets – Transforming iwi and science spaces?
Restoring gender roles?
Ethics – responsibility? Authentic? Rights?
Taiatea Conference – Transforming conservation and science globally?
Connecting indigenous conservationist, science, taiao?

Pūrākau pātai: use the questions below to begin a discussion around each of the three pūrākau

- How would you interpret this pūrākau?
- What message does it send us?
- How is this pūrākau gendered? By whom?

- How does this pūrākau position Ngāti Kuri women?
- What does this pūrākau tell us about relationships with – whenua/moana, taonga species, people?
- How does re-telling/re-writing this pūrākau (re)shape or decolonise: Ngāti Kuri women's identities and science

Waananga schedule

9.15 – 10.15 am: Moehau pūrākau.

10.15 – 11.15 am: Pingao pūrākau

11.15 – 11.30 am: coffee/muffin break

11.30 – 12.30 pm: Kuaka pūrākau

12.30 – 1.30 pm: lunch/travel – Kai - cooked chicken, cheese, buns and salad

1.30 – 4.30 pm: tipi haere – Rarawa Beach

Speaking Pūrākau in taiao:

- Place-based learning – learning, being, feeling in place.
- Listening – listening to nature and nature listening to us
- Oral traditions – cultivating our pūrākau, storytellers and tupuna in Ngāti Kuri women's lives.
- Positioning – women in place as kaitiaki, knowledge holders, leaders – gate keepers: nannys at the gate; museum work; conferences – partners: treaty partners; research partners and iwi partners
- Kainga – returning home – ahi kā – getting to 'know' home – Letting kainga know I've come home

Tipi haere pātai:

- How do you feel when you tell pūrākau in and around your home spaces: Te Rerenga Wairua, Kapowairua, Taputaputa, Kokota, Rarawa, Te Hāpua, marae etc?
- How does hearing those pūrākau shape/maintain/construct your concept of home/kainga? (whakarongo)
- In what ways do pūrākau connect you to place, taonga species, tupuna, other Ngāti Kuri women, your identity (or not)?
- At Taiatea we spoke a lot about what nature hears when we kōrero on land/country/oceans: What might the taiao hear when we speak pūrākau 'in' place? (place-based learning and sharing)
 - Why might that be relevant and important for Indigenous environmental management/protection/research?

Appendix 4: Ethics approval

Linguistics Programme
School of Arts
Faculty of Arts and Social
Sciences
Te Kura Kete Aronui
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton 3240
New Zealand

Phone +64 7 838 4466 ext
8144
E-mail
jbarbour@waikato.ac.nz
www.waikato.ac.nz



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Wāikato

Sandi Ringham
Lynda Johnston
Naomi Simmonds

GEOG

19 October 2016

Dear Sandi,

Re: FS2016-50 Making space for Māori women in conservation: Ngā wāhine o Ngāti Kuri and nature conservation in Te Hiku o Te Ika.

Thank you for submitting your amended application to the FASS Human Research Ethics Committee. We have reviewed the final electronic version of your application and the Committee is now pleased to offer formal approval for your research activities, including interviews along with wānanga/hikoivisual diaries.

We encourage you to contact the committee should issues arise during your data collection, or should you wish to add further research activities or make changes to your project as it unfolds. We wish you all the best with your research. Thank-you for engaging with the process of Ethical Review.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Julie Barbour'.

Julie Barbour, Chair
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee.

Appendix 5: Interview, wānanga, tipi haere and image consent forms

Participant rights

Participants have the right to:

- Decline to participate;
- Stop the interview at any time;
- Decline to answer any particular question;
- Decline to be audio recorded;
- Ask for the audio recorder to be turned off at any time;
- Edit, omit or add any material up until one month after receiving the interview transcript;
- Withdraw from the study up until one month after the interview;
- Participate in English or Te Reo Māori or both;
- Ask questions at any time during your participation in this research.

The results

The results of this research will be used in conference and seminar presentations, academic books and journal publications. The recorded interviews will be transcribed. Copyright of my kōrero and contribution is held by participants. Any publications that arise from this research will be held by Sandi.

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University of Waikato. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee, email fass-ethics@waikato.ac.nz postal address, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Te Kura Kete Aronui, University of Waikato, Te Whare Wananga o Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240.

Please complete the following checklist. Tick <input type="checkbox"/> the appropriate box for each point.	YES	NO
I agree to be interviewed.		
I agree to having my interview audio recorded.		
I wish to receive a copy of the interview transcript.		
I wish to receive a summary of the findings.		
I wish for research material to be stored in iwi archives		
I wish to use a pseudonym for publications. If the answer is yes, please provide your chosen name:		

“I agree to take part in this research and acknowledge receipt of a copy of this information sheet and signed consent form. I understand my rights as a participant in this research and

that my identity will remain confidential and anonymity guaranteed unless I state otherwise. I have had adequate opportunity to discuss the above information and I am satisfied with the answers that have been provided.”

Signature of participant: _____ **Date** _____

Signature of researcher: _____ **Date:** _____

Your details (for my records)

Name:

Age:	18-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	45-49	<input type="checkbox"/>
	25-29	<input type="checkbox"/>	50-54	<input type="checkbox"/>
	30-34	<input type="checkbox"/>	55-59	<input type="checkbox"/>
	35-39	<input type="checkbox"/>	60-64	<input type="checkbox"/>
	40-44	<input type="checkbox"/>	65 and over	<input type="checkbox"/>

Address: _____

Phone number: home _____ **cell:** _____

Email: _____

Gender: _____

Iwi affiliation: _____

Ethnicity : _____

Occupation: _____

If you have any questions at any point during this research please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and for being an important part of this research.

RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

Research title: Te karanga tūturu o Maieke: Ngāti Kuri women's taiao geographies

Researcher: Sandi Ringham, Geography Programme, University of Waikato

The research

This research explores Māori women's experiences and leadership within nature and conservation sites in Te Hiku o te Ika, Aotearoa (Far North, New Zealand). In Aotearoa conservation sites are spaces where political, scientific, economic, social and cultural values inform and control management, access and ownership. This research is grounded in a Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine framework and will consider how wāhine (women) experience and contribute to the taiao and conservation practices in Te Hiku o Te Ika. The research is conducted for a Doctor of Philosophy qualification.

Your involvement

I am committed to working collaboratively to ensure the research engages with what is important to participants. Information will be collected through a series of wānanga and/or hīkoi as well as individual and group interviews with people involved in conservation.

You have been invited to participate in this research based on your affiliation to Ngāti Kuri and/or your involvement in conservation in Te Hiku. Your decision to participate in a wānanga is appreciated. As a research method wānanga encourages a collective production of knowledge, shared learning and participatory practices. Wānanga will include story sharing about the Ngāti Kuri rohe, conversations about conservation in Te Hiku and analysis of visual images. While Sandi will provide a list of suggested themes to be discussed during wānanga this is also an opportunity for you to raise any conversation issues you would like to share or discuss. The Wharekapua Wānanga will take place from the 16 – 18 February 2018 at Wharekapua, Ngataki. The wānanga will be audio recorded, transcribed and participants can request the audio recorder is turned off during their contributions. A summary of wānanga will be sent to participants.

We are also hoping to go on a hīkoi around the Ngāti Kuri rohe. If all goes to plan this will take place on the 17 February and we will travel to Te Hapua, Kapowairua and Taputaputa. The mobile nature of tipi haere enables a 'wānanga moving through space' to emerge enabling participants to share knowledges, stories, experiences and thoughts in meaningful ways.

The research is also interested in producing a visual diary to represent Ngāti Kuri women in Te Hiku's te taiao. During the wānanga participants will be asked bring any photographs that represent their personal places of significance from within the Ngāti Kuri rohe with a focus on, but not restricted to, images of nature, women and conservation. Participants also invited to take photographs with the research in mind during the hīkoi. Participants will then have an opportunity to choose which images to use in the research. It is hoped that hīkoi and photographs will prompt story and experience sharing about our place in the world and conversations about conservation in Te Hiku. Conversations and images will only be used with participants' consent.

Confidentiality

Due to the collective nature of this research guarantying confidentiality and anonymity is difficult. This will mean that if you were to participate your identity may be recognisable in any research publications. I will also work collectively with participants to establish protocols for using any sensitive kōrero that arises during the research.

Transcripts, audio recordings, photographs, participant information and correspondence will be kept in a locked cabinet in my office at the University of Waikato. Electronic material will be stored on a computer which is protected by a secure password known only by me. The above material will be stored securely for five years after which will be destroyed. Audio recordings and transcripts will be returned at the completion of the research at your request.

Ngā mihi mahana

Sandi Ringham

Doctoral Candidate – Geography Programme

Email: slr27@students.waikato.ac.nz

Mobile: + 64 21 483690

Office: + 64 7 838 4466 Ext.

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Lynda Johnston (Chief Supervisor)

Email: Lyndaj@wakato.ac.nz

Phone: + 64 7 838 4466 Ext: 8412

Naomi Simmonds (Co Supervisor)

Email: naomis@waikato.ac.nz

Phone: + 64 7 838 4466 Ext: 9159

Participant rights: Wānanga

Participants have the right to:

- Decline from taking part in any wānanga;
- Leave the wānanga at any time;
- Decline to participate in any discussions and withdraw from any activities that take place during the wānanga;
- Decline from being audio recorded;
- Request that the audio recorder be turned off at any point during your contributions;
- Withdraw from the research at any time up to two months after the wānanga;
- Ask questions at any time during your participation in this research.

The results

The results of this research will be used in conference and seminar presentations, academic books and journal publications. The recorded wānanga will be transcribed. Copyright of my kōrero and contribution is held by participants. Any publications that arise from this research will be held by Sandi.

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University of Waikato. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee, email fass-ethics@waikato.ac.nz postal address, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Te Kura Kete Aronui, University of Waikato, Te Whare Wananga o Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240.

Please complete the following checklist. Tick [<input type="checkbox"/>] the appropriate box for each point.	YES	NO
I consent to participating in wānanga.		
I wish to receive a summary of wānanga.		
I wish to receive a summary of the findings.		
I consent to photos of me being taken during wānanga to be used in research publications.		
I wish for research material to be stored in iwi archives.		
I wish to use a pseudonym for publications. If the answer is yes, please provide your chosen name:		

“I agree to take part in this research and acknowledge receipt of a copy of this information sheet and signed consent form. I understand my rights as a participant in this research and that my identity will remain confidential and anonymity guaranteed unless I state

otherwise. I have had adequate opportunity to discuss the above information and I am satisfied with the answers that have been provided.”

Signature of participant: _____ **Date** _____

Signature of researcher: _____ **Date:** _____

Your details (for my records)

Name:

Age:	18-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	45-49	<input type="checkbox"/>
	25-29	<input type="checkbox"/>	50-54	<input type="checkbox"/>
	30-34	<input type="checkbox"/>	55-59	<input type="checkbox"/>
	35-39	<input type="checkbox"/>	60-64	<input type="checkbox"/>
	40-44	<input type="checkbox"/>	65 and over	<input type="checkbox"/>

Address: _____

Phone number: home _____ **cell:** _____

Email: _____

Gender: _____

Iwi affiliation: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Occupation: _____

If you have any questions at any point during this research please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and for being an important part of this research.

Participant rights: Tipi haere

Participants have the right to:

- Decline from taking part in any hīkoi;
- Decline from taking part in the visual diary;
- Decline to participate in any discussions and/or withdraw from any activities that take place during the hīkoi;
- Decline from having your image in publications;
- Withdraw from the research at any time up to two months after the hīkoi;
- Ask questions at any time during your participation in this research.

The results

The results of this research will be used in conference and seminar presentations, academic books and journal publications. The recorded interviews will be transcribed. Copyright of my kōrero and contribution is held by participants. Any publications that arise from this research will be held by Sandi.

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University of Waikato. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee, email fass-ethics@waikato.ac.nz postal address, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Te Kura Kete Aronui, University of Waikato, Te Whare Wananga o Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240.

Please complete the following checklist. Tick [] the appropriate box for each point.	YES	NO
I consent to participate in tipi haere and will adhere to health and safety requirements.		
I consent to taking photos during tipi haere and/or visits to conservation sites.		
I consent to the photos I take being analysed during wānanga.		
I consent to the photos I take being included in research publications.		
I consent to use my own camera/phone for taking photos.		
I wish to borrow a camera for taking photos and will return the camera at the end of hīkoi.		
I would like my photos returned in a digital file.		
I wish to receive a summary of tipi haere		
I wish for research material to be stored in iwi archives.		
I wish to receive a summary of the findings.		

“I agree to take part in this research and acknowledge receipt of a copy of this information sheet and signed consent form. I understand my rights as a participant in this research and that my identity will remain confidential and anonymity guaranteed unless I state otherwise. I have had adequate opportunity to discuss the above information and I am satisfied with the answers that have been provided.”

Signature of participant: _____ **Date** _____

Signature of researcher: _____ **Date:** _____

Your details (for my records)

Name:

Age:	18-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	45-49	<input type="checkbox"/>
	25-29	<input type="checkbox"/>	50-54	<input type="checkbox"/>
	30-34	<input type="checkbox"/>	55-59	<input type="checkbox"/>
	35-39	<input type="checkbox"/>	60-64	<input type="checkbox"/>
	40-44	<input type="checkbox"/>	65 and over	<input type="checkbox"/>

Address: _____

Phone number: home _____ **cell:** _____

Email: _____

Gender: _____

Iwi affiliation: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Occupation: _____

If you have any questions at any point during this research please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and for being an important part of this research.

Participant rights: Image consent

Participants have the right to:

- decline from taking part in the visual diary component of this research;
- decline from giving consent to your images being used in publications;
- ask questions at any time during your participation in this research.

The results

The results of this research will be used in conference and seminar presentations, academic books and journal publications. The recorded interviews will be transcribed. Copyright of my kōrero and contribution is held by participants. Any publications that arise from this research will be held by Sandi.

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University of Waikato. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee, email fass-ethics@waikato.ac.nz postal address, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Te Kura Kete Aronui, University of Waikato, Te Whare Wananga o Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240.

Please complete the following checklist. Tick [] the appropriate box for each point.	YES	NO
I would like my photos returned in a digital file.		
I consent to the list of images attached to this consent form being used in publications.		

“I agree to take part in this research and acknowledge receipt of a copy of this information sheet and signed consent form. I understand my rights as a participant in this research and that my identity will remain confidential and anonymity guaranteed unless I state otherwise. I have had adequate opportunity to discuss the above information and I am satisfied with the answers that have been provided.”

Signature of participant: _____ **Date** _____

Signature of researcher: _____ **Date:** _____

Your details (for my records)

Name:

Age: 18-24 45-49
 25-29 50-54
 30-34 55-59
 35-39 60-64
 40-44 65 and over

Address: _____

Phone number: home _____ **cell:** _____

Email: _____

Gender: _____

Iwi affiliation: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Occupation: _____

If you have any questions at any point during this research please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and for being an important part of this research.

Pūrākau

The pūrākau contained here were written and shared by the Ngāti Kuri Relationship Working Group during three wānanga (2016, 2017 and 2018) with tribal members, scientists, conservationists and community members.

Tohunga Moehau

Moehau was an important Ngāti Kuri tohunga. Her powers were so strong she lived in isolation from her people to ensure their safety. She protected and healed all, both human and non-human, that lived in the area. Ngāti Kuri people revered her and understood that her mātauranga was indeed a precious gift to be respected. They asked for her advice, healing and help only when required. Moehau was to be left in peace to ensure she was free to focus her powers wherever need be. Moehau spoke the languages of the land, oceans and all beings.

During the seasons that coincided with the migrations of tohorā around our coast Ngāti Kuri would ask Moehau if it was time to bring in rawa moana (bounties of the sea). When, and if, the conditions and the time was right Moehau would exert her enormous powers through karakia to influence one of the whales to break away from the main body of the tohorā whanau passing by to beach itself. Relationships between Ngāti Kuri and sentient beings were based on interrelationships. Moehau practiced kōrero hinengaro (telepathy) to converse with many beings within the taiao and the moana and it was her duty to ensure her people sustained their daily lives and their interrelationships within the taiao and moana.

Moehau's calling of tohorā was driven by a genuine need to sustain the daily lives of Ngāti Kuri and was performed on this basis. It was not a regular occurrence. Moehau only performed these duties during times when tohorā numbers and the moana were abundant. Of course, these occasions were always met with happiness, jubilation and gratitude by the iwi. Tohorā was a huge bounty to be shared and traded ensuring the health and well-being of Ngāti Kuri continued. At her passing Moehau was installed as the kaitiaki of the Pārengarenga bar. These powers were vested in her by her tūpuna and her mana tohunga. It is said that if you see Moehau when passing across the Pārengarenga bar your day will prove to be a plentiful one.

Fifteen years ago, taumata kaumātua ō Ngāti Kuri were determined to re-name Barlett's Rātā. This would further enhance our kaitiakitanga (guardianship) vested in tupuna Moehau and passed down through the generations. In doing so, Ngāti Kuri historical and cultural values would be installed on taonga species such as the Rātā Moehau while also propelling our tupuna Moehau into the future.

Ngāti Kuri were successful in the re-naming of Bartlett's's rātā. Renaming taonga species articulates Ngāti Kuri's mana motuhake (sovereignty) and tino rangatiratanga. The name 'Rātā Moehau' symbolises not only Ngāti Kuri historical and cultural context but also the power and value found in mātauranga o Ngāti Kuri and articulates a species in need of conservation.

Pīngao

Pīngao was once a child of the sea. She lived there with her father, Tangaroa and whanau. She shared a close relationship with all the other creatures of the ocean and moved freely about her taiao. One moonlit night she was close to where the ocean meets the land playing with the waves and bioluminescent plankton. While Pīngao rested in the shallows near the shoreline she noticed a beautiful pale being dancing high on the Kokota. She watched entranced as the moonlight illuminated the fine pale hair flicking and flowing around the graceful body of Toetoe as he swayed in the wind. Pīngao had never seen such a beautiful creature and she fell madly in love with the beautiful and entrancing image of Toetoe. Night after night Pīngao watched Toetoe dance in the moonlight. Toetoe, being a vain creature performed spectacularly enjoying the audience. Toetoe flirted with Pīngao his dance enticing her to come ashore. He called to her: "come to me Pīngao, your beauty will never be seen if you stay hidden in the ocean. Come to me and be my wife".

In her excitement Pīngao approached Tangaroa announcing: "I have fallen madly in love with Toetoe. He is the most beautiful and gracious creature I have ever seen. I must go ashore to meet Toetoe and become his wife? Tangaroa warned: "you are never to wander ashore Pīngao! Toetoe does not love you! It is dangerous, you do not belong on the whenua. You are a child of the sea, this is your home, here you have whānau, you are safe and loved".

Pīngao's dreams were crushed and she continued to dream of meeting Toetoe. Her fascination grew to obsession. Knowing that this would be impossible because her father had warning; and yet still meeting Toetoe became her only wish. Pīngao could think of nothing

else. She did not want to disobey her parents but Toetoe continued to call to her promising his love and enticing her ashore.

Eventually the promise of finally meeting her beloved Toetoe became too much to resist. She told her father she was going to play with the waves and plankton close to the shore and that she would be back soon. Tangaroa warned her again: “Stay in the ocean Pīngao, Toetoe is not for you”. When she arrived at Kokota Toetoe’s graceful form called to her beckoning: “Come to me Pīngao, come to me”. As Pīngao left the ocean her first few steps seemed easy, but her body was transformed. Her beautiful green skin began to change to a golden yellow.

Alarmed by the change in her appearance Pīngao paused and in that moment, she heard her father calling her back to the sea and her whānau. As she turned to reply to Tangaroa she found she had become stuck in the silica sands of kokota. Pīngao panicked and cried out for her father to come and help. Tangaroa was saddened by the sight of his daughter bound to the land reaching and calling out to him. He could not help her. Her decision to disobey his warnings had sealed her fate, he called to her: “Pīngao, my daughter I love you, but I am sorry I cannot help you. You must now stay between the shore and the ocean forever more.

Pīngao then turned to Toetoe for help but his back was turned. Tangaroa had been right, Toetoe would never love her. His vanity and ego would never allow him to marry Pīngao. Pīngao was heartbroken Toetoe had rejected her, her many tears saturated the sand around her. As the sand absorbed her tears its hold on her strengthened. She became firmly rooted in the liminal space between shore and ocean. There she remains today binding the shoreline of Kokota. Her roots and foliage offering resources, sanctuary and sustenance for shellfish, insects, birds and Ngāti Kuri.

Pīngao is another of Ngāti Kuri ’s most prized taonga. This plant is most commonly used for hosting toheroa spat, dune stability, insect kai, nesting birds and weaving. The pūrākau above speaks of the imperative role pīngao plays in the health of the dune environment. Ngāti Kuri has dedicated countless years to the restoration of pīngao along our coastline.

We have a saying, “he Pīngao ngā kaitiaki o ngā Toheroa” meaning it is the kaitiaki of the Toheroa. There are two kinds of Pīngao that we collect. One from Te Kōkota and the other from Te Oneroa a Tohe. The gold variety of pingao was once prominent across the Pārengarenga harbour. This variety is favoured by our weavers.

Kuaka

When Tāne was creating birds, he created our beloved Kuaka who was curious and talkative by nature, friendly and family orientated. Kuaka being a lively soul was always off on an adventure exploring his world.

Kuaka was at his happiest when he was finding new information and seeing new things. Kuaka, being a talkative bird, would chat to everyone he met telling them stories of the things he had seen. He became a skilled and renowned storyteller for all creatures.

One day Tāne noticed kuaka was unusually quiet and looking quite sad. This worried Tāne and he asked “Kuaka, why are you so pōuri, what’s wrong?”

Kuaka said: “I’m getting tired of telling the same old stories, everyone has heard them”.

Kuaka had explored his world fully and there was no new information to be gathered. “I wonder if there is anything out there across the ocean, anyone else like me, and anything knew to see”.

As Tane listened to his beloved, he knew that, for Kuaka seeing new things would fulfill his desire for adventure. But he also knew that he himself and all the creatures who loved him would miss him dearly if he was to fly away yonder and not return.

Tāne looked at his Kuaka and said: “Here’s what I can do for you Kuaka, close your eyes and go to sleep and I will have a surprise for you when you wake. As Kuaka slept Tāne slipped a stone into his throat and when Kuaka woke Tāne told him he could now travel in search of new stories. Kuaka was delighted, he was to travel past Hawaiki-Nui and Hawaiki-Roa and further beyond to Hawaiki-Pamao. Through his travelling, he would quench his thirst for adventure.

Tane gave Kuaka clear instructions, do not eat from any of the lands you visit or fly over, only take from the sea. I have spoken to my brother and he will be there for you, should you get tired he will rise up support for you. Now Kuaka you go and chase the sun but there is one condition and that, when you feel the pull of the stone that I have placed in your throat from this land, you must return to us, to your homelands and bring all your stories and share all your knowledge with your whanau, all of us that will wait here for you.

Finally, Tāne warned him again to not take any food from strangers on his journey he was to only eat only from Tangaroa’s food basket when the time came.

Kuaka thought deeply before he left on his adventure, he loved his home and whanau and it was hard to leave them. Sitting in the silica sands of Kokota he buried half his heart. It was a symbol of his love and whakapapa to Pārengarenga. Wherever he travelled in the world a piece of his heart would always remain at Kokota.

Then Kuaka, left with half a heart and a stone in his throat. As he travelled he had many exciting adventures - he saw and met many different creatures some of who spoke the same language as him. Kuaka discovered that relationships had been already formed through his whakapapa with Papatūānuku. As Kuaka travelled across the many to Hawaiki he tired and was hungry - he called to his uncle. Tangaroa threw up a great sandpit for him with a food basket that would sustain Kuaka. There he rested before travelling on. This place is now known as Osaka, Japan.

From a distance he circled a big harbour looking for a place to land. He saw a group of birds who looked similar to him. Curious, Kuaka decided to land. These birds were very familiar and during his visit he in fell in love. The pair married and had many tamariki and mokopuna. Kuaka had created a new whanau. He became a part of the community and told his stories of Pārengarenga and Aotearoa.

One day he woke with a pulling sensation in his throat. He knew the stone in his throat was a call from home and time to return to the Kokota. He spoke to his wife pleading with her to take the journey – she refused saying she must stay to look after the elders, he would have to go without her. Kuaka, still deeply in love, promised he would return and buried the other half of his heart in the sand at his wife’s home.

It was decided that the tamariki and mokopuna would travel with Kuaka to Aotearoa so that they would know their father’s whanau and connect to their whakapapa. When the day finally came for Kuaka to chase the sun again, the whanau gathered on the beach. Kuaka flew up into the sky circling back to say goodbye to his wife. Two of his children joined him in a second circle back. Finally, the rest of his family flew up to take the journey to Kuaka’s home. When they arrived at Pārengarenga Tāne and Tangaroa were thrilled and Kuaka told his new stories of the world to anyone who would listen. Kuaka was in his element his children where for the first time on the Kokota and he was able to enjoy story telling during the long days and twilight nights that summer brings on the shores of the Parengarenga.

Kuaka has his heart in two different parts of the world. He demonstrates the importance of belonging to a place and love for whanau. He travels back to the homeland of his wife every

year always arriving at the beginning of each summer whether he is visiting his northern or southern home. Kuaka's story reminds us of the need to pursue new knowledge, to forge new relationships, to trust our whakapapa and our own relationships for survival and prosperity, he also reminds of strength, endurance and perseverance. Kuaka weaves our whakapapa and relationships with other Indigenous peoples across the globe. For Ngāti Kuri, Kuaka's return symbolises a special season – a season of sun, happiness, whanau times, celebrations and abundance. Kuaka who traverses the globe linking us to the wider world – brings with him new knowledge and shares this in abundance for all those who want to listen.

Appendix 7: Findings wānanga

Te karanga tūturu o Maieke: Ngāti Kuri women's taiao geographies - Findings wānanga

Wānanga focus:

The focus of this wānanga is to present my findings to you, my whanaunga, who participated in the research. This is a way for me to honour your contributions and to ensure that you are happy with what I have written. The wānanga will focus on my three findings chapters. During the wānanga I will present my findings and then open the floor for you to give feedback if you wish. Feedback and questions can be given during the wānanga or privately at a later date. All feedback you offer is appreciated and will be considered and treated with the upmost care and respect. A summary of each of the findings chapter will be made available during the wānanga. See below for a summary of the research.

Date, time and location

- Te Paki Office
- Saturday, 2 July 2022
- 12 pm

Itinerary

- 12 pm - lunch
- Zoom link: <https://waikato.zoom.us/j/kZNV0UBHx>
- 1 pm - Wānanga open, karakia
 - Findings chapter: Because our grandmothers said so: Re-storying Ngāti Kuri women's identities, relationships and sense of belonging (15 mins)
 - Open discussion, questions and feedback
 - Findings chapter: Optimising failed spaces: Representation, narrative and Ngāti Kuri naming (15 mins)
 - Open discussion, questions and feedback
 - Findings chapter: The fire whispers to our blood and bones: Sensing home (15 mins)
 - Open discussion, questions and feedback
- 2.30 pm (approximately) Wānanga closing, karakia
- Afternoon tea

PhD title: Te karanga tūturu o Maieke: Ngāti Kuri women's taiao geographies

Aotearoa's te taiao are layered with political, colonial and gendered discourses of power which shape notions of 'conservation' and 'science'. The research, 'Te karanga tūturu o Maieke: Ngāti Kuri women's taiao geographies', is interested in examining the geographies of te taiao and Ngāti Kuri women. Ngāti Kuri lands, islands, waterways and coastlines hold unique ecosystems, some of which cannot be found elsewhere in Aotearoa nor the rest of the world. This draws a plethora of scientific research and conservation initiatives to Te Hiku o te Ika. Exploring the ways in which Ngāti Kuri women negotiate relationships within te taiao, iwi, scientific and conservation institutions makes space to critique colonial gendered power plays while giving voice to the women of Ngāti Kuri. Indigenous, and in particular Māori

women's, geographies have received very little academic attention in regard to conservation of te taiao. As a consequence, there is a gap in the way these spaces are negotiated, imagined and known.

In this research te taiao is considered as natural environments that hold not only unique ecosystems but also complex physical, metaphysical, cultural and political landscapes in which Māori women, iwi (tribe) and other institutions inform and negotiate science and conservation. Through a Ngāti Kuri women's lens the research examines how Indigenous women's identities and relationships are, at times, precast by colonial, political and masculine concepts. The research, then, explores the ways in which Māori women reconfigure colonial discourse and spaces through building on traditional and contemporary relationships, engagement and autonomy.

The research asks three questions:

1. In what ways do ancestral women influence the identities, taiao relationships, sense of belonging and autonomy of Ngāti Kuri women?
2. How and where are Ngāti Kuri women resisting and transforming colonial and patriarchal conservation knowledge?
3. How and in what ways are environmental tohu re-centering Ngāti Kuri women within tribal homelands?