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Fragmentation and Restoration:
generational legacies of
21st century
Māori

by
VINCENT A MALCOLM-BUCHANAN

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submitted to the University of Waikato
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- Abstract -

The content of this thesis is premised on a reflexive examination of some historical juxtapositions culminating in critical aspects of being Māori in the twenty first century and how such aspects have informed contemporary indigenous identity. That is, the continuing acknowledgement and exponential public recognition of critical concepts which inextricably link indigenous and civic identity.

The theoretical sources for this research are, in the main, derived from anthropological and religious studies, particularly on the significance of mythologies and oral histories, as well as from the oral theorising of elders in Aotearoa New Zealand. A very significant contribution from one such elder, a senior Māori woman academic, has been included in the form of the transcript of an interview. She herself had collected the views of a number of elders on myth, creating a rare and valuable resource. In the interview she married her reflections on these with her own experiences and her cogent analyses.

From the outset, it was necessary to be discerning so as to ensure the thesis workload was manageable and realistic. For this reason the selected critical aspects that have been used to frame this research are (1) a developing Western validation (that is, acknowledgement and respect) of Māori, Māori culture and their mythology; (2) oral history (genealogy) and traditions that have remained constant despite the influences of modernity; and (3) notions of fluidity, negotiation and pragmatism regarding kinship legacies and cultural heritage. The thesis is comprised of six chapters starting from a subjective narrative leading through increasingly objective discourses that culminate in a conclusion which supports a belief that modern Māori require a balancing of critical aspects of cultural heritage, with a broad understanding of the world of the 'other', in order to realise and develop their contemporary indigenous identity.

Ultimately, indigenous ideologies, practices and knowledge recorded and examined in the world of academia today, become potential resources for tomorrow. The intention of this research is to aggregate and discuss intrinsic aspects of the Māori past as well as developing aspects of the present, in order to better understand the significance of the future, and to add to the growing corpus of indigenous worldviews.

- Acknowledgements -

*Ko Matawhaura mē Tuwatawata ngā maunga
Ko Rotoiti mē Whirinaki öku moana
Ko Te Arawa mē Tuhoe öku iwi
Ko Ngāti Pīkiao mē Ngāti Whare öku hapū
Ko Uruika mē Waikotikoti öku marae*

If all that is earthly is contingent to a thought, then the gestation process of this thesis has perhaps spanned too many generations, minds and lives to acknowledge here. In so saying, during the course of my current academic career, my koroua, several kaumātua, and my precious mother departed the tribulations of this mortal fold, leaving legacies, oral histories and indelible memories; few which I discuss herein. It is because of them that I undertook this work, and to them, that I dedicate it.

My heartfelt gratitude must foremost go to my academic supervisor, mentor and dear friend Dr Wendy Cowling, without whose guidance and inspiration this thesis would never have reached fruition. Your professional counsel and pedagogic instruction acted to harness so many random whakaaro, refine them into a semblance of rationale and combine it all into what I only now realise is meant by the word 'thesis'.

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- He roimata ua, he roimata tangata –
Tears of rain, tears of men

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- Glossary -

Many Māori words are in common usage in New Zealand today. The following glossary is intended to supplement the text of the thesis where I have not provided in-text translations. I have chosen to utilise the macron (tohutō) to indicate the customary stressed vowel.

ao: world	kuia: female elder
aotearoa: land of the long white cloud	kupu: word
aroha: love, sympathise	kura: school
atua: god, deity	mana: integrity, prestige, charisma, standing
awhi: assist, help	māoritanga: Māori culture, Māori perspective
hapu: pregnancy	marae: meeting house complex
hapū: sub-tribe	mauri: life principle
harakeke: flax	mohio: to know, understand
he tangata: people	nō: from, of
hui: meeting, gathering	noa: free from tapu, not sacred
ihi: essential force, power	pā: stockaded village
iwi: tribe	paepae: carved threshold in the porch of the meeting house
kai: food, sustenance	Pākehā: non-Māori
kāinga: home, residence, village	pātaka: carved food storehouse
kaitiaki: guardian	patu: club
karakia: prayer, incantation	patupaiarehe: fairy, spirit person
kaumātua: respected elder	poroporoaki: farewell ceremony
kaupapa: strategy, theme	pounamu: jade, greenstone
kēhua: ghost, spectre	pōwhiri: welcome ceremony
kīngitanga: Māori King movement	rangatira: chief, dignitary
kōrero: talk	rohe: territory
koroua: male elder	rūnanga: assembly

Tā: Sir

taiaha: long hunting spear

tangata whenua: people of the land, natives

tangi: funeral ritual, cry

taonga: sacred treasure, item of importance

tapu: sacred, forbidden

tauihu: prow of canoe

te: the

te Tiriti o Waitangi: The Treaty of Waitangi

tikanga: cultural practices

wharenui: meeting house

whānau: family

whanaungatanga: relationship, kinship

whare kai: dining room

whare whakairo: carved/decorated meeting house

whenua: land

tohunga: ritual/spiritual specialist

tukutuku: woven panels in the meeting house

tūpuna: ancestors

turangawaewae: home ground, foundation, place to stand

waiata: song

wairua: spirit

whakaaro: thought

whakapapa: genealogy

waka: canoe, means of transport

whaikōrero: formal oratory, speech

whakairo: carve, embellish or decorate, arts of the meeting house

CHAPTER ONE

HE WHAKAATA - reflections -

If I want to 'test' the difference between the illiterate, a non-literate and a literate orientation to the world, I can do so either at the level of culture or at the level of the individual.

Goody 1987:251

Māori myths and traditions are logically arranged and related systems that fulfilled explanatory, integrating, validating, historic and socialisation functions for the people who owned them.

Walker cited in King 1992:182

Keywords: knowledge, transmission, storage, pre-literate, literate, oral society, Māori, Pākehā, education, enculturation, tale, story, narrative, pantheon, worldview, religion,, tradition, New Zealand Waitangi Tribunal, autochthonous, homogenous, whaikorero, whakapapa, indigenous, ideology, authority.

- 1.1** Introduction
- 1.2** Methodology
- 1.3** Reflexions: a collision of the encultured and the educational
- 1.4** Oral traditions as evidence

1.1 Introduction

World-wide the transmission and storage of knowledge is communicated informally and formally, in both private as well as public environments. While written texts in literate societies are essential and invaluable sources of information, many pre-literate societies relied on highly developed, and often specialised, oral communication systems which were augmented by a diverse array of performance and artistic expressions. Therefore in many indigenous societies, such as in the case of the New Zealand Māori, the shift from pre-literate to literate, considered perilous and undertaken with trepidation, came about following inevitable socio-cultural juxtapositions and subsequent fragmentations.

This thesis examines some aspects of the effects of what happened to Māori myths, genealogies and history which, as a rule, were maintained by oral means, even when Māori necessarily transitioned to literacy. In New Zealand, throughout the decades of the nineteenth century, especially following missionisation efforts from 1814 onwards, and into the twentieth century, contrasting knowledge systems operating mutually independent gave rise to widespread uncertainty for generations of Māori attempting to retain their worldview and also abide by the government controlled education system. The prevailing uncertainty subsequently led to older Māori kin-members maintaining specialised pre-literate forms of knowledge retention and transmission, while younger Māori, often at the urging of family, adopted the language and lifestyles of the West at the same time that increasing numbers of non-Māori demanded the primacy of their own forms of literacy and communication. Eventually families and tribes came to be divided into those who sought urban advantages framed within the modernising world and those who maintained their ancestral lands, locally-based connections, and indigenous worldview.

Ultimately, spatial and temporal influences led to fragmentations in the continuity of indigenous knowledge that had for centuries been

communicated from preceding to successive generations, previously localised but gradually becoming demographically and eventually socially distinct. As the majority of younger generations of Māori urbanised, the older and most proficient proponents of their indigenous knowledge, to varying degrees, often resisted relocating from their ancestral lands, where they maintained a rural lifestyle, and also refused to learn the English language. Many anticipated the opportunity to impart their knowledge to successive generations of descendants who for whatever reasons failed to cross the ever-widening divide.

Eventually, numerous new generation Māori spoke English exclusively, or variations of 'book' Māori (a term I was taught when learning my native tongue by means of the formal education system), others became utterly immersed in their urban and distinctly westernised lives, some allowed family rifts (often caused by cross-cultural or even cross-tribal marriages) to expand, while still others managed to bridge the divide successfully. Of those who were able to return to their ancestral holdings, not all were permitted to sit at the feet of their elders and undertake training which required significant time, personal acuity and an evident commitment for the interests of the whānau (family) and iwi (tribe). Even so, a wealth of myths, genealogies and life histories continued to be perpetuated in the tradition of the ancestors.

This thesis offers an examination of the developing ways and ability of Māori to be Māori on their own terms. This has been a process which has required socially internal and external flexibility, negotiation and pragmatism.

Chapter one is a reflective insight into being born of dual heritage and raised in a historical social climate which at first resisted the Māori worldview and its constituent characteristics until the political manifesto of biculturalism came to the fore by way of progressive forums such as the New Zealand Waitangi Tribunal. Chapter two is focussed on historical

transitions which facilitated the transformation of Māori from an ancient to a contemporary people. In chapter three I consider kinship factors, former systems of knowledge transmission, inherent generational continuity and subsequent juxtapositions and fragmentation during the transition from preliterate to literate. The discussion in chapter four is centred on the notion of myth as a universal codifier, while in chapter five I examine the theoretical development, in anthropology and history, of the validation of oral discourses and narratives.

It is my assertion that twenty first century Māori can and do aspire to civic positions of wealth, power and authority at both a local and global level. For the individual this often requires a balancing of the critical aspects of his/her cultural heritage with a broad understanding of the world of the 'other' in order to enter realms once closed to the majority of the members of even the most recent of preceding generations. We have successfully assimilated the western tools of education at the same time that we continue to increasingly return to former grassroots, ancestral lands and our indigenous language. However, the transition from being a formerly preliterate, autochthonous society to a modern literate indigenous society has taken in excess of a century, with significant impacts upon each generation concerned.

1.2 Methodology

In undertaking the research for this thesis I anticipated using three distinct methods of enquiry. The thesis was initiated by a culmination of personal notions of being Māori in the twenty first century which were premised on my developing concepts of bicultural heritage, urbanisation, and indigeneity. Being of dual heritage descent, from a kinship system in which my generation, and the immediately preceding generation, had personally experienced several of the processes discussed in this research, allowed me to be both the researcher and the key informant. I therefore chose to start with a brief reflexive examination which acts to ground the work in a firsthand experiential setting.

The personalised and subjective nature of the reflexive narrative, that grounded the research, subsequently motivated a necessity for achieving academic objectivity by which to frame the work. The second method therefore involved an in-depth, ethnographic research process, involving broad historical research into key critical aspects evident in the lives of former and contemporary Māori. From the outset, it was clear that it was necessary to be selective so as to ensure the thesis workload was manageable and realistic. For this reason the selected critical concepts that have been used to frame this research are (1) a developing Western validation (that is, acknowledgement and respect) of Māori, Māori culture and their mythology; (2) oral history (genealogy) and traditions that have remained constant despite the influences of modernity; and (3) notions of fluidity, negotiation and pragmatism regarding kinship legacies and cultural heritage. The theoretical influences are in main derived from anthropology and religious studies, each being dual-majors of my Bachelor's Degree, as well as from oral theorising of elders in Aotearoa New Zealand. Mythology acts as the principle theory prevalent throughout each of the critical concepts.

I had originally intended to conduct a number of interviews with a small group of elders and senior Māori academics. However, following the first interview I chose to shift from the initially proposed focus of the thesis and adopt a different approach realising that my original conception would be more suited to a doctoral study or a book. However, I felt it important to include the first and only interview as this presented a rare and outstanding example of the richness of material potentially available to myself or another future researcher. The participant, Dr Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, has agreed to being identified and it is with the utmost gratitude that I have incorporated the interview material.

1.3 Reflexions: a collision of the encultured and the educational

Growing up in the Pākehā (non-Māori) dominated 1970's urban consciousness of New Zealand, I was occasionally sent to sit amongst family elders in the confines of the marae so as to learn the teachings of tribal histories, cultural traditions and the axiomatic responsibilities. During those early years of childhood, I came to learn of particular family narratives, interspersed with stories learned during church-run Bible study classes, before eventually being introduced to sets of myths taught within the state education system. My maternal grandfather and my mother were each full blooded Māori. Both were versed in the limited bicultural fashion endemic to the early and mid twentieth century. As a direct consequence of their indigenous heritage and the communication by them of cross-cultural religious beliefs, namely Rātana and Catholic, I was taught to develop an enquiring mind framed within religious ideologies and linked to our indigenous history.

My grandfather Tutere Michael Hohepa (1929 -2006), Āpōtoro takiwa o te Hāhi Rātana (District Apostle of the Rātana Church), had a preference for the stories of miracles scattered throughout the narrative of the development of his faith. On my first childhood trip to the Rātana Pā in Wanganui he drew my attention to a



steel fence at the entrance of the Temepara Tapu (sacred temple) which enclosed a fruit tree that 'miraculously' grew two distinct fruits (oranges and lemons), or so I was led to believe. That night he led me to an open field where multitudes of people were gathered, awaiting the appearance of flickering coloured nightlights that seemed to dance in the distance. He proudly exclaimed that this was divine confirmation of the presence of heavenly angels at the Pā. The next night he had me sit in the front section of the māngai's home (meaning 'mouthpiece' and belonging to the church's founder) where a host of people were again gathered. We were

instructed to gaze constantly upon the smokey-white multi-shaded stained glass panel which adorned the front door. 'The faithful are able to see the image of the māngai sitting on his rocking chair tipping to and fro as though vigilantly watching over his flock in death' (Michael Tutere Hohepa, personal comment, 1977). These events remain indelible although confused, in my memory. I certainly exclaimed in my own excitement at the revelation of each event. But I also wondered, even at that young age, whether I was simply going along with my grandfather's determined perceptions. In so saying, and often in contrast to the Rātana doctrine, he resolutely ensured that I was instructed in the ways of the ancient Māori. He had asked my father to make sure that I was shown how to interpret the unique narratives concealed in the carvings of the wharehau and that my whaea (aunts) teach me how to decipher the meanings in the intricate patterns of the tukutuku (woven wall panels). Each of these processes reflected distinct aspects of our pre-colonial non-literate society. As in traditional society it was required that I learn the family's historical narratives regarding ancestral heroes; their exploits, successes, marriages and the names of their progeny.

However, many of the people who assisted my mahita (teachers) were unable to fluently converse in te reo Māori (the Māori language) for whatever reasons (such as fear, lack of knowledge, and illiteracy) and I suspect my grandfather was kept unaware of this fact. For this reason much of what I learnt was taught in English, and to this day I regret that was the case. My grandfather was a Church Minister, kaumatua (revered elder), marriage celebrant, inter-cultural orator, philosopher, evangelist and interpreter of mystic phenomena who told me that the Māori world had changed so drastically that he feared for the future of our people, unless we could safely navigate and bridge the cultural divide. He spoke despondently of that bygone era in which his grandparents had been raised and of how, within his own lifetime he had witnessed the dying of his culture and incremental social assimilation of our nation. In the indoctrinated belief that Māori could only survive by way of cultural

intermarriage, he had anticipated that my mother would marry a prosperous Pākehā, of the Rotorua District – an expectation which failed to eventuate.



My father, Te Heta Tamehana Ohlson (1942-1996), of Māori and Scandinavian descent, made no overt efforts to exercise his dual heritage, instead preferring to practice his uniquely Māori worldview of life. It was my father who first told me of the tale of *The White Lady*. After finishing their morning chores on their rural farmstead he and his brothers would begin their daily hour- and a-half trek through neighbouring homesteads and native forest to attend the nearest school. Along the way, and always at the same point in their journey, they would encounter a curious sight marked by a particular fence-line where the early morning mists lifted over the landscape. It was the image of a tall, pale woman, seemingly pōrangirangi (distraught) and making her way quickly across the fields. Since every effort they made to get her attention failed, and she never turned to acknowledge their presence, they innocently assumed she was a troubled and timid Pākehā who deliberately evaded contact and in time they came to call the mysterious figure 'the white lady'. They eventually made a game of trying to catch her up, but even if they were riding horses they could never reach her before the mists completely lifted and she simply vanished. On days when there was no mist, the white lady failed to appear, and in due course each of them came to the realisation that she was a kēhua (ghost), so they naturally heeded their elders' warnings to avoid any potentially fatal contact.

Another story my paternal family taught us was that of *The White Bull*. All children quite naturally dream and whilst growing up in a modern, urban indigenous family environment, we were often asked what we had dreamed of in order that our whaea or kuia (grandmother) could, if necessary, interpret the events. This was how we came to learn that my paternal grandmother was a descendant of matakite (seers), and was

herself, a renowned and highly skilled seer. At a very young age we were vigilantly instructed that, should we ever dream of a white bull, then we were to let someone in the family know immediately. As the lesson was taught, so we learned that the white bull was a family kaitiaki (guardian) and it appeared in dreams to forewarn of potentially impending doom or death within the family. As an adjunct to this story, I must say that we, the children of my generation, were also taught that the dreams of the white bull only came to the one child of each set of parents. I was subsequently the only one of my father's children who ever met the white bull in dreams.

Yet another tale was that which I shall call *The Hidden Prophecy*. My paternal koroua (ancestral grandfather) had, according to family history, built our papakainga (family homestead) and marae. This was a life-long effort requiring significant industry and expense on the part of the entire Ngāti Whare hapu (sub-tribe of Tūhoe - Children of the mist). At the time, Tūhoe were still recovering from numerous post-colonial impacts (such as introduced diseases, enforced loss of language, land and so forth) as well as traditional inter-tribal conflicts. This story speaks of a taonga (treasure), concealed by my koroua within the construction of the whareniui. According to the story, my koroua was also a tohunga (spiritual specialist) who had seen into the future and who had subsequently left a taonga which, when discovered by the rightful descendant, would prove invaluable in the survival and success of our lineage.

The last family story which I shall mention here is that of *My Grandmothers' Passing*. My paternal grandmother (1902 - 1967) had been betrothed at 15, to my grandfather who was only 13. In due course their union resulted in 21 children born at the papakainga in the very isolated mountains of the Urewera. The story of her death at the age of 65 apparently began with various phone calls to each of the surviving children, instructing them to return to where she was preparing to depart this world in order to join my grandfather in death. Apparently my

grandmother had undertaken this same task two years earlier in 1965, but had stopped the event with the announcement that she distinctly disapproved of the Pākehā lifestyle of her last-born child and she therefore chose to postpone her 'passing' until he had 'sorted himself out'. Dad recalled how in 1967 he had eventually arrived to find his brothers and sisters with their mother, all of whom appeared in good health and high spirits. My father, the second to last born child, had found himself bewildered by the boisterous gathering and had almost convinced himself that the supposed kaupapa (subject) for the assembly must have been wrongly communicated. However, as the sun sank and night began they were each called into their mother's room and asked to form a closed circle around her bed whilst karakia (prayer) began. She spoke to them of respect, honour, fidelity and love before informing them, almost casually (as my uncle recounts) that she had carried out her duty to the family and it was now time to join her beloved husband. With her children encircling her, the room lit by candlelight, and the soft sound of muffled sobbing, she closed her eyes and quite simply willed her body to pass over to the next life.

My father and his siblings had been born into a generation who had predominantly been forced to suppress their indigenous cultural knowledge, including the language, in preference for 'the western mechanistic system' (a term used by my father which I took to mean the domination of various introduced technologies). However, they had been raised, for the most part, in an isolated rural region in the uniquely indigenous environment of the Urewera Ranges. My paternal family had strategically adapted to the necessity of recognising the precepts of the Presbyterian Church, although they surreptitiously continued to acknowledge the Māori pantheon and worldview; a common practice prevalent to Māori families of this generation. In later life, my father would exclusively assert the validity of the Māori worldview.



Conversely, my mother, Cairo Makarena Te Wao Hohepa Ohlson (1941 – 2009) was raised in the more urban-influenced Te Arawa system (centred in Rotorua), and her father, although a devout Ratana minister, insisted she attend the best Catholic schools. However, my maternal family also continued to practice tikanga (protocol), kawa (etiquette), and the Māori worldview. Unsurprisingly, my siblings and I were exposed to a richly diverse and eclectic array of cultural, spiritual and religious ideologies. So it came to be that within the first decade of my life I had been introduced to an expansively diverse array of narratives by way of family members.

Then, for a few years before reaching an age when we could choose not to do so, we were required to attend Bible study. Dependent on where my grandfather's ministering required him to be, we were sent to classes in various formal Western churches. There we received religious instruction and of course became familiar with biblical stories such as *The Nativity of Jesus*, *The Fall of Man (Adam and Eve)*, *Noah and Moses*, to name but a few. These religious teachings were reinforced in our early childhood home setting by our grandfather who insisted on daily services, both morning and evening, as well as prayer before each meal. I fondly recall that in his sermons and prayers my grandfather emphasised the religious beliefs of the Ratana faith, and effortlessly did so in Māori.

The collection of narratives, those from the family, plus the Biblical stories, was further expanded, albeit confusingly, when we were eventually introduced to various sets of stories through the public schooling system. The *New Zealand School Journal* was an invaluable source of stories, folktales and myths for both Māori and Pākehā schoolchildren. In 2007 the Journal's centenary celebrated being 'the longest-running serial publication for children in the world' (<http://schooljournal100.learningmedia.co.NewZealand/>). It was through this particular source that I first learnt of the fantastic and numerous exploits of Maui, who had fished up the North

Island of New Zealand, captured the sun, had stolen fire for his people and attempted to attain immortality. I simultaneously encountered the renowned tales of the Brothers Grimm, Charles Dickens and Hans Christian Anderson to name but a few other writers deemed suitable for children.

Being so young, I was easily influenced by the multitude of ideologies which each of these varying narratives offered, although the odd juxtapositions certainly proved exigent later. The collection of family tales deemed miraculous (such as the hybrid fruit tree) are perhaps to a large degree explainable by means of reductionism. In so saying, I prefer to believe that my grandfather's tales of assumed miracles in fact reflected his fervent optimistic hope that one day his people, Māori, would find divine salvation and deliverance in a world which for him seemed to be wholly disregarding of the first people of the nation. Conversely, tales such as *The White Lady*, *The White Bull* and *The Hidden Prophecy* are clear examples of oral narratives intended to obviate the danger, duplicity and sacrifice which previous generations of Māori had experienced when dealing with their recently arrived and rapidly dominating Pākehā counterparts. The ancient traditional myths involving the Māori pantheon and legendary ancestors of modern Māori were taught to me as clear and distinct narratives which evidenced and affirmed the holistic presence and enduring status of Māori within the world at large. That is to say that the more recent traditional indigenous stories can be seen to echo a declining society's acute grief, pain and turmoil, all too common within colonised societies. The honouring and celebration of the ancient traditional mythical exploits of omnipresent deities such as Io, Papatuanuku and Rangi (Omnipotent God, Sky Father and Earth Mother) and legendary characters such as Kupe (proclaimed as the first Māori to arrive on the shores of Aotearoa - Land of the Long White Cloud) went 'underground' for a time.

Interestingly the three differing environments of home/marae, church/bible-study, and school, also demarcated by the variables of

family, religious tutors and school teachers, facilitated an overlapping yet divergent intercultural perspective regardless of, or perhaps even due in main part to, the incongruent aspects of each. I do recall asking why there were two all-powerful deities – Io and God – and being told by my grandfather they were essentially one in the same. In fact, as I now think about it, I realise that the home/marae and church/bible-study environments were quite complementary systems. Each involved narratives of the physical and the metaphysical, the sacred and the profane, of the interaction of divine entities, of genealogical hierarchies, ritual performance, worship and obeisance, traditions, etiquettes and protocols. In both systems I quickly learned of values such as respect, honour, humility and the deference to be offered to those of a higher authority – which pretty much meant everyone else who was older than I.

However, in my mind's eye the religious environment was never perfectly equal or parallel to the marae/home setting. The latter setting always facilitated a far more sociable, personal, interactive and nurturing sense of relationships, while the former offered a more impersonal, emotionally detached and culturally sterile experience. It also never failed to escape my attention that the biblical depictions were only ever representative of white men and white families. (It was many years later that I learnt of the celebrated Galilee Chapel Window at Saint Faiths Church, Ohinemutu, that portrays a Māori Christ in the korowai/cloak of a Chief, seemingly walking on the waters of Lake Rotorua). As a student I was an obedient youngster, determined to comply with every instruction given by my robust and compassionate, although authoritarian school teachers. In so saying, I only ever absorbed that information which fitted with my developing worldview and simply discarded the rest. In adulthood I have learned that such pragmatism is a notable trait of Māori. I do recall being very confused when a school teacher asked who had discovered New Zealand, to which my reply was Kupe, only to find the classroom break out in stifled sniggering. Or being asked what makes plants grow, to which my answer of Tāne Mahuta (Māori God of the forests), was similarly

met. I was quickly informed that New Zealand was discovered by a white man, two in fact, and that I needed to look up the meaning of photosynthesis. I was also instructed to leave 'Māori superstition' at home and that school was intended to benefit those who wanted a real education.

1.4 Oral traditions as evidence

Whilst the latter was occurring at a grassroots level, at a national level the New Zealand Waitangi Tribunal, formed in 1975, was developing its priorities as a commission of inquiry mandated with the task of inquiring into the vast numbers of complex disputes involving the Māori and the Crown. The Tribunal efficiently bridged the more obvious cultural divides of the two adversarial and aggrieved, factions. Invariably such disputes have pertained to perceived Crown violations of the historical Treaty of Waitangi, and the Tribunal is the formally acknowledged specialist agency sanctioned to scrutinize the claims of violation. From its inception as a quasi-judicial authority the members of the Tribunal realised that the necessary components of recognizable historical evidence did not entirely suffice for their mandate and as Grant Phillipson noted:

Historical evidence to the Waitangi Tribunal takes a variety of forms. In many cases it appears as professional reports, researched and written by historians. But this is only one type of evidence considered by the Tribunal. In addition, there are eyewitness accounts of historical events; visual demonstrations of places and their significance; oral traditions handed down on the marae or in the home; and ceremonial songs or orations that illustrate a context or create powerful moods or expressions. These different forms of evidence contribute to a complex, layered interpretation of historical claims... (cited in Hayward and Wheen 2004.)

Since its inception, the efficacy of the Tribunal can be seen with any cursory glance at settlements now successfully concluded involving several major iwi (tribes). The proficient bureaucratic capacity of the Tribunal is

reflected by the fact that it is today a core agency within a much larger overarching structure which includes formal representative bodies, the courts, various Ministers of the Crown, and the Office of Treaty Settlements. Once the Tribunal has reached its informed findings, settlement claims then become a matter for the governing authorities and the Office of Treaty Settlements undertakes to negotiate a settlement between the iwi concerned and the Crown. This formally legislated process thus empowers the Tribunal with the capacity to knowledgeably advise the governing authorities who administer the ongoing fiduciary responsibilities of the Crown and of Māori. For the purpose of this thesis it is notable that a prevalent Tribunal practice is to undertake all hearings within the precincts of mutually agreeable marae (meeting grounds), whareniui (meeting house) or parallel sacred Māori sites; a customary practice which of itself necessitates the enactment of whaikorero (formal oratory).

Autochthonous, pre-contact culturally homogenous society of Māori lived within a framework of stringent customary laws, rigorous ancestral and nature-based spiritual ideologies, impressive principles of communal reciprocity and holism, and highly developed skills involving the ability of meticulous memory retention. As an intrinsic element of powhiri (formal welcome) the ancient pre-contact art of whaikorero has remained in continuous use throughout the post-contact era and remains the principal salutation art-form by which tangata whenua (the people of the land) formally greet and welcome manuhiri (visitors) who necessarily reply in kind. In its most basic form whaikorero deploys the interwoven expressions of mihi (greetings), whakapapa (genealogy), karakia (prayer), take (purpose), waiata (song) and hongī (pressing of the nose/exchanging of breath). Within this rubric there is a broad facility for the expression of significant mythic deities, ancestors, events and declarations, and to the best of my knowledge I have never known of or borne witness to a whaikorero which has not partaken of the mythic aspect, in some form. However, the myths of pre-contact Māori were efficiently disavowed by the early missionaries, their governing authorities and the rapidly growing

colonial state. New Zealand history chronicles the insidious post-colonial attempts at social assimilation; previously extending so far as to suppress the ancient indigenous language and oppress the quickly declining native population.

As a post-colonial nation, the indigenous society of New Zealand succumbed to Eurocentric socio-cultural deconstruction and eventual contemporary reconstruction. Disavowed myths of indigenous origin were efficiently deconstructed, displaced, and disregarded as quaint stories for children. Today this intrinsic aspect of Māori oratory has come full circle; as indigenous people throughout the globe wield their language and myths as profound contemporary identity markers of their unique indigeneity. Within the developing rubric of modern indigenous parity, previously censured and rejected myths have been claimed as ideological and historical testaments substantiating tribal claims of autochthony. Eventual indigenous reclamation processes such as Waitangi Tribunal settlement claims have enabled the subsequent acceptance of legal title of ownership and rightful governance over land, language and culture.

It is now over two decades since Parliament gave the Waitangi Tribunal the power to review New Zealand's race relations history, allowing it to explore Māori claims against the Crown to with events that have taken place at any time since 1840. other similar societies created by the flood of colonists that poured out of Europe in the modern age of empires have also had legal bodies trying to resolve indigenous grievances by investigating and reinterpreting their national histories. In 1946, following widespread and valued participation in World War II, the United States established the Indian Claims Commission and began an examination lasting almost four decades into the way Native American land had been acquired for European settlement. In Australia, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's report on the 'stolen generations' in 1997 was a narrower but more controversial attempt by a commission of enquiry to retell the story of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders taken from their families to be assimilated into white Australian society. However, the Waitangi Tribunal's investigations are by far the most comprehensive and extensive review of any country's colonial legacy. (Belgrave 2005:1)

There has been a significant shift in relation to the indigenous ideologies and the myths and worldview of New Zealand Māori. Once ethnocentrically belittled, these narratives are increasingly acknowledged as pre-literate, oral templates of ancient knowledge and sacred authority. The ancient myths have returned to being intrinsic components of indigeneity and modern history.

CHAPTER TWO

AOTEAROA

- land of the long white cloud -

For thousands of years, the Pacific Ocean has been criss-crossed by the exploratory drives and competing aims of diverse peoples. On a global capitalist map of significance, Oceania's economic and politico-strategic value is derived from its between-Asia-and-America-ness... Amidst the high-powered Asia- America routes there are persistent circuits of production, exchange, consumption, and identification linking Pacific Islands together and to places beyond. Oceanian natives have been enigmatic figures in this traffic: not at all bound by isolation, smallness or poverty, they have at times unassumingly kept pace, most times trailed behind, but with surprising frequency outwitted – if not outstripped – their competitors in the race which has been modernity.

Teaiwa cited in Harvey 2005:15

Keywords: eponymous, stratified, independent, ranked, collective, migratory, Te Ao Māori, Pākehā, whare, kainga, fortified pā, marae, pre-contact, tribal, Aotearoa, collision,, marginalised, discriminated, dismantled, abandoned, New Zealand, coexisted, literacy, transitional, ethnocentrism, prohibited, post-colonialist, unified, illustrious, indigeneity, legacy.

- 2.1** Te Ao Māori
- 2.2** Contact and collision
- 2.3** Tā Apirana Ngata: realising the vision
- 2.4** At home in New Zealand: legacies and hope

Today, the mana, the prestigious name, and impressive life achievements of Sir Apirana Ngata (1874-1950) continue to be invoked by academics seeking to explore indigenous ideologies and concepts, particularly those focused on aspects involving the Māori. Seemingly everything he turned his hand to was subsequently advanced because of his exceptional industry. A one-time Parliamentary Minister, ethnologist, published academic, educator, distinguished elder Māori statesman, poet, philosopher and rare individual whose lifetime achievements undoubtedly elevated the social status of Māori. This chapter examines Ngata, the man, the myth and the transformation of the focus of Māori communities away from individual dwellings to the marae as the centre for the performance of rituals and as a constant for the affirmation of individual and corporate identity.

2.1 Te Ao Māori

The earliest and eponymous name of Aotearoa, meaning land of the long white cloud, was bestowed by Kuramārōtini, wife of Kupe, the legendary Māori explorer who according to myth and genealogy is reputed as having first discovered the land upon which Māori society arose. Te Ao Māori, the pre-contact Māori world, was a stratified, independent, hierarchically ranked, collective civilization combining distinct tribes who, although lacking pan-tribal unity, grew out of the same language base, ethnic heritage, belief systems, life principles, values, laws and culture; with regional variations. These communities were the descendants of previously Oceanic navigating people who had successfully settled Aotearoa centuries earlier. Each community ultimately developed a society in which the members were divided by rank but unified by land, language and various social mechanisms that facilitated inter-tribal alliances. In the latter aspects, they were not unlike the ancient Egyptian, Greek, or Roman civilisations in which population growth caused conflicts over diminishing resources and eventual competition for access to introduced resources. Pre-contact life was simple, less complicated and framed by a social

responsiveness to nature and its abundant bounty; an attitude which transformed with modernity.

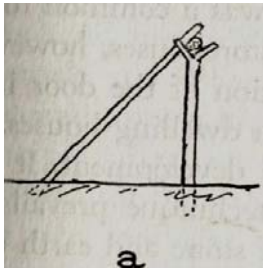


FIG 1: Buck's sketch impression of the lean-to frame used by earliest Māori (Buck 1950:115).

Temporary, lean-to shelters used by the earliest seasonally migratory Māori ceased to be used once geographic boundaries were established and changes in cultivation practices transformed the needs of the people. Unfortified kainga, with semi-permanent walled pit dwellings, eventually displaced lean-to shelters. Eventually, the unfortified kainga were transformed into fortified pā, but then the pā were

also transformed, either being abandoned or changing with the advent of the modern, communally focused marae complex. Unlike societies who divided the internal space of a structure to cater to different functions, Māori did not internally divide as such, but externally separated each distinct space according to functionality and custom. Buck (1950) describes this distinction as the underlying premise to the early and mistaken colonial notions which compared the single roofed function-specific whare to the entire multi-roomed, multi-functional European-style house. The whare were rudimentary eaved dwellings that ostensibly functioned as protection from the oftentimes harsh climactic conditions. Their relative permanency necessitated the building of a separate food storehouse and of a latrine area. The earliest permanent dwellings that housed individual whānau



FIG 2: This nineteenth century whare, made of loosely bound reeds with a sack cloth for a doorway, reflects the pragmatic old-time Māori also dressed in the same cloth. The kuia Mata Kukae, pictured here with her smoking pipe, was over 100 when this was taken and died within months (King 1992:92).

were low, rectangular, A frame sleeping houses with thatched grass walls and roof, sunken pit earth floors, and a single squat entrance flanked by an aperture that could serve as either a window or chimney. Best (cited by Buck 1950:115) documented two kuia in the Wairarapa living in just such a pit dwelling as late as 1849.



FIG 3:

Although difficult to discern, this is one of the earliest surviving photographs of an actual Māori settlement. Taken in 1859 by Bruno Hamel, it shows a collectivity of traditional nikau and raupo whare at Te Wairoa close to the famed Pink and White Terraces. This large and successful kainga, as with the Terraces, was entirely destroyed in the 1886 Mt Tarawera eruption (King 1992:52).

A more renowned surviving example, which was buried under volcanic ash during the Mount Tarawera eruption, can be found on display at the Tarawera Buried Village. Buck also reports that the materials used included “the leaves of the *nikau* palm [which] closely resemble coconut leaves and they were probably used for thatch during the early period of settlement. Their use was continued in temporary bush shelters and sometimes in lining cook houses...” (1950:118), as well as stripped boughs of totara and manuka trees, native grasses such as raupo, with flax, bark, and reeds all used to make cords and lashings, purlins and battens, ridgeposts and supporting poles, rafters, beams and so forth.

As kinship ties and communities of whānau grew so too did the need for larger whare, and of course collections of basic buildings for sleeping, storing food and latrine shelters. In due course these groupings became

tight-knit village settings, kainga, that could comprise anywhere from a handful to several hundred whare.

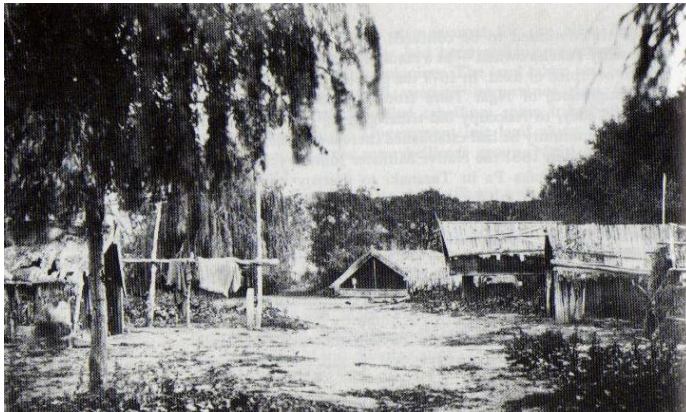


FIG 4: King suggests this photograph shows a kainga in Wanganui possibly impacted by the depopulation caused through introduced diseases. The raised pataka is clearly evident to the side of what King assumes to be the chief's whare. The bark strip roofs, particularly that on the left, indicates the desperate state of disrepair (King 1992:52).

The competitive nature of tribal co-existence of the early Māori also facilitated the advent of defensive fortified pā that ingeniously employed the likes of stockades and natural geographic features such as terraced hills, promontories and islands which acted to prevent unwelcome access. Their living conditions were simple and the common pit dwelling, raised (or embedded) food storehouses and separate latrines each remained evident in both the kainga and pā setting, and amply satisfied the immediate needs of the people. Significantly, it was a pre-European

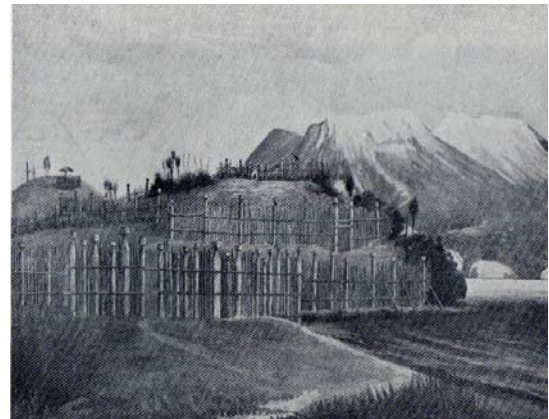


FIG 5:

These artist impressions (by J McDonald) were drawn from sketches taken by G F Angas who visited the Motu-o-Puhi pā site at Lake Roto-aira in the Taupo district in the 1850's. At the time that Best documented these sketches he conceded that Māori refuted the portrayed carved animal representations and uncommon mounds. Nonetheless they relate the layout and fortification skills of Māori (Best 1975:97 and 98).

feature to have both a smaller kainga settlement on a flatland area where cultivated crops were maintained, at the same time as having a nearby larger pā which served as the collective's defensive settlement.

During these changes in organisation Māori still maintained their long-established hierarchical system of stratification. The whare of chiefs and ritual specialists were distinguished from the whare of commoners by multiple symbolic and spatial mechanisms.



FIG 6: In his book *The Art of Māori Carving: Te Toi Whakairo*, Hirini Moko Mead identifies this artist's impression as one of a collection which arose during the middle of the nineteenth century. This particular image is identified as having been done during Dumont D'Urville's later voyages to New Zealand (Mead 1986:38).



FIG 7: This photograph, taken in the 1880's, is identified as part of a kainga with a fenced marae on Mayor Island in the Bay of Plenty. King stipulates that large marae and whare such as these became vogue as hui negotiations escalated, with the need for growing participants (King 1992:79).

Whether achieved or ascribed, a tribal chief was the quintessential archetype of mana for the entire community. Therefore a chief, as the collective's ultimate receptacle and conduit, was accorded differentiation by all manner of mechanisms including speaking and decision-making rights, control of food distribution, micro-managing the maintenance of all tribal resources as well as acceptance and command of all taonga. In the context of this social stratification and spatial division it is little wonder that the chief's whare eventually became distinguished as the decorated and carved house emerged.

Every aspect of life, and death, was perceived and conducted according to distinct customary laws of tapu and noa. In the case of Māori ritual specialists deemed inherently tapu due to the nature of their vocation, rudimentary dwellings were purposely kept discernibly separate, and literal physical contact was highly restricted. This spatial distinction also extended to food, which was hand-served yet void of physical contact by select servants with implements necessarily kept separate from the

community's; any inadvertent direct contact would result in ominous consequences, the ultimate being death. By contrast, a chief's whare was established as the singular spatially distinct site at which all formal meetings and ceremonial gatherings took place. The small eave of a chiefly whare would suffice intimate meetings. However, it was more often the marae atea, courtyard, in front of the chiefs house which was used; as was certainly the case when engaging with visitors.



FIG 8: An 1885 Burton Photograph that reflected the proficiency of Kingitanga Māori. Here is a excellent made, securely bound, raupo whare with flax roof. According to King, the standing is the Kawhia Chief Whitiara (King 1992:92).

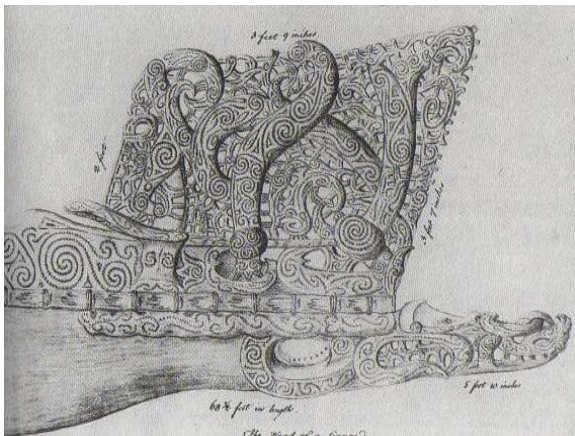


FIG 9: During Cook's voyages around New Zealand one of his artists, Sydney Parkinson, was known to have sketched various Māori artefacts. This sketch of a canoe prow is believed (at least by Mead) to have been by Parkinson, with its detailed and ornately carved designs. The sketch remains in the British Museum and Mead identifies it as that of a whaka measured by Cook and Banks, at Tolaga Bay in the eighteenth century (Mead

A stratified society who placed profound emphasis on genealogical knowledge and familial relations, their ocean-faring prehistory and ancestral legacy was particularly evident in the prestige and honour

accorded to the historicised carved whaka, which logically became a customary, prototypical tribal taonga. The mana and prestige of the unique carved whaka reflected their connection with mythologised Hawaiiiki, the eponymous homeland. The art of carving had clearly traversed the Pacific with those pioneering voyagers, and this highly valued vocation continued to develop as a distinctive tradition in Aotearoa. Māori habitation of Aotearoa was indubitably successful, to the extent that oceanic voyaging eventually



FIG 10: This tauihu (carved canoe prow) is thought to be mid 17th century. (Mead 1986:159)

slowed, as they determinedly established their culture on the newfound previously uninhabited land.

Thus whilst the art of carving developed, whaka technology became increasingly fixed, as the once revolutionary double-hulled canoe that had allowed them to traverse vast distances came into disuse. In time the historical and tribal prestige of unused discarded carved whaka was transposed, ultimately being applied to the carved house of those select high-born whose social status was further elevated with the accumulation of highly valued taonga. In his 2005 PhD thesis,

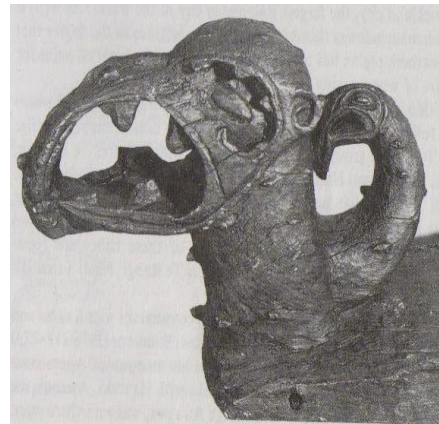


FIG 11: This tauihu (carved canoe prow) discovered at Doubtless Bay depicts the head of a taniwha and is, by Meads estimation, most likely from the early 1600's. It remains housed at Auckland Museum. (Mead 1986:36)

Damian (2007:89) "The whare whakairo was a result of specific changes in Māori society, religion, culture and politics in the nineteenth century. Whare whakairo replaced whaka as the focus and expression of hapū and iwi status, as access to European boat technologies became more common." In so saying, it should be noted that pre-contact Māori did not look upon taonga as exhibition or display art in the same fashion as their Pākehā counterparts. Instead, taonga were first and foremost functional



FIG 12: Mead suggests that this tiharu (water bailer) most likely dates to the eighteenth century. Its ornate carving depicts both the manaia and full face image. (Mead 1986:152)

apparatus that served the inherent pragmatism of Māori existence and often times reflected customary ideologies. Whether as a the prow of a whaka or even a water bailer, each taonga had a function. When the pragmatic utility of taonga, such as a cloak, weapon, whaka or

even whare, ceased, they were appropriately discarded or replaced; albeit at times with some ceremony.

2.2 Contact and Collision

It was inevitable that with the arrival of the European came the introduction of new technologies which would impact the customs of the ever pragmatic Māori, who easily adapted contemporary mechanisms that could develop their own traditional technologies. Though in so saying, it is doubtful they realised that such practical adaptations, albeit discriminate, would in conjunction with other social phenomenon, prefigure the downfall of Te Ao Māori. Aotearoa had encountered sporadic contact with European travellers in Southern Oceania in search of a safe haven for brief respites, but who then engaged in communication with members of some Māori settlements, with subsequent trading stations created at strategic shore locations. As the numbers of traders expanded in response to the possibilities and demands resulting from the increased contact, prescient Māori could foresee problems. By this time they had encountered Spanish, Dutch, French and English visitors in various uninvited interactions. It was therefore not surprising that, by the early 1800's, Māori began negotiations seeking protection both on the ocean and on land. They sought an alliance that they envisaged would safeguard and preserve the welfare and interests of the native chiefs and their indigenous peoples. This alliance was sealed in the eventual but still controversial treaty, signed in 1840 by numerous Māori chiefs. The Treaty of Waitangi was subsequently used to facilitate a tide of well-meaning missionaries, optimistic migrants and colonial military forces who opened the way for the British Government to displace and supplant Te Ao Māori, which rapidly became the British colony of New Zealand.

The inexorable collision, of the dominant colonial West and the pragmatic indigene, resulted in the devastating loss of lives which then led directly to the crucial impact and subsequent deterioration of traditional knowledge. At a political level, indigenous knowledge was displaced in preference for colonial, whilst at the grass-roots level, indigenous technologies were expanded upon by using various introduced technologies. The once strong

and autonomous Te Ao Māori diminished as the innovative, but fewer, counter-colonial New Zealand Māori emerged.

The Māori, not for want of trying and, as in the case of other dominated peoples such as the First Nation's North Americans, Australian Aborigine and Native Hawaiian, were forced to relinquish their indigenous language, customs and heritage and unwillingly accept the various colonial versions of assimilation (limited by racist concepts), or die. As many historians have pointed out in the mid 1800's it was assumed by the British, and by other foreign nations, that the Māori would eventually disappear. Their population had been drastically reduced, they had been disenfranchised from their lands, their language suppressed, pā dismantled, artworks destroyed or buried, marae undeveloped, primordial customs superseded,



FIG 13: Located on the banks of the Wanganui River, this nineteenth century village setting clearly shows the critical juxtaposition that Ngata would have encountered, with modern, sawn timber houses, as well as squat thatched whare; the whareniui is prominent with its large Marae. Best states that the hapu (Ngati Pamoana) had abandoned their cliff-side pā to located themselves in this flatland setting.

indigenous practices confined, myths and histories intellectually reconstructed and the survivors politically and economically marginalised and discriminated against. However, the abyss of diminishing hope in which native Māori were forced to exist was not the only obvious ending.

Steel and iron tools had replaced adze and bone; nails replaced sennit braid, lashings, wooden pins and battens; corrugated iron replaced the thatched roof, and so on. Physical aspects of the fortified pā necessarily continued to be transformed with the introduction of guns that replaced the traditional weaponry. With the subsequent and significant decrease of

the warrior and commoner classes, these communal settings became briefly spatially transfixed.

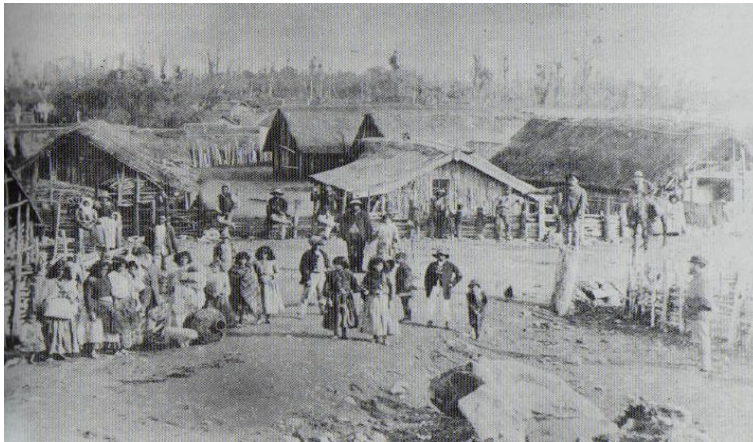


FIG 14: Notably the Taranaki settlement of Parihaka is perhaps one of the first that used gas and electric lighting, as seen in this 1885 image with a street lamp at the left above the roofs. The whare are thatched but are no longer the squat dwellings of yore, and as can be seen here, the European verandah began to appear (Mead 1986:159).

Many fortified pā were eventually dismantled, either by Pākehā during the devastating Māori land wars or by tribes, attempting to conceal their taonga and protect their way of life during the colonial incursion. Some kainga simply ceased to be used as their sustainability became impractical, and some Māori had abandoned their traditional system and adopted that of the colonial. In the wake of such events, once highly populated rural enclaves struggled to be maintained and, all too rapidly, the chiefly whare was displaced as the central sacred site for the people.



FIG 15: In this late nineteenth century photo of Whakarewarewa at Rotorua, King states "A juxtaposition of traditional Māori and conventional European housing..." Although the whare are no longer as squat as in previous times, they were still made of thatching with earth floors and particularly rudimentary in contrast to the modern housing also evident (King 1996:90)

By the mid nineteenth century, fragmented Māori had begun to unite under a common cause and subsequent escalating political and religious activity led to a growing need for more large formal venues of assembly

as well as accommodation. Skinner concurred with modern estimates of the early nineteenth century indigenous population of Aotearoa as ranging from 70,000 to 90,000 at the time of contact. These are particularly conservative figures when compared to much earlier estimates that the indigenous population exceeded 500,000 (McKinnon 2003: Plate 11). Numerical approximations aside, Māori, whose social infrastructures had for centuries maintained well-established and fully functioning autonomous communities, thereafter became susceptible to introduced diseases which their immune systems were unable to combat. As the numbers in the Māori population fell, the British incursions increased. The inevitable conflict for the control and management of land and natural resources led to widespread warfare and further decimation of the indigenous people. It was at this critical socio-cultural point in time, in which the occasional rudimentary pit dwelling, scattered kainga setting and shrinking but distinct pā communities coexisted simultaneously, that the nineteenth century communally focused, carved and/or decorated meeting house and familial Marae setting was created to supersede all previous indigenous settings. As Skinner and Grant explain:

It was once assumed that the whare whakairo pre-dated the contact between Māori and Europeans in the late eighteenth century. Discussing the arts that greeted Captain Cook and his crew when they first visited Aotearoa, Ta Apirana Ngata, for example, suggested that 'The carved war canoe, the fortified pā, and the carved and decorated houses of assembly were strikingly characteristic of New Zealand, as were most of the garments of the people, with their varied types and wide range of ornamentation.' This idea has been dispelled by historical research that suggests the whare whakairo emerged in the nineteenth century as a response to colonisation, and was not a traditional, pre-European structure that began to disintegrate under the pressure of European settlement. (2007:89)

This is not to say that the elaborate art of carving or the chiefly system did not exist prior to contact with the West. Just as in the case of the art of carving, the chiefly system had also traversed the Pacific and to this day each has, to varying degrees, been retained. However, it should be

noted that community housing systems had already incorporated the large wharepuni (sleeping house) that catered to manuhiri; as well as the increasingly distinguishable chiefly whare. The existence of the pit dwelling whare at the same time as collectivities of kainga, fortified pā and modern homes made of sawn timber, nails and so forth was prevalent throughout the country as Māori attempted to come to terms with their changing world.

By the end of the nineteenth century the epoch of the autonomous Te Ao Māori had diminished. The name of New Zealand, adopted from a Dutch explorer who had never walked the shores of this land, had been deployed as the newly-founded transitional British colony swiftly transformed into a semi-autonomous British Dominion. Māori did not suffer alone in this enforced transformation as the age of empires saw the powerful reach of Queen Victoria (as well as that of Republican France) extend throughout the Pacific. In this new colonial age, an understanding of the introduced religion and of literacy (in English) required that Māori thought, communication and activities had to either conform to or be superseded by the Western frame of thought. The Māori heritage of being self-sustaining peoples shifted dramatically as many were recruited as paid labour. This, in most cases, separated them from their native lands, further fragmenting the tribal and familial systems.

Arguably, the overall impact of the missionaries went some way to inspire the emergence of the large wharenui, wharekai and marae, although these can also be seen as a defiant indigenous political construct laden with underlying counter colonial purposes. The post-Treaty sharp increase in the European population contrasted with the acute decline of the indigenous population and the government push towards assimilation meant that surviving Māori were being continuously marginalised. With such a significant loss of lives within the warrior and commoner classes came the inevitable loss of traditional knowledge. The carvers, builders, artisans and performers had, like the language, been pushed to the brink

of becoming moribund. It was into this profoundly fragmented spatial and temporal juxtaposition that Ngata arose and developed, or rather standardised, what is so easily recognised as the modern marae.

2.3 Tā Apirana Ngata: realising the vision



FIG 16: Apirana Ngata as the first Māori graduate of a New Zealand University in 1894

Within his tribe, Apirana Ngata's long awaited and propitious birth in 1874 was seen as a portent by his parents who, up to that point, had feared being unable to have children of their own, until a prominent tohunga intervened (to his eventual detriment). Such serendipitous events foreshadowed a time during which Māori experienced continued social challenges which were, at last, counter-weighted by historical accomplishments amongst and for Māori people. In the 2001 biography *He Tipua: The Life and Times of Sir Apirana Ngata*, speaking of Ngata's genealogy Ranginui Walker traced his ancestry to Toi, one of the principal chief's of the canoes which are believed to have first brought the Māori to Aotearoa. He writes:

Notwithstanding the Ngati Awa claim that Toi was born in New Zealand, the possibility that he was a navigator who came to New Zealand contemporaneously with Kupe can not be ruled out, given the fact that Toi was also known in Rarotonga. Kupe is cited as the founding ancestor of the tribes on the West Coast of New Zealand, while Toi is cited as the ancestor of the East Coast tribes of the North Island. Toi's descendants, known as Te Tini-o-Toi, or Toi-kai-rakau, provided the base population of the present day Ngati Porou. The last wave of aristocratic migrants from Hawaiki – namely Whironui in the *Nukutere*, Pawa in the *Horouta* and Paikea, possibly in a vessel named *Tutepewarangi* or *Rereanini* commanded by his son Rongomaituahu – imposed their mana over the disparate tribes of Te Tini-o-Toi. (2001:34)

Walker speaks of numerous, subsequent and eminent progeny of the aforementioned ancestors. Though Ngata was not the child of first-born chiefs, he nonetheless belonged to a long lineage of distinguished leaders.

At the time of his birth Māori were being inextricably forced into almost totally accepting the over-arching authority of the colonial government. Assimilationist efforts were crushing the few remaining hopes of Māori autonomy. Consequently, Ngata's formative years occurred in a social landscape which reflected the poverty-stricken, lowly, fragile position of surviving Māori on their ever-diminishing native lands. Warfare, disease and numerous social conflicts had all but decimated the population. The subsequent impacts manifested on the indigenous people were already evident as the young Ngata was being prepared for adult life.

Today in New Zealand the concept of racial discrimination is deplored, to the extent of being legislatively prohibited. However, Ngata grew up at a time in which colonial ethnocentrism was pervasive and explicit. In so saying, and in counterpoint to such barriers, the geographic isolation, indigenous resilience and resolute conviction of his Ngati Porou elders, facilitated a very different outlook for a young man who would make history, not once, but numerous times. His koroua and kuia educated him in te reo, kawa, tikanga, mōteatea and waiata, regaling him with stories of familial triumphs, and sharing with him the exhilarating exploits of Māori deities, mythical figures and historical heroes. Such a rich cultural education and exclusively indigenous experience was rare and confined to Māori who were safely distanced from the colonial structures then being enforced across New Zealand. At the age of five, he watched the felling of manuka trees as the district's first Native School was erected in accordance with his illustrious koroua's (the aged Commander Rapata Wahawaha) encouragement. Neither Wahawaha nor Ngata's father Paratene had learned English, but both were staunch advocates of education, and they had determined that Apirana would learn the language of the Pākehā. where neither of them had. According to Ngata's own recollections, the stumps of those manuka were used to contain fires for cooking a lunch of potato and kumara; bread was uncommon and butter or jam a rare treat indeed. Their clothing was meagre, although their needs in this regard were modest. Riding wild horses bareback was

the usual alternative to walking. everywhere. His formative initial formal education would however be short lived in his home district of Waioamatatini. Aged nine the tender age of nine he was sent to the post-missionary, assimilationist, Anglican-influenced Te Aute College at Hawkes Bay, where he flourished and passed his matriculation examinations in 1890 before being recommended for a special university grant (Walker, 2001).

Having developed an uncommon ability to articulate his own understanding of the Māori worldview, as well as that of the British, he sought his elders' approval to enter University. Ngata undertook the two to three day journey home by train, steamer, bush-tramp then on horseback to Waioamatatini. For two years he sought to overcome the valid and earnest concerns of his elders, visiting relatives throughout Ngati Porou who would impart indigenous knowledge and teachings that strengthened all that his koroua, kuia and whānau could instruct him in. His tribal elders pacified, Ngata was freed from all whānau obligations to set off for the unfamiliar landscape of the South Island and Canterbury University. Ngata became the first Māori recipient of a University Degree in the Dominion of New Zealand, at a time when Māori were facing an uncertain future. In the eyes of the post-colonialist, his greatest drawback, of being born a heathen native, was overcome through Western-style education, Christian religious instruction and personal acuity. The ability and desire of Māori to be Māori on their own terms was, for the colonial administrators and for Pākehā in general, a ludicrous notion. National identity was, at that time in New Zealand, inextricably linked to the country's membership of the British Empire, with some acceptance of the effects over time of local environments and settler experiences. On occasion, the white 'colonials' were sympathetic towards the Māori in the abstract, while simultaneously celebrating their acquisition of Māori lands and resources. These were of course the very same lands and resources which were being increasingly disenfranchised from Māori. But then Māori

were a dying race, therefore the rapidly cultivated colonial identity, as settler, was presented to the world.

The influence of this constructed identity of the New Zealand settler and of their descendants became celebrated by local writers and artists and by the colonial government. This can be seen in formal government documents and the personal correspondence of the time, including that of British, including Irish, soldiers who had been imported to suppress Māori resistance. Almost immediately, or so it must surely have seemed to Māori, the colonial interloper assumed and promulgated the national identity of intrepid settler; male and female, effectively transforming themselves from enemy to inhabitant. The initial dispossession of Māori may have been arguably unintentional, but the process became sanctioned as the national identity was transformed. Douglas Sinclair in his article "Land Since The Treaty", and republished in the 1992 compilation *Te Ao Hurihuri: Aspects of Māoritanga* (edited by Michael King) asserted:

When the first New Zealand Company Settlers arrived at Port Nicholson in 1840 they were a chosen band of men and women, well equipped and fully prepared to face the challenge of life in an alien but bountiful homeland. They were determined to succeed, but confident that the culture, institutions, and power of the British Empire must prevail over Māori adversaries. They were determined to gain control of land, ruthless in their dealings with those who opposed them, critical of those who were not for them, and quite ready to set aside their allegiance to the Crown, if by doing so they would be better able to get on with the business of better colonisation and settlement of the vast spaces that awaited them. Most important of all, they were well led.

The orchestrated construction of New Zealand settler history was literally manufactured by deconstructing, reconstructing, and at times even erasing the earlier indigenous history of Māori. As a consequence, the settler's so-called 'civilised' and ethnocentric views of the ignoble 'savage', 'heathen', uncivilised (even 'Stone Age') Māori, was the constructed social milieu with which the adult Ngata had to contend at the turning of the

twentieth century. Walker (2001) movingly describes the wretched community systems and failing infrastructures that Ngata came upon as he travelled in rural New Zealand, most often on horseback, experiencing first-hand his people living at all levels of subsistent existence; with occasional exceptions. Iwi remained disconsolate at the phenomenal loss of lives. The vast land confiscations contributed to an increasing inability to remain self-sustaining. Economic resources were minimal and many Māori were working on farms for Pākehā. There were also many Māori communities which were overtaken by the creation of cities such as Auckland and Wellington. Introduced government-enforced laws over-complicated their independent efforts to improve themselves. There were the all too common smoke filled, insect-ridden, poorly, thatched pit dwellings which he found particularly uncomfortable and distressing. When he came upon kainga and pā, they were often in desperate disrepair with few remaining carved tupuna whare, made from rudimentary materials; contrasted by the equally rudimentary wharepuni, wharenuī and marae. King describes such conditions:

In most districts traditional building materials – raupo, muka, punga, earth sods, bark, nikau – continued to be used into the 1880's. Houses were likely to have wooden frames, usually of manuka, and wall material of reed or wood packed against them. Sod walls remained in favour in some South Island communities at this time – partly because wood was not always available and partly because they gave more adequate insulation from the colder climate. Roofs were thatched with reed, nikau or tussock, or they were covered with bark. Such structures were still visible in the early years of the twentieth century; although by then such use was in noticeable decline. Generally, as pit-saw timber and corrugated iron became available in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Māori were quick to make use of them where they could afford the. House styles changed in the process. (1996:75)

The revitalisation of Māori was the driving force of Ngata's life. He initially set about arranging the refurbishing of existing wharenuī, beginning with his own ancestral house, Porourangi, which in 1909 he re-opened in the presence of elite New Zealand Government officials the highest being the

Governor-General. Walker comments: "Having the head of state attend was central to Ngata's strategy for promoting cultural survival. Patronage from the highest office-holder in the land, besides giving respectability to Māori culture, brought Pākehā into contact with the finer elements of that culture" (2001:213). It was a strategy that succeeded as Government and public support grew and slowly an array of resources became available.

2.4 At home in New Zealand: legacies and hope

Ngata's resolute perception of a singular, unified rubric of Māori symbols was premised on a complex objective to counter dominant post-colonial indifference and enmity. Emphasising the significance of the prestigious *whare whakairo*, Ngata proffered invaluable and sought-after assistance with what became an upgrading and refurbishing revolution of existing *whareniui* throughout the nation. Such was the success of his endeavours that he marshalled political and grass-roots forces towards the goal of establishing what in September 1926, by act of Parliament, became known as the Rotorua School of Māori Arts and Crafts which formally opened eight months later. This singular pivotal institute was the initial agency by which the restructuring of Māori identity markers would enter the modern age at all levels of society. For Māori, Ngata's intent was to immediately encourage new crafts workers in the diminishing traditional arts of carving and weaving. Thereafter he was determined that the acquisition of these skills would be returned to the people by way of newly developing *marae*. This would revitalise traditional art and increase employment opportunities. Ngata was simultaneously determined to promote indigenous art as valuable forms of memorabilia which could be sold to the increasing numbers of tourists. The School sold carved work to the travellers who passed through Rotorua, even then renowned for its geothermal landmarks and retention of the Māori culture. Consequently, due in main to Ngata, there had arisen a deliberately encouraged genre of carving styles by which a growing number of carvers abided, inadvertently bringing about what would in time become a national mode. As Skinner

states, "What was for Ngata a strategic means of creating a pan-tribal identity started to become a convention" (Grant and Skinner, 2007:91). The perceived ignoble savage had, in the eyes of the colonial, begun to transform into the noble savage. Ngata was using his formidable accomplishments and rapidly growing prominent social position as an impressive vehicle to counter widespread ethnocentrism, thereby reinforcing the growing notion of Māori as a deserving, valuable, unique and constituent component of New Zealand society. With his dispersed people obviously needing authoritative representation under the auspices of a redefining western frame, Ngata skilfully presented a combination of tangible symbols with cultural narratives, as unique and inherent elements of indigenous identity. With the popular, widespread colonial view of Māori as a dying race Ngata, and his few Māori contemporaries, appealed to the growing government sentiment for the need of funding required to address the widespread evident social inequities. Simultaneously, he determinedly directed all available resources to the rejuvenation of the Māori identity at various grassroots levels. Ngata acted as both the colonial-sponsored conduit as well as the indigenous archetype and administrator, often having to mediate, micro-manage and, at times, coerce individuals within both sectors. He was ardently committed to upholding a policy of a Māori-Crown alliance at the same time as unabashedly seeking to improve every disparate social condition of Māori. At the time, the majority of Māori were still scattered throughout New Zealand in rural tribal enclaves and had already undergone various social transformations that would continue. Throughout his entire life, Ngata remained determined in his pursuit of improving the lives of all Māori. He wasn't faultless, some Māori critics, members of his generation and the preceding, were known to admonish him for a candour and passion which tended to circumvent the authority of chiefs and later in life he was publicly accused of being a mono-culturist and anti-Pākehā.

The passing of this illustrious elder Statesman in 1950 marked a definitive distinction between the classical and contemporary Māori eras, heralded

by the deep feelings of grief and loss felt throughout Aotearoa by its peoples at a tangi, the scale and scope of which till then had surpassed living memory. In their December 1950 and March 1951 issues, the presiding body of the Polynesian Society sanctioned the publishing of several commemorative acknowledgements dedicated to the Journal's former President. A private journal entry, written in Māori by his distinguished father Paratene Ngata (an acknowledged Ngati Porou leader in his own right) and translated into English, spoke of the prophetic nature of Apirana's conception. Pages of poignant reflections and statements were then brought together in a memorial booklet published by the Society. There were sincere reflections by notable contemporaries such as the equally esteemed Te Rangi Hiroa (Sir Peter Buck) who wrote of their final farewell:

He was standing on the steps of his plane with a smile on his face as he waved. I waved and smiled back, and we both stood perfectly still for a moment as we gazed across the intervening space at each other. It was a look which carried a message of the love and affection which had existed between us for over fifty years of unclouded friendship. Then Apirana turned to enter his plane and I went inside to await mine. We had had our last look. (68)

The Rt. Hon. Mr. S. G. Holland, Prime Minister, in his legislators' tribute said:

New Zealand has lost one of her greatest sons, and today members of this House mourn his passing. It will fall to the lot of future historians to record the outstanding part that the late Sir Apirana Ngata played in the conduct of this countries affairs. As a statesman, as a patriot, as a scholar, as an author, as an administrator, and as a churchman, he was outstanding in each and all of those fields (46)

The Right Hon. Mr. Peter Fraser, who had been Prime Minister from 1940 to 1949, had forged strong links with Māori. He had played a significant role in the passing of the Māori Social and Economic Advancement Act designed to assist Māori to cope with the problem of poverty and to deal

with urbanisation issues. It was at Fraser's urging that in 1947 the Department of Māori Social and Economic Advancement became the successful Department of Māori Affairs. In his legislators' tribute he said:

I rise with deep regret, sorrow, and sympathy... It is quite true to say that he has passed away full of days and honours, but still the wonder is there that one man could have accomplished and discharged all those multifarious duties... The thought that has occurred to me that never before has this House honoured one who has gone ahead of us who has been so full of great and varied achievements in so many fields... (48)

Fraser, who passed away within months of delivering these words, was well remembered in Māori history for his cultural sympathies and compassion.

During my childhood, decades after his passing, I encountered differing and at times conflicting social perceptions of Sir Apirana Ngata. His illustrious name was raised at the papakainga because of his revolutionary adaptations to the design of wharenuī, wharekai and the subsequent modernisation of the marae complex entire. Ngata had also vigorously introduced innovative farming practices of which family members, who managed and worked the agricultural tribal-holdings, tended to be either ambivalent or disparaging. Similarly Ngata's reputation was profusely evident in the contemporary waiata and haka which he had composed and that we had learnt as teenagers performing in the commercial kapahaka groups that featured throughout the hotels, cultural and geothermal attractions of Rotorua. The successful architectural, agricultural and cultural enterprises that he initiated in Horohoro and Rotorua had left indelible impressions, for better or worse, upon the memories of the confederated tribes of Te Arawa. However, it was ultimately the brilliant combination of Ngata's successful political, economic and cultural industry that forged a formidable foundation for inter-cultural relations which, for the first time, allowed a nation's divided populace to literally walk on common ground; namely, the marae.

Walker in his article "Marae: A Place To Stand", republished in the previously mentioned 1992 compilation *Te Ao Hurihuri: Aspects of Māoritanga* writes:

The marae is the focal point of Māori culture and community activities... Despite the corrosive effect of missionaries on the culture of Māori society in New Zealand and the assimilationist policies of successive governors, the marae as an institution has persisted into the modern era. When Ngata became Minister of Māori Affairs he revived interest in the almost moribund art of carving by establishing the school of carving at Rotorua in 1928. In cooperation with the Waikato leader Te Puea, Ngata launched the cultural renaissance of the Māori at the opening of the meeting house Mahinarangi at Turangawaewae Marae the following year. Over 6,000 people from all tribes attended the opening. The name Turangawaewae symbolised the footstool of the King movement and a place to stand for all Māori... Thereafter, tribes around the country began building carved houses or refurbished old ones. Ngata's name is connected with a number of modern meeting houses, including the Treaty Memorial House at Waitangi, Tamatekapua at Rotorua, Wahiao at Whakarewarewa, Tukaki at Te Kaha and the carved memorial church at Tikitiki ... (15-20)

Māori had been given a focus thanks to the influence and labours of Ngata and his contemporaries. He had not only given over his entire life to the advancement of Māori, but the legacy from his generation meant future Māori could now enter the realms of politics, academia, economics and so forth as never before, with their heads held high. When we consider inherent aspects of indigeneity today, Ngata is arguably the last of a bygone generation whose hard fought legacy enabled Māori to be just that, Māori. Equally as significantly, Māori could be Māori on their own terms, and grounds, not Pākehā.

CHAPTER THREE

HE KŌRERŌ WHAKAHEKE - intergenerational aspects -

In slightly over two centuries Māoris have ceased to be members of locally organized chieftainships, becoming instead members of a complex western democracy... Two hundred years after the arrival of Captain Cook, a legacy of suspicion and distrust inheres in relations between Māori and European... In the twentieth century, Māoris are a minority whose place in the larger New Zealand social context has been subject to almost constant redefinition... Occupationally, Māoris are in less skilled, less secure and lower paying jobs.. Lower standards of education, lower income and underemployment, poor housing and health, and high crime rates all interact with and reinforce one another, making it unlikely that the situation will improve much in the next generation. Inevitably there has been a rupture between those who have turned to the city and those left behind in the relatively underdeveloped rural hinterland.

(Sinclair cited in Counts, 2004:29-31)

Keywords: kinship, whānau, hapū, iwi, patrilineal, biological, divided, diffused, generational, continuity, knowledge transfer, enculturation, oral, principal indigenous culture, Aotearoa, discontinuity, juxtaposition, fragmentation, social organisation, stratification, nation-building, modernity, urbanisation, removed, depopulating rural, burgeoning urban, diminishing cultural knowledge, integrate, marae, cultural renaissance, memories, literary resources, Māori intellectuals, fixing-up.

- 3.1** Kinship
- 3.2** Generational continuity and knowledge transfer
- 3.3** Generational discontinuity: juxtapositions and fragmentation
- 3.4** Cultural memory and a rare exception

Generational continuity in oral societies is critical for the transference and maintenance of crucial indigenous knowledge. Formerly an oral society with a rich literary corpus including chants, songs, oral histories, rituals and genealogies taught by elders, the Māori of the twenty first century have had to adapt to multiple variables which fragmented this continuity, directly impacting their kinship system, culture and traditions. The baby-boom generation which resulted in a significant population growth, has to date continued to affect all of New Zealand society, in particular the superannuation and welfare systems. The brain-drain phenomenon which has seen vast numbers of Māori and other New Zealand'ers relocate to foreign shores such as Australia and England also impacted our society. Some of these phenomena are examined here, in particular, the intergenerational variables. The consequent transformations caused by the external factors and the socio-cultural adaptations required to enable Māori to maintain their indigenous identity because of the challenges posed to the critical cultural principle of knowledge transfer will also be discussed.

3.1 Kinship

From birth, every active and productive individual in a society, by some means, learns to communicate and interact in order to survive. How we do so is defined by sets of pre-figured rules and practices, many of which are framed within a rubric relating to social identity, both of the self and of others. Our social identity is learned during enculturation and is premised on a foundation of kinship connections, not exclusively based on biological ties, which immediately connects us to a set of family members. Our understanding of our 'place', both social and familial, is communicated through various forms of knowledge transfer, formal and informal. As infants, wholly dependent on a nurturing familial environment, our identity is framed according to predetermined social recognition of kinship ties. We are, essentially, a blank page in a book of life and our immediate kin will

determine the initial context (and content) of our existence. Parents or guardians act as the primary conduit, the first generation of authors through which our ascribed identity, and consequently some reproduction of their own, is superimposed within a given social environment. As we develop and mature our individual and familial status, as well as those of others, may change and frequently transforms.

Kinship is significant in anthropological study because it is a universal phenomenon. It connotes specific basic human attachments practiced by all people, and it reflects the way in which societies give meaning and ascribe importance to human interactions. The kinship system is the initial means by which our existence is recognised and communicated. It is this same universal phenomenon through which we in time communicate our own maturing individual identity and subsequent transforming social status, Peoples and Bailey write:

Because the way various relatives are lumped together into labelled categories does not perfectly reflect the degree of genetic relatedness between them, anthropologists commonly say that kinship terminologies are culturally constructed. The cultural construction of kinship implies two things: (1) as children grow up in a certain community, they socially learn the logic by which their culture classifies "relatives" into categories, and (2) those categories do not simply reflect biological/genetic relationships. (2006:185)

The critical study of kinship emerged from research of Native American peoples carried out by the nineteenth century American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-1881). He named the multiple varying kinship systems after the peoples he had investigated, first the Native American tribes, the Iroquois and Seneca Native America, and many other groups in comparative studies. The results were published in his highly descriptive and successful works *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family* published in 1871, and *Ancient Society* which followed in 1877. In the latter, Morgan's complex classifications and contentious theories incorporate particularly evolutionist notions; that the human family and

intrinsic mating systems developed from fixed and successive phases of promiscuity, group marriage, polygamy, and monogamy.

We have been accustomed to regard the monogamian family as the form which has always existed; but interrupted in exceptional areas by the patriarchal. Instead of this, the idea of the family has been a growth through successive stages of development, the monogamian being the last in its series of forms. It will be my object to show that it was preceded by more ancient forms which prevailed universally throughout the period of savagery, through the Older and into the Middle Period of barbarism; and that neither the monogamian nor the patriarchal can be traced back of the Later Period of barbarism. They were essentially modern. Moreover, they were impossible in ancient society, until an anterior experience under earlier forms in every race of mankind had prepared the way for their introduction. (Morgan [1878] 1985:383)

The link between a mother and her progeny, found in all societies, and which anchors all manner of additional consanguine and affine family members was central to his findings. The ensuing principle of descent (biological or otherwise) is in this manner used to systematically connect each member and each generation; a system which also ultimately determines specific rights and obligations across generations. Descent groups can be variously traced, for example; unilineal descent is through either the male (patrilineal) or the female (matrilineal) parent; bilateral descent is through both parents, producing a centralised kindred feature; and cognatic descent has overlapping membership and acknowledges relatives of both parents with slight formal distinction between each. The kinship terms people use to classify and identify their relatives have numerous practical applications and the familial relationships particular to a society often establishes the allocation of resources and rights, as well as their subsequent transmission (knowledge transfer) from one generation to the next. Kinship roles are gendered, with reciprocal terms and behavioural correlates, and our kinship ideology is directly influenced by our external social environment. It follows that there are generational

obligations with embedded social expectations, such as the inheritance of property and succession to offices and titles.

As Buck discusses in *The Coming of the Māori* (1950), the traditional kinship system of the patrilineal Māori is rooted in a biological nucleus of the whānau; a word which originally meant "to give birth" and became a term to denote the primary familial core of parents and progeny. Increasing nuclei of whānau, related biologically, then came to be referred to by the word hapū, derived from the word hapu which meant 'pregnancy'. When used with a macron, hapū came to denote a common familial connection among growing and expanding numbers of whānau. In time hapū themselves increased, divided and diffused. However, hapū could and often would, unite when it was advantageous to do so. On such occasions the word iwi (bone) was used to reinforce appropriate blood ties which could be ultimately traced back to common ancestry. At the outermost reach of the Māori kinship system are specifically related iwi, collectivities of hapū, whose descent could be traced back to the waka (canoe) upon which their eponymous ancestors arrived. Today these Māori terms have come to be more commonly known by their English correlates: the family (whānau), sub-tribe (hapū), tribe (iwi) and canoe (waka). To use Morgan's elaborate classificatory schema; at a grassroots level Māori typify the Eskimo kinship system prevalent in western post-industrial societies, with its dual-tiered nuclear core consisting of the mother, father and child(ren), which by definition comprises two generations.

3.2 Generational continuity and knowledge transfer

From birth, various roles are prescribed for each individual and during enculturation the process of knowledge transfer allows for instruction of each prescribed designation and the subsequent conditional roles, familial expectations and social obligations. During our life-cycle we increasingly

maintain a balancing act which illustrates our multiple and simultaneous relationships according to specific ascriptions of each generation. We are a child of our parents at the same time as being a sibling, a grandchild, a cousin and so forth. Each role is generationally specific, rarely allowing for any intergenerational cross-overs. For example, whilst we are simultaneously a child of our parents and a grandchild to our grandparents, we are not a parent to our grandparent or a grandchild to our parents.

To my mind, there are, in their most basic forms, five traditional generational classifications of kinship by which Māori inter-relate. Generations A and B comprise the family nucleus. Generation A are comprised of our parents, their siblings and their cousins (our aunts and uncles). In the first ascendant generation A1, we find our grandparents, their siblings, as well as their cousins (our koroua and kuia), whilst in the second ascendant generation A2 we find our tūpuna (ancestors) who are numerous and deceased. The first descendant generation B, comprises ego (ourselves), our siblings, and our parent's sibling's children (our cousins). Our own children are in the second descendant generation, B1, along with our sibling's children and our cousin's children. See the following graph for diagrammatic clarification:

TABLE 1: Generational Classifications

Generation A2: Ancestors (our tūpuna)
Generation A1: Grandparents, their siblings and (by extension) their cousins (our koroua and kuia)
Generation A: Parents, their siblings and (by extension) their cousins (our whaea and matuakēkē)
Generation B: Ego, their siblings and ego's parent's sibling's children (our cousins)
Generation B1: Ego's children, their sibling's children and (by extension) their cousin's children (ngā tamariki)

While Morgan's Eskimo kinship system does not allow for an interchange of designations within a given generation, Māori in fact commonly

interchange both designations and roles, revealing a historically reminiscent social context more aligned with Morgan's classification of the Hawaiian kinship system. Uncles and aunts may, without social repercussions, assume the roles of parents (and in their absence may even adopt the designation); great-uncles and aunts may assume the roles of grandparents; cousins may assume the roles of siblings and similarly nieces and nephews may commonly be referred to as our children. Within a given generation we may assume each of these roles and designations according to whosoever we are in the company of. However, while overlapping as such, designations accorded within each generation remain fixed. In the realm of the home Māori most commonly use one or other designation. However, at a family gathering we will commonly refer to multiple and overlapping designations throughout the generational spectrum, fixed designations which are not interchangeable between the generations. It was by means of this simple and effective generational taxonomy that Māori, as an oral society, developed and perpetuated very efficient methods of knowledge transfer.

Each new generation was educated in all the necessary life-skills by their predecessors; with a few individuals chosen to specialise in the more select arts and traditions. All were expected to develop their unique tribal knowledge of protocols, etiquette, an understanding of the sacred and the profane, child-bearing and rearing, clothes-making, hunting, food gathering – in other words every aspect of life as Māori understood this. By means of their holistic kinship system, when an individual was taught a skill, they were also, in time, charged with the responsibility of imparting that skill. When deemed ready, the student sought the teacher and in time became the teacher themselves. Mothers passed their knowledge to daughters, who then transferred this same knowledge to their own daughters and so on. Likewise fathers taught sons and so forth.

Such an uncomplicated system of knowledge transfer also meant that only those appropriately knowledgeable could impart such skills, ensuring a

consistent calibre of practice and conduct. Where a parent might be untrained in a particular skill, it would be taught by a whaea or matuakēkē, or even a kuia or koroua. Those individuals who realised a potentiality in the select arts such as carving, spiritual teachings, or healing would require appropriate specialist training, sometimes only available beyond the immediate family's skill base. Nonetheless, these individuals would predominately be trained by practising kin members, although in many such cases this required a young person to spend years living away from their immediate whānau, and to reside in the kāinga of their extended whānau members. In this social context it is logical that generational designations and roles interchanged with aunts and uncles, or grandparents and so forth as they assumed a parental role for whānau members in their charge.

The holistic Māori worldview was securely maintained because the core contributing members, at each generational level, were trained by the preceding generation who then appropriately trained those who followed in their stead. Every required aspect of knowledge resource was made available either within the whānau or hapū; with rare assistance sought throughout iwi members. More formalised training environments also existed in the form of iwi-based whare wananga (houses of learning), although initially these catered to the elite and warrior classes. Nevertheless, if a member of the common class was recognised as gifted in an art, they were not denied access. Skilled Māori were, and remain, disciplined taskmasters. This generationally-based, tight-knit, self-contained, system of knowledge transfer encapsulated the students, their teachers, wider social commentators and where required, community mediators. Therefore the indigenous kinship system acted as a nurturing and instructional location complete with its own audience. Such a successfully functioning tradition of knowledge transfer remained unobstructed for centuries as whānau, hapū and iwi maintained the dissemination of their unique knowledge. With the arrival of non-Māori however, came the conflicting mechanisms of another civilisation which

would forever change the lives of generations of Māori, and in time non-Māori alike.

3.3 Generational discontinuity: juxtapositions and fragmentation

As the principal indigenous culture of Aotearoa, Māori came face to face with an entirely alien and domineering society who had arrived with their own (initially veiled) manifesto of entrenchment and with their particular concepts of what comprised “civilisation”, including social organisation. Consequently, two distinct and opposing social systems began to briefly operate simultaneously. However, whenever a dominant society prohibits and prejudices the means by which the members of another society communicate and express their unique identity, then adaptation or annihilation are the two most likely outcomes. Each group already possessed histories of being a governing principal culture. In the case of New Zealand, these two distinct societies were initially opposing forces which, in refusing to operate side-by-side, ultimately arrived at an impasse. Out of the initial impasse a hard-fought two-fold history arose.

All was not lost, although it must surely have appeared so for the elders and descendants of the particular Māori generations during that time. While the nineteenth century notion of the death of the Māori was certainly entertained and propagated by non-Māori, rapid social adaptation meant an alternative situation developed, although most were ill-prepared for the resultant and on-going situation. With the British-dominated colonial expansion of New Zealand society came the clash of social ideologies. As we understand it today, the migrant representatives of western civilisation employed all manner of means, ruthless as well as empathetic, to prevail over their indigenous counterparts. Under the guise of civility and religiosity Māori were forced to assimilate a foreign, complex and radically different worldview. There were numerous contributing factors which led to generational discontinuity as Māori knowledge

became increasingly fragmented throughout generations of iwi. Some of these factors will be discussed elsewhere in the course of this thesis.

The original Māori system of stratification was displaced by the transposed class system with its alien mechanisms of colonial governance. As Māori laws were banished in preference for the imperial rules, Māori specialists, *tohunga*, were by law prohibited from teaching their ancient knowledge. The capitalist economic system, and introduced taxation regulations meant that if Māori were to survive they had little choice but to increasingly engage in employment in foreign business enterprises and become part of the new cash-based trade and exchange system. Involvement in such activities ultimately removed men, then women, from the havens of their former, self-sustaining and wholly indigenous environments. The new education system that would in time become mandatory, introduced exclusively western principles to new generations of Māori; as did the teachings of the warmly embraced religious institutions. The rise of the New Zealand colonialist simultaneously bought about the fall of the pre-contact indigene. In the face of the effect of European-formulated nineteenth century nation-building, assimilation became the only alternative. Māori responded by assuming the very means of their colonially perceived social inadequacies; namely the British version of principles and codes of conduct, language, lore and law, religions, means of livelihood, and so forth.

It would be accurate to say that Māori initially only dipped their toes in the sea of western ideologies. In fact Māori practised biculturalism long before the concept was employed as a political ideology in the late twentieth century. However, in due course Māori came to be totally immersed. As increasing numbers necessarily etched out western, individualised identities, they still persistently preserved their collective uniqueness as an indigenous people. Outwardly they had to learn, adopt and exemplify the foreign attributes of the colonial population and, at the same time, determinedly and oftentimes surreptitiously, retain their own history,

cultural principles, practices and worldview. For the best part of a century, Māori traversed from a precipice of being potentially moribund to building a platform of social equality; but of course let it not be said that their journey was ever without prejudice, grief or considerable personal cost.

With the increasing effects of modernity, new generations of bicultural Māori sought knowledge, commodities and economic advantages only obtainable by western means. In doing this they thereby excluded the opportunity for preceding generations to transfer indigenous knowledge; ancient wisdom which seemingly failed to meet contemporary needs. Introduced textiles became fashionable and the earlier dexterous skills of working with native fibres came to be less sought after. Indigenous horticultural and harvesting practices came to be discarded as self-sustaining environments became ever more depopulated in preference to living in the new and burgeoning townships. As the government-controlled Native School program grew, compulsory scholastic education in the English language was legislated. Thus arose one of the most damaging of the juxtapositions of the two opposing principal cultures. The result for the countless Māori children who lived through this era was their literally being forced to exclusively speak English in the school environment. At the same time many Māori rebelled and commanded their children speak only their native tongue in the kāinga, bringing home the clash of the cultures as a harsh reality for this and forthcoming bicultural generations. Then railway and roading projects throughout the country offered work, as well as an eventual ease of access to the expanding townships. This in turn led to an ensuing departure from rural enclaves which encapsulated their former ancient ways of life. The unrelenting great migration of rural Māori seeking better opportunities for employment, education, as well as modern living standards, subsequently divided whānau, hapū and iwi throughout the nation. Many older Māori and few families remained on their tribal holdings, particularly in the isolated Tuhoe Urewera Ranges and far north remote Nga Puhī lands, as increasing demographic shifts led

directly to a generational breakdown in knowledge transfer that would continue during the century of the advent of Urban Māori.

The urbanisation of Māori was fraught with its own particular complexities, perhaps more so because Māori had to seek out the mechanisms of urbanisation long before modernity had arrived in the rural districts. The subsequent development and management of an urban lifestyle involved finding paid employment, establishing residence in the townships and acquiring all manner of useful, fashionable appurtenances such as a means of transport, a refrigerator, a stove, and later a washing machine, telephone, television, and so forth. The rurally located Māori way of life was taking second place to the modern urbanised New Zealand way of life and, as young Māori continued to relocate, they were unable to adequately transpose their own cultural ideologies, philosophies and heritage. In the fullness of time, urbanised Māori became distinct in many ways, from their outnumbered and progressively disadvantaged rural whānau. The whānau-based, generational knowledge transfer system became superseded by modern ideologies involving social agendas that gave little or no consideration to cultural factors. Regardless whether they were rural dwellers or not, Māori would continue to struggle with the sometimes tragic consequences relating to their marginalisation, their experiences of institutional racism and pervasive discrimination.

Most frequently it was generation B and sometimes eventually generation A, who moved to the townships. Generation A1 predominantly and understandably chose to remain in their traditional homesteads to live out the entirety of their lives. Attached to their ancestral lands and history but detached from their descendant generations, they were unable or averse to crossing the early bicultural divide which seemed to emphasise what must surely have seemed a critical cultural breach. In the absence of their descendant kin, significant cultural knowledge was unable to be appropriately transferred. Generational continuity, which had underpinned their knowledge transfer system, was now becoming fragmented at its

very core. By relocating to urban centres, generations of Māori had of course become physically removed from the singular centralised social and cultural context which maintained the continuity of their language, traditions, ideologies and worldview. Although physical distance had become a significant barrier, there were also multiple socio-cultural issues which mired the development of Māori. Budding urban centres which had appeared attractive - with apparently great promises of modern experiences - not only separated them from their cultural roots and histories, but from the world as they comprehended it. In the absence of their former worldview, Māori began to substitute alternative practices; in the process, becoming vastly changed and culturally wanting. Urbanisation also facilitated an unprecedented accessibility to alcohol, drugs, future welfare dependency and a social environment that tolerated opportunities for unfettered cohabitation. Māori were now engaging in alternative behaviour far removed from that of their predecessors whose social environments had been less liberal, less complex and less demanding. Failing a comprehensive understanding of their former kinship ideologies, and in the absence of tribal elders who acted as both the receptacles of knowledge and cultural guardians, inter-tribal as well as cross-cultural coupling arose at a scale previously unseen amongst Māori. This gave rise to vast numbers of new, inter-tribal and cross-cultural marriages or relationships, and to the birth of the new generations. As time passed, and the physical separation grew pronounced, the fragmenting generational continuity became evermore evident in both the depopulating rural as well as the burgeoning urban locations.

3.4 Cultural memory and a rare exception

From the mid-twentieth century onward Māori and Pākehā, who had forged new and powerful bonds in the tumultuous wake of two World wars, came to work and live together with a newfound mutual respect. Their children came to be schooled together, played sports together,

worked together and often eventually married; inextricably constituting a post WWII generation that would become known as the baby-boomers. In the 1995 Statistics New Zealand text *New Zealand Now: Baby Boomers* it is asserted that by the end of the baby-boom a 77% rise in births had occurred; that is a population increase of 1.125 million births from 1946 to 1965. This is understandable when we consider such social phenomenon as the large numbers of our young male population, who had just returned from long periods of being abroad fighting in the interests of the British Empire. Furthermore, the subsequent labour force shortages opened the way for the entry of new migrant populations. In addition, people were marrying earlier and with an increased frequency. There was an emphasis by government agencies and others on the advantage of larger families as a social and demographic asset for the nation. Such anomalies were advantageous to the Māori population whose urban residences established a central point from which to facilitate their whole-hearted participation.

Unsurprisingly there arose a considerable increase of Urban Māori, and in time notions of cultural disenfranchisement developed as the growing bicultural population came to realise the extent to which Māori had become disconnected from their indigenous heritage. Efforts to introduce what had become realised as diminishing cultural knowledge was all the more significant as generations of baby-boomers modernized the socio-cultural foundation of New Zealand society. In her article *Koro and Kuia: Aging and Gender Among the Māori of New Zealand*, Karen Sinclair writes:

In slightly over two centuries Māoris have ceased to be members of locally organized chieftainships, becoming instead members of a complex western democracy... As Europeans inexorably took over New Zealand land and imposed their own institutions, Māoris responded with armed combat, religious iconoclasm, appeals to the judiciary and to the Crown, and recently with organized political protest. Two hundred years after the arrival of Captain Cook, a legacy of suspicion and distrust inheres in relations between Māori and European... In the twentieth century, Māoris are a minority whose place in the

larger New Zealand social context has been subject to almost constant redefinition... Māori and European segments of society are far from integrated... Occupationally, Māoris are in less skilled, less secure and lower paying jobs. There is a consistently lower standard of living for Māoris: they suffer from greater susceptibility to disease, a lower life expectancy, and a higher rate of infant mortality... Lower standards of education, lower income and underemployment, poor housing and health, and high crime rates all interact with and reinforce one another, making it unlikely that the situation will improve much in the next generation. Inevitably there has been a rupture between those who have turned to the city and those left behind in the relatively underdeveloped rural hinterland.

(Cited in Counts, 2004:29-31)

The 'rupture' which Sinclair speaks of, and which I refer to as the fragmentation of generational continuity, is no doubt a by-product of New Zealand's colonial past as well as the concomitant government emphasis, and misguided efforts, of social assimilation.

Modernity aside, upon realising the extent of the discontinuity, Māori sought to integrate, into their modern lifestyles, opportunities and means by which to revitalise their cultural heritage; calling on their familial and kindred networks for support.

In a fully integrated society, a person is like a fly caught in many intersecting webs. Potential webs include kin from nuclear and extended families, the friends and neighbours of your residential community, the cronies and clubmates of your leisure communities, and the school and workmates of your occupational community.

Belich 196:411)

This was of course what Ngata and his contemporaries had laid the foundations of and initiated in the first half of the century, as I discuss in the previous chapter. Collective knowledge, and resources combined as Māori began to mobilise in the manner of a single pan-tribal unified force asserting the rights, privileges and identity of Māori in the modern world.

Although they had become detached from their rural whānau, they had nonetheless maintained crucial contact and vice-versa. Whānau, hapu and iwi gatherings, whether at tangi, weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, even kapahaka competitions and suchlike, became focal points for open discussions regarding unity under the rubric of their unique indigenous identity. Whole villages and entire tribes were rallied, elders were called upon to come forth at a public level, former grievances between iwi were put aside or forestalled, and Māori engaged with each other in nationwide hui to (1) discern the extent of the fragmentation, (2) consider means by which to bring back critical aspects of their former identities, and (3) put into operation the means of restoring their language.

So unfolded the closing decades of what is often referred to as the cultural renaissance. This was the time when Māori drew on the lived memories of remaining elders whose predecessors had been largely unaffected by modernity, as well as their myths, family histories and the collective knowledge of their oral heritages.

The three decades from 1961 to 1991 saw an extraordinary Māori cultural renaissance. Relatively few people were involved in fostering the renaissance but it influenced almost all sectors of New Zealand society. Māori radio stations were established. Māori television developed and new forms of Māori dance, theatre, music and literature appeared. In the economic sphere, Māori owned assets increased substantially, especially through agreements with the government and the settlement of some key Treaty claims towards the end of the period. Māori economic management in turn began to be transformed. Political action focused both on local land alienation issues, many of long standing, and on wider questions of Māori self-determination and sovereignty.. (McKinnon 2003: Plate 99)

The time period McKinnon refers to is the same period during which I grew up and innocently observed firsthand the familial concerns and cultural anomalies that had begun to appear on Marae. This was the singular universal setting at which rural and urban Māori effortlessly merged. Often one would hear the informal terms 'the farmers' or 'cow-

cocky's' or 'the country bumpkins' which denoted rural whānau, versus 'the townies' which denoted urban whānau. Each of the terms were freely bandied in friendly open exchanges as we learnt to distinguish our commonalities and differences. The elders however insisted on reinforcing the familial kinship based commonalities regardless that, as we grew older, the differences between the country bumpkins and townies would become pronounced. More often than not, it was the country bumpkins who effortlessly broke into te reo Māori, and even when townies, such as myself, spoke, we were often looked upon with curiosity and disdain. Townies tended to learn 'book Māori' at school as a secondary language, whereas our rural cousins most often learnt, and spoke, our native tongue as a first language. At kapahaka competitions, where we performed united, the country bumpkins would more often than not win the formal speech sections. Fortunately, in the fullness of time, many townies were able to return to their ancestral environments and learn at the feet of their elders.

The essence of community apprenticeship was young people learning by participating, by becoming carriers of wood, by chopping the wood and by setting up the hangi. As you grew older you moved on to being in charge of the butchers, the hangi men and the people who gathered the food. You went through all these processes. Then you were allowed to go and listen to elders speaking on the marae and in the meeting houses. So you progressed by observing and becoming involved in all the activities of the marae. That traditionally was the way a young man fitted into place as the elders died off.

Rangihau cited in King 2006:183

To compound the issue, elders across entire generations and throughout the nation were naturally dying, and in many cases indigenous knowledge that had failed to be transferred subsequently died with them. For my Ngāti Pīkiao hapū, the necessary transference of this knowledge was quickly realised; but only after various elders had already passed on. Many senior whānau made conscientious efforts to relax the generational and cultural constraints involved in the ancient tradition of imparting the knowledge.

My koroua began writing material, though only in classic te reo, and he slowly began teaching mōteatea and familial histories to those family members prepared and interested, regardless of their age, gender, stage of life or social standing (or lack thereof). Admittedly I witnessed him struggle with these issues; he had after all been taught by traditional methods that were strictly oral (no writing, no reading) within the confines of the wharenuī, at distinct times of the day and at specific stages of life, uninterrupted, and never alongside female counterparts. Regrettably, he could not bring himself to similarly teach the ancient arts of formal speech or indigenous rituals which he had learnt. Regrettably he, like so many tūpuna, did not (could not) impart those ancient skills more widely before his death. During the so called cultural renaissance, few Māori had, at various levels and with varying consequences, conscientiously sought out the cultural knowledge and memories of living elders. For a multitude of reasons such efforts were infrequent, and rarely did surviving elders allow their teachings to be recorded or documented in any form.

A rare exception

Authentic literary resources dating from the nineteenth and early twentieth century written by Māori, about Māori and for Māori are, in my experience as a fledgling academic, limited. This is in part due to the fact that the first Māori academics did not emerge until the early twentieth century, and they have since been, in my estimations, too few and far between. Māori elders were traditionally reticent about whom they chose to impart ancient knowledge and wisdom, and for whatever reasons, their select recipients were rarely academics permitted to record or document such knowledge. Nonetheless, there exists today a limited corpus of material that is being increasingly added to by a growing number of Māori intellectuals, authors and elders alike. The following transcript presents a rare and outstanding example of the richness of material potentially available to myself or another future researcher. The participant, Dr

Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, has agreed to being identified and it is with the utmost gratitude that I have incorporated the interview material. Dr Te Awekotuku is of Te Arawa, Tuhoe and Waikato descent, whose remarkable and diverse life history is occasionally revealed in her dialogue. She is a well published academic, and a lecturer of high-standing at the University of Waikato.

In transposing the transcript from a recording of a one-on-one oral dialogue I have learnt the complexities and potential problems involved in shifting a verbal exchange into written form. For this reason I have chosen to include my personal impressions which I recorded within twenty four hours of the interview. I have deliberately refined the transcript, removing non-essential pauses, verbal exclamations and minimal intermittent dialogue which was unnecessary when written. Of course I have retained the actual recordings and full unadulterated transcript for academic reasons and as a personal resource. There were also several Māori words and phrases which I did not translate here, but rather the full translations can be found in the glossary.

Slightly flustered having returned from a consultation with another academic in the same office block, Ngahuia was warmly wrapped in a hip-length black woollen jumper and jeans. Always convivial, she acknowledged me then warmly ushered me into the inviting surrounds of her private academic space. The office was large, well furnished and everything appeared to have its appointed place, giving the room a semblance of being simultaneously immaculate and peaceful; perhaps like the meticulous occupant herself. Ngahuia is astoundingly impressive, with an abundantly natural gift for articulation, oratory and expression. Previously I have been surprisingly impressed by her insightful perceptions, arguable insights and undoubted passion for her work. The finesse with which she speaks today enhances her words and her ideas

are subsequently all the more convincing. Her smile, facial expressions, gentle tones, lilting eyes and skilled body language all reveal a woman who was surely comfortable in her own skin – and appropriately so. We each quickly settled into a mutual ease and engaged in a process of familiarisation. She spoke of her early training in the arts and hopes of becoming an actress (at the Little Theatre in Rotorua) and of her unexpected invitation into doctoral studies at the University of Auckland. Not having originally planned to become a scholar, she pondered that she now found herself in an academic situation, regardless that she had succeeded. Allowing her to speak openly of our whanaunga connection, she revealed her looming 61st. Speaking of her childhood she divulged aspects of her whakapapa. Her mother was from 'the house on the hill at Tikitere' and directly descended from Pikiāo – a mutual hapū connection. However, she was a whangai, into Ohinemutu. Ngahuia also mentioned how during the late part of the twentieth century she had begun to record and document select dialogues with elders; an enviable and atypical cultural resource indeed.

Interviewee: I grew up in a household with story-tellers in Ohinemutu, on the Lake [Rotorua], and I was adopted by a family of weavers and guides and exceptional people. Hera Rogers was my kuia and Te Awhi Rogers was my koro and in many ways a lot of me comes from those two. Ahakoa he whangai ahau, toku whānau ake na Ngati Pikiāo na Ngai Tuhoē me Whakaue Rangiteaorere Ngati Mahuta. So I'm a real karangamaha, real mix, big mix. I grew up primarily as a child of Ohinemutu and as a little girl in the period so many decades ago, when we were told very clearly and firmly this is your place and so for me the stories and the myths reinforce that, this is your place. Within Ohinemutu my kuia Hera was a really successful guide and an absolutely stunning story teller and a weaver of not just magical tales but of significant taonga. She made the cloak for Queen Elizabeth in 1953, she made the korowai. She did the tukutuku in Saint Mary's Church on the coast at Tikitiki, on the pulpit there and around

the alter and she also worked extensively in other churches around the motu, including Saint Faiths and her piupiu were remarkable and I was very lucky growing up with them. She was also a film star and her moment of glamour was in 1914, in a full length feature film, directed by George Ta called Hinemoa. This is really quite a mad history...

Hinemoa and Tutanekai were part of my life as a little girl growing up. The other one was Kurungaituku the bird-woman. I questioned those stories. I questioned them. I took them apart, I couldn't figure out why Kurungaituku died and fell into a ngāwha and died, if she was a bird with wings. Like I couldn't figure that out, cos it didn't make sense. So contrary to, I suppose, the premise that you're positing, I didn't accept myth from a very early age. I questioned them. And maybe it was something in me, but it was like no, if she had wings she wouldn't have fallen in the ngāwha. So that was Kurungaituku who was a big part of my childhood; it just didn't seem right, it felt wrong, it felt wrong, because for me she was a heroine, she was wonderful. She had pet birds. All the.. ngārara and kararehe and manu loved her, so why was she evil, why did she have to get killed? Why is the fella that abused her, stole her taonga, did all these ghastly things to her, Hatupatu, why was he the hero. Something wrong; yeah this is me at nine years old you know, six years old, thirteen you know, and I just couldn't accept that, I was a heretic from early childhood. Anyway, so, the other story was Hinemoa. And as an Arawa girl you were told to be demure, and to know your place, and to be sweet, and passive and lovable and feminine and constantly relate to the opposite sex in a certain way. You waited, you waited for the men to take the initiative. You waited for the men to show you the way. You waited for the men to make the decisions. Well then, I said to my kuia, how come Hinemoa's the one that swam the lake and put her life in danger. Why did she chase him? Why, because he was interested in somebody else. Did he really want her? was she that desperate? If she was so beautiful, and everybody goes on and on about how beautiful Hinemoa was, then she could have anybody, anybody. Why did she hit on someone that didn't want her? Because if he wanted her, he would have swum to her, that was my logic. So why on earth would she,

you know, what the hell was going on if this puhi virgin princess, gorgeous, glamorous, irresistible, female [would] go out of the way, put her life at risk, jump into the water in the middle of the night, swim across the lake, and do all this stuff to get this guy? It just didn't seem like a very good story at all. Well my grandmother, my mother, all the ladies singing Kahore he wahine hei rite, you know the Hinemoa poi, and on and on we go, and the tableau's that we all did at the concerts and that whole scene reinforced, again and again that he was an artistic flute player who lured her across the water and she swam to him in her passion. But then you know the story gets a bit strange because she gets to the island and he's not that interested. He's not around, and she, and this intrigued me, she dresses up and she makes up she's a guy, and she bashes up his friend, and she smashes the calabashes, and she says to Tiki 'tell him I want him down here'. Now what sort of butch girl is that? You know, look what sort of female does that?. And I thought Hinemoa, we are ripping you off, you are being portrayed as something other than what you are. Of course my aunties and my mum and my kuia, anybody, thought there she goes again, there's that girl, there's something wrong with her.

Anyway I got to Auckland University and I discovered the Grey collections in the Auckland Library, Auckland Public Library. And the Grey collections are the writings of Wiremu Maihi Te Rangi Kāheke, which you must know, we've got a whole set here at Waikato. And these stories became the basis of Grey's Polynesian Mythology and that whole series of legends, myths, anecdotes, pakiwaitara that we've inherited today. Well the original scribe was Wiremu Te Rangi Kāheke and Grey actually took all of the material that the koroua had written for him, the koroua was commissioned by Grey, which is another story. Those original pages are there for us to read as descendants. So I've checked up the original story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai, and here we go, I'll just read a bit from here and you can get it.

In many of the carved meeting houses of my community Hinemoa is one of the few women represented visually. I noted this as a child. I wondered,

who was she? What was she really like? Got to University, I was determined to read the original Te Rangi Kāheke manuscript about that story.. and I wept over what I discovered. Tutanekai enjoyed a particular relationship with a special male friend, his quote 'hoa takataapui' translated by Williams as an intimate companion of the same sex. We have reclaimed the word. The Te Rangi Kāheke version of the story, though recorded by a missionary educated elder of noble birth, raises many questions about sex, relationships, and the nature of desire in the pre-contact Māori world. And I felt as if I had found the Hinemoa who had been waiting for me on an island, in my own lesbian consciousness and across the dangerous waters of the lake. I had to swim to find her. So in the story that I wrote, because I re-wrote the story, and this is the story here. I took Te Rangi Kāheke's version, Tutanekai was in love with Tiki! They were an item.

Hinemoa in my story is like that too. What she see's in him, because there's pressure on her as a puhi to make a correct and a politically useful arrangement, there's pressure on her. She takes one look at this, obviously desirable, creative chap, and thinks he'll do! That's the one, he's got a boyfriend. Because when they were at Owhata, he and Tiki were together. When she first saw him, he was with his partner. And she thought right, that's why she took the initiative. She got to Mokoia, she became a man, and that's in Rangi Kāheke's story if you read the Māori version. Now what the hell's happened? The myth has been twisted, we the descendants have been given this romance of Hinemoa and its very straight. Tiki, ends up in some space that really is very sad. But actually, in the final pages of the story of Te Rangi Kāheke's version, Tiki actually says to his father, oh where is it, oh I think its in here oh I cant find it! But he says to his father, ae.. kei te aroha tonu ahau ki te oku hoa takataapui ki a Tiki, and then he suggests to his father why don't we give him my sister? or why cant we find someone for him? But their relationship remained pretty staunch. You know those are two examples of, well Hinemoa and Tutanekai is one example. The other is Kurungaituku whom I mentioned earlier... Hinemoa was aware, she was brilliant, she was

politically astute, but she knew her desire. What is interesting is that after the birth of Ariari Te Rangi, after the, I think it was first male child came out, the marriage collapsed. The political alliance was still there with Umu Kāria and with Whakaue.

What's interesting you see in that story as well, is that Tutanekai was the son of Tuwharetoa – not the son of Whakaue kai papa. Rangiuru, the mother of Tutanekai, was confident enough and interesting enough to take lovers of her own. So she had it off, with Tuwharetoa, when he was visiting Mokoia, they got on together, her and this guy from Taupo and then hello, you know, ka hoki mai a mea a Whakaue kaupapa ko hapu a Rangiuru, ko puta mai tenei tamaiti e tane. And the tohunga who was helping her give birth kept reciting the whakapapa of Whakaue and of course the process became more and more complicated cos it was the wrong whakapapa and of course Rangiuru was just probably so guilty and confused, or something, and so she sort of muttered, or somehow exclaimed that actually the father was Tuwharetoa, and so he started that one and out popped the baby. So we know that Tutanekai was definitely the lovechild. Now even though he was the lovechild, of Rangiuru, he became the tamaiti piripoho, the favourite, baby of Whakaue. When you look at all the Ngati Whakaue whakapapa you've got Tutanekai as his son, and yet we know that he wasn't. So its very interesting, you're not just looking at issues of takataapuitanga and of a wilful young woman swimming in the middle of the night, grabbing the guy that she thinks will do. But you're, and you know protecting, and cross-dressing and changing her sex for a few hours to get his attention, but you've also got the absolutely transgressive, supposedly, you've got the interesting behaviour, maybe it wasn't transgressive, but you've got the interesting behaviour of the hero's mother, of Tutanekai's mother, having it off and being confident and canny enough to follow her own desires. Arawa women of a certain class and breeding are constantly told that is not to happen to them. So in that story you've got all these [factors] and that's just one myth, or legend or ancestral tale, you've got all these different, really crunchy issues you know, about same-sex relationships, about young women that say no this

is what I'm going to do, about a high-born aristocratic married woman taking a lover, having his child, you've got the husband of that woman saying the child will be mine and I will cherish him – which he does. So you know it's a great story and when you look at the way that myths and stories shape our lives today, unless you question them and really take them into yourself and spin them around and make them happen for you, they can have very little meaning. The meaning of stories like that come from what you make of them and with Hinemoa what I made was transgressive, like what I made completely rammed against and moved against the grain of our koheke, of our Arawa sensibilities.

The same goes for the story of Kurungaituku, that Hatupatu is the hero, she is the ugly half-human witch, again you've got this great thing that happens in that story, she took him. He didn't go to her, she actually kidnapped him, she grabbed him, she thought oh that looks cute, I'll take that back to my cave and play with it! And that's what she did, she enslaved him, as a little mokai, ponanga, hoa moenga, sex-slave, who knows what he was for her but she grabbed him. Therefore she had to be punished, she had to be punished, I mean that's what I'm thinking now. She took him, she was a woman, she was half bird half human but she was a female. She goes out there she grabs this comely youth, sort of whips him off to her cave, settles him in with there kararehe and the ngarara, he is very impressed by her wealth, he wants her wealth. He sets it up that there are some berries far far far away, some object, and I think it was karaka berries actually or something, so you know, besotted and ever-loving Kurungaituku flaps off miles and miles and miles away to get her boyfriend some lovely kai, and I mean that's real strange too cos its usually the guys that go out and get the kai for the pregnant mother or for the lady of their dreams, but no there's old Kurungaituku off getting the kai and of course in her time away he destroys the cave, he butchers all her animals, he kills all her birds, he gathers together all her taonga and he takes off, he splits. And you have the chase, you know you have that ghastly story of how she tries to catch him and oops hello she falls in the ngāwha. Ko hemo, good job. She deserved to die, he's the hero, he's the

hero because he got away from her, he taught her lesson, he lured her into the ngāwaha, he killed her off, he got her treasures and the treasures were kahukura, red-feather cloaks, kahukiwi, fabulous things. He got all her pounamu, he got everything, he was triumphant, he was the hero. And I thought, what a nasty prick! Something wrong with that story! Nah she didn't die, she didn't die, nah she didn't die, she's still out there, she did not die. I used to go and sit on the rock... on the way to Taupo, that rock on the side of the road. I go there whenever I drive, I go and stay there and have a talk to her, for me that's her rock, even though he hid underneath it in the hole. And I think you cowardly bastard, you utter asshole I'm going to expose you. So in my book, in Ruahine, there's the real version of Kurungaituku.

So those are two examples, another one that I turned around in the book is called Ruahine, and it is in the library so check it out. In this I upset all our uncles from Mataatua, and got into trouble and got yelled at. Arawa's given up, they don't yell at me anymore, they just sort of, you know... But with Mataatua I did something really outrageous. Again its like the stories you grow up with.. the legends of strength and inspiration and spiritual power that you grow up with, I believe should be questioned. That's why I'm such a bad Catholic. I couldn't accept it all, I always asked what it meant. Anyway in the Mataatua story, there are a whole lot of things in there that I think are really curious, but what I've done in my retelling of Whakatane, is I've got Muriwai save the canoe. Tuhoe, Ngati Awa say Wairaka saved the canoe. I reckon that they did it together. They both hauled it in, and Wairaka was the big butch one and she's the one that, oh if you read the story you'll see what happens. I've got them working together, and Muriwai is the fem, prissy, swift swimmer and she swims out with the rope and she gets the rope around the canoe and Wairaka hauls it in. Cos you couldn't have the girl get onto the canoe with the rope and then swim back to the shore and then haul it in. So in my story I've got both of them and somewhere in the intervening 800 years the two iwi have gone their separate ways and cut those girls and in the Muriwai, Wairaka, Mataatua retelling that I've done, I've put them back together and of

course Wairaka is another queer girl madly in love with Muriwai who really cant be bothered. You see you get the stuff that happens to Wairaka with Maiurinu, the guy that she met that she marks. In the story, te kuia i raru i te po, yeah there's this ghastly bloody story, and again its about punishment and she gets punished. When she sees this guy and she thinks oh well he'll do, and she tells her father Toroa because the pressure is on her again to make an alliance, and she rejects all men, everyone, you know, she just won't associate with anyone. Her heart is broken because Muriwai has gone off with a guy and she's busy having babies. So she's thinking well Jesus you know I better do me job here, but she rejects everybody that comes to the marae. Then one day this gorgeousness turns up and she thinks okay yeah right, and he had this really ugly friend and she sort of whispered to him, you know, I'll be under the windowsill or in the corner or wherever I'll be and.. Maiurinu gets in ahead of the guy that she wanted, and so she tells her father, the man that you see tomorrow morning with my mark, cos in this story she bites him or does something to him, in my story she does something really gross to him, but in the straight story she marks him. [But] the guy that she wanted hears her having sex with his mate and goes away, he's really upset. Daylight dawns, the father looks out for the guy with the mark, sees this ugly Maiurinu. She realises, cos she's never been with a man and she had no idea what she was doing, that this was not the guy that she was going to be with, so she's punished. Once again, wayward women, girl with a mind of her own but hey, she gets caught, she gets her beans. She marks the wrong guy, the ugly gross one does her.

Researcher: In the two latter stories, what do you consider, if anything at all, is the consequence to these narrations of 'contact'..

Interviewee: We actually believe, and this in many ways is why I've agreed to talk to you. I actually think that [during] the colonial process, that Judeo Christian values [such as] the hatred of women, the absolute condemnation and loathing of same-sex relationships, the perverse and grotesque imposition of alien values warped and corrupted our early

stories. I believe that, I do and that is why I felt it was my responsibility as a writer, as a dreamer, as a little girl growing up in Ohinemutu, to question why are these stories like this? I'm sure their not like this originally. Which is why for Hinemoa, I went back to the first ever recording of the story and it was different. Somewhere between 1849, which is when that story was first written down by Te Rangi Kaheke, between 1849 and 1914 when they made the film Hinemoa, with my grandmother in it, somewhere between those two dates, something warped and mutated and transformed the story.

Researcher: I think our [Māori] history calls it a fixing-up..

Interviewee: Ae they fixed us up and made us just like them! or else attempted to sanitise and correct and modify and scrub-up Māori sensibility and passion, and the truth, our original stories, were stained and polluted with Christian and misogynistic and ugly sensibilities. You know I think that as a writer, as a scholar, and a dreamer and an intellectual, part of my life's work is to tell the real stories or bring them back.. fix it up again! Yeah that's right! To say no, this isn't how it was. This is how the Pākehā writers and the ministers of the Church and the school teachers and the ruddy right-wing mainstream orthodoxies of the colonial process, this is they say we were. Captured in school journals, and ghastly tourist brochures and films like my grandmother's Hinemoa. They became the agents of reinforcement, they set about re-writing, reconstructing our stories, its no different actually from the myth of the seven canoes, you know and [there] are so many Māori that still believe that there were only seven canoes and they all arrived on the beach at the same time.

Researcher: The Great Migration Theory..

Interviewee: Yeah! Well where did all the canoes land... but then there's the popular culture aspect of it as well and the very clever manipulation by Ngata and his mates, of the education system so that you have this entire

repertoire of songs like, you know, Hoia Mai Ngā Whaka E Te Iwi E, and Ngā Whaka E Whitu.. and so generations of kids have been singing these songs. Think of Uia Mai Koia and you've got the set of canoes in that song which is the Arawa national anthem!

Researcher: I'm going to ask, and I'm doing this because I want to acknowledge your gender here... the manner in which you've constructed it or reconstructed it or developed it, you've mentioned how Arawa women are conditioned specifically... that as women you were able to question the narratives...

Interviewee: Oh I had a really amazing upbringing, like my kuia was very tolerant and they all thought I was a bit mad. I mean part of it is that I was too clever for my own good, like I was too smart, Miss Mohio, you know and paraparanga, whakaputa mohio, you know there was this other terrible thing that was thrown at me which I'd never heard before which was, actually it was old, I was called a breaker of calabashes which I'd never heard before. That actually came out after my book was published, after Ruahine was published. In terms of gender specificity, for me it was like, I wanted to know about the women, and about the girls of the stories that I grew up with around the lakes and around Ohinemutu and Whakarewarewa. There was always the sense that bad girls get punished, they get their beans and good girls get rewarded and one of the greatest stories which I didn't hear until I was much older, and it was like why did that happen, and its one that still resonates for me and its really gender specific, and yet its about tapu and its about the power between a woman's legs and all that..

Te Ao Kapurangi, its neat how I heard this story cos I was at a tangi and there was this amazing woman, she was magic and she was tall and majestic and had these great big eyes, and clouds of hair and she could pukana and she could waiata. She really was amazing and she wasn't that much older than me. I would have been a teenager and she would have been in her thirties and it was like, oh god who is that! You know,

sitting there with my mum and they were all talking, she was from Pikiāo this woman, and this was at a tangi at Ohinemutu, and then somebody said oh she's just like her name. I went around and asked about this woman and her name was Te Ao Kapurangi and then I said well what's special about her name? and I got the story, and of course she's the one who married a Northern chief in the early 1800's and came down with her husband, and Hongi, and she's the one that said to Hongi, before they were about to attack Mokoia, spare my family, and he said, I will spare everyone that passes between your legs tonight! Well, this is my mum telling me this story, in Māori and English but you know. I wai ngā nui o kuha, between your legs. I mean, it was a challenge aye! And immediately you've got this thing of, she wanted to spare her father and her brothers and her aunties, and so you've got sex and power again aye, what does she do? Rushes into the kainga, jumps on top of Tamatekapua, spreads her legs along the maihi, balances herself on the koruru, pushes her feet down as far as they could go, and calls out to the people to run between her legs, and she saved dozens of people! She bloody saved scores of people, some say hundreds, at least a hundred got into the house and he arrived, Hongi, saw what had happened and just thought ae, wahine kamakama. Well, what an amazing story, for Arawa women. Far out, you know, and then you think of you know, men are so tapu and you know they wont go down there and I mean we've had ridiculous moments in my life where, oh Jesus, oh well just as an aside, and in a way its not cos its absolutely contemporary and relevant.

When this building that we are sitting in now in A Block University of Waikato was taken over by the Tari Māori and what was in those days, in the 1970's, the centre for Māori Studies and Research, there was a controversy, and this is a true story, its on the records, its bloody funny. Te Rangihou, uncle John and Bob Mahuta, were the fellows in the Centre for Māori studies. Te Rangihou and Bob Mahuta were the staff of the Centre for Māori Studies and Research and Timoti Karetu and Wharehuia and a number of women staff were in the tari Māori, and the female staff included Pākehā. The original plan was for Rangihou and Mahuta to be

downstairs and the secretarial staff ngā wahine ūha were to be located upstairs. And uncle John refused to work downstairs. Pākehā women but women, walking around above his head! So there was this big hui and [by] the end all the secretarial staff were relocated downstairs and Rangihou and Mahuta, te tari Māori came up here and Continuing Education moved downstairs. Isn't that funny. Its good and its that whole thing about the so called polluting influence of women, of ūha, and of course that's the story of Te Ao Kapurangi, and yet when it was a matter of life or death, you know, how many noble men or women or, you know, males, ran into that house, we'll never know, but there were a few.

Researcher: I mentioned earlier [that] in my minds eye there was a shift One day it was okay for them to speak these narratives, the next, they became confined to the marae. For those particular people, I am aware of a public revival..

Interviewee: I think this is where in many ways Vince as an Arawa female, bought up in a household of guides, and story tellers, maybe I had an unusual upbringing, because the telling of myths, the celebration of a very peculiar version of Hinemoa and Tutanekai, the rendering of Kurungaituku, was my kuia's job, was my aunty Aho's job, it was aunty Bubbles job. It's what the tourist guides did for a living, they told the stories. Now the stories were told in the safe and contained environment of Whakarewarewa thermal valley, of Hell's Gate thermal reserve, of particular places, so they became currency. You know, those narratives were related for, what's that game? Cos that sounds a bit yuck, but you know they were fed to the Pākehā's as part of Māori culture which went along with singing Ngā Whaka E Whitu and getting up on the stage and doing the haka.

In my school years, I went to Rotorua Primary, and that's when we got Kurungaituku, in all her glory, because we had the Kurungaituku Netball Tournament and that was a big thing in Rotorua and all the cousins and the aunts were either refs or playing basketball, you know that was part of

the life. So I went to school in the 50's and I went to Rotorua Primary School and St Michael's Convent. And in both of those environments we got the school journals, and I don't recall any actual suppression, or act of denial of them. But its hard for me to remember because the presence of Hinemoa, Tutanekai, Tamatekapua, Kurungaituku, Maui, the Sun God, were all in my house at home! You know, so its hard for me to get that one cos I grew up with carvers next door doing houses and my uncles were carvers, and what did they carve? They carved Maui, the Sun God, and the seven canoes, and so I guess anyone from Ohinemutu or Whakarewarewa would probably have the same sort of reaction as me, that we grew up with this because it was our parents bread and butter.

Researcher: What about with your students?

Interviewee: I had some really interesting.. not so much my students but.. with Ruahine, with my book of stories, what I did was I took eight stories which included Rona, Mahinarangi, Muriwai, Wairaka, Haumapuhia, Tuhoe, Waikato, Arawa, because those are my whakapapa, and what's been interesting is that girls, and its mainly cry actually, but.. at tangi's or shops or Frankton flea market and they say 'it really happened like that aye'.. and I say yeah! And they say 'yeah aye, you've told the real story aye' and I think oh god its amazing... their affirmations. But also they are questioning. Like, they are bought up on Hinemoa the fairy princess and Wairaka and Muriwai as two separate beings and.. Rona, I do a hysterical version of Rona, and.. things were different for them. You know, and I do believe Vince, and this is where I was really excited by what you have been suggesting in your study, that the stories have been corrupted, or somehow Christianised, and we do need to ask why did that happen, how did that happen and for me, personally, the next stage is as you put it so clearly, fix it up again!

Researcher: I do believe, and I'm going to conclude here, I do believe that if it isn't myself then perhaps one of my own could, but that one day our people will stand at the United Nations, with a voice of the myths of old...

and not just the sanitised versions. Even if they cant get it right they can still acknowledge that this is what happened. In conclusion, thank you.

Interviewee: It's a pleasure. I think that your study is important and that the position that you occupy is a courageous one. You will be challenged, you will be questioned and you know that already, but you think of the originating heroes and heroines in those stories. Ngā mihi kauana ki a koe.

CHAPTER FOUR

NGĀ KŌRERŌ PAKI

- myth as a universal codifier -

Indeed the chronicle of our species, from its earliest pages, has been not simply an account of the progress of man the toolmaker but – more tragically – a history of the pouring of blazing visions into the minds of seers and the efforts of earthly communities to incarnate unearthly covenants. Every people has received its own seal and sign of supernatural designation, communicated to its heroes and daily proved in the lives and experiences of its folks. And though many who bow with closed eyes in the sanctuaries of their own tradition rationally scrutinize and disqualify the sacrament of others, an honest comparison immediately reveals that all have been built from the one fund of mythological motifs variously selected, organized, interpreted, and ritualized according to local need, but revered by every people on earth.

(Joseph Campbell 1997:10)

Keywords: history, myth, universals, spatial, temporal, oral narratives, mythology, myth-truth, myth-narrative, empirical enquiry, repositioning, pre-literate societies, utilisation, psychology, sociological, iconoclasm, Christian, re/constructed, re-constituted, utility, historical redress, oral transmission.

- 4.1 A history of myth
- 4.2 Spatial and temporal influences
- 4.3 Myth and utilisation
- 4.4 Myth and modernity

Preliterate societies promulgated a wealth of oral narratives, including myths, which often continued to be developed by literate means. Myths have served multiple and diverse purposes for numerous generations and societies. This chapter considers utilitarian notions of myths as well as intellectual views proffered by writers who have published material specific to this field. Many Māori myths also eventually came to be transposed from their distinctly oral (and tribally specific) form to the written and often published form. In the closing section of this chapter I briefly address two examples of Māori myths that exemplify a resource of cultural knowledge.

4.1 A history of myth

It is generally accepted that myths are multilayered narratives embedding universals and but also with unique focal points, intents and prerogatives, unique in that they are specific to particular societies. Existing in all known human histories and all cultures and societies as accounts that can reveal cognitive, psychological, spiritual and socio-political aspects of a people's customs, laws, beliefs and traditions. Mythologies also render multifarious expressions of a people's social, political, economic and religious framework. As has been shown over historical time, myths are a major aspect of the authoritative ways in which an ideology has been established to form the foundation of an entire culture.

Several millennia ago the autochthonous ancestors of modern humanity, preliterate, but none the less logical and capable of reason, learned to survive and necessarily adapt in a milieu wherein ecological conditions dominated their existence. This was a world where humankind, evolutionarily unique yet archaically primitive by modern measures, learned to understand the exigencies of their environment and what must at times have appeared as seemingly whimsical, happenstance circumstances. Their reality was subject to the basic yet simultaneously

uncontrollable polarities of day and night, light and dark, birth and death, health and ill health, safety and danger. What we today commonly conceive of as the seasons changing, intermittent eclipses of the moon and sun, freak meteorological events, predictable tidal shifts and so forth, must surely have been seen vastly different in the eyes of our earliest ancestral predecessors. Professor emeritus of biblical history at the University of Southern California Gerald Larue contemplated such conditions and in *Ancient Myth and Modern Man* wrote:

In his community, a person who had been well would suddenly become ill and die. Another individual became ill but recovered. Why? Unique experiences added to the confusion. On one occasion, a root seemed to reach up and trip a man, causing him to fall and be bruised. A rock fell from the wall of a ravine and broke a man's leg. An angry wild beast or an enemy attacked, causing injury. Why did such events happen? (1975:8)

Lacking the necessary resources by which to harness or even comprehend such a varying array of external forces, the early peoples resourcefully conceived oral narratives which proffered a sensible explanation. A rock deemed responsible for causing harm might have been conceived of as containing an evil spirit; while another rock used in a successful hunt might be deemed as containing a benevolent spirit. The ill person who recovered might be considered worthy of life or having unfinished personal business, while the one who died might have been seen as less worthy or having finished all personal business. In this manner, our earliest ancestors were able to account for experiences and observations which exceeded their conscious intellectual limitations – events which today we understand as either pertaining to natural forces or simply explained in ways which are seen as based in superstition. By way of these earliest oral narratives, means developed to give order, structure and logic where humankind was otherwise unable to comprehend the wider world, cosmos and the intrinsic laws of nature which today we so effortlessly grasp. Oral narratives consequently served as a natural response to comprehend ostensibly inexplicable phenomenon.

4.2 Spatial and temporal influences

As oral narratives were expanded upon and also became dispersed, that is moved with people out of their original spatial and temporal confines, the narratives unsurprisingly developed beyond their original forms. This repositioning of oral narratives was most evident as societies shifted from pre-literate to literate, and the spoken words became written discourse, in numerous and complex forms designated at different times and in different places as sacred stories, myths, folk tales, fables and legends. Furthermore the use of myth as an ideological tool is manifest throughout historical time. For the purpose of this thesis I shall focus on the vast and complex rubric of myth.

Contemporary academics and authors of both fictional and non-fictional literature, Scott Leonard and Michael McClure, have published multiple scholarly texts. In *Myth and Knowing* (2004) they embarked upon an enlightening analysis, delving extensively into contemporary psychological, religious and cultural emphases in mythologies worldwide.

For two and a half millennia, debates over the importance and meaning of myth have been struggles over matters of truth, religious belief, politics, social custom, cultural identity, and history. The history of mythology is a tale told by idiots – but also by sages, religious fundamentalists and agnostic theologians, idealists and cynics, racists and fascists, philosophers and scholars. Myth has been understood as containing the secrets of God, as the cultural DNA responsible for a people's identity, as a means of recognising all human knowledge, and as a justification for European and American efforts to colonize and police the world.

Leonard and McClure 2004:5-6

They assert that the study of myth, including theories about the meaning of myths, can be seen to have arisen as early as the sixth century BCE and a fascination has remained with this form of narrative ever since. They note that as early as Homer and Hesiod (700 BCE) we can see an

identifiable perception of *mythos* as pertaining to ‘... divinely inspired, poetic utterance...’ (2004:2) whereas *logos* was often associated with a more mundane, common ‘transactional discourse’. They then report that more than a century later *logos* came to be seen more as disputative dialogue, contrasted with the more refined narratives of oral poetry. Another century later Plato proffered his analyses which led to a social repositioning of *mythos*. This was mainly due to his predilection for determining many such narratives as ‘synonymous with falsehood...’ (2004:3). In so saying, and as Leonard and McClure point out, Plato, revealed an all too prevalent elitism which was endemic in the Greek empire, that is a differentiation between the predominance of the myth-truth views of the ruling elite, versus the myth-narrative propaganda which was disseminated within the lower classes by oral poets who were not any more philosophically educated than their more allegedly gullible commoner audiences. At the time of Euhemeros, the Greek philosopher of the early third century BC, he and other ancient commentators continued to consider myths as narratives containing historical facts. However, these were considered to be encapsulated within the dominant narratives containing exaggerated superstitions. They argued that the superstitions, accepted in earlier civilisations, lacked the advanced tool of empirical enquiry. However, Euhemeros considered that particular details in the myths regarding the identity of the Greek Gods could be correlated with significant historical feats involving actual heroic figures. In this manner, according to Leonard and McClure, Euhemeros determined that the deities were in truth men that had been elevated to god-hood.

By the time of the Renaissance, myth and mythology had seemingly undergone yet another repositioning from that of the established Platonic/Euhemerist lens of elitist preference and the attainment of particular truths. In the view of the scholars the classical myths had become ‘mired in associations with make-believe or, even worse, outright falsehoods, which if believed or acted upon, were designed to damn souls to Hell’ (Leonard and McClure 2004:7). At this historical juncture myth was

now assigned the earlier social connotations of *logos* and vice versa; that is the contents of logos were repositioned as authoritative narratives. Leonard and McClure cite Doniger's (1998) *The Implied Spider: Politics and Theology in Myth* in which he discusses the political power plays of the early church fathers such as Clement of Alexandria, Justin Martyr, and later Tertullian. Tertullian's widely dispersed *Thesis of Demonic Imitation* was deliberately intended to contrast the rivalry of the gods of ancient Greek myths with the church's own legacy of Jesus. By the time of the Enlightenment, numerous scholarly efforts were being undertaken in the study of the Ur language; the intent being to identify the lineage and progeny of the firstborn of God, and of course, to then assume the contingent prestige and authority of such descent. In these undertakings it was appropriately necessary to evaluate and research myths, and of course in so doing they were in main relegated to their earlier position as potentially authoritative narratives. The Enlightenment, characterised by logical and scientific methods, then gave rise to various attempts such as Giovanni Battista Vico's 1725 scholastic effort at reorganising the chronology and meanings of myths into a logical system '... that used history, linguistics, iconography, and a great deal of ingenuity to align Egyptian, Greek and Roman myths with the key beliefs of his Christian culture' (Leonard and McClure 2004:8).

Originating in ancient pre-literate societies, traditional oral story telling was an entertainment, utilised in ritual performances and, perhaps more crucially, was a means of transmitting significant and useful information between the generations. The people who received and then shared oral narratives were simultaneously the living repositories of their society's preceding and contemporary histories. The story tellers were, in effect, living breathing encyclopaedias, dictionaries, interpreters, entertainers and educationalists. Ancient oral narratives were infused with the orators' and performers own life force, and so the stories were transmitted with the authority of multi-generational transmission. As the transmission of oral traditions shifted between narrators, time-periods and societies, varying

emphases were also transmitted to each new generation. The narratives themselves continued to retain intrinsic aspects such as the polarities of sun and moon, heaven and earth, light and darkness, good and evil, sacred and profane, deity and human, hero and trickster, the initiated and uninitiated, the role of the elite member in a society and the role of the commoners. With the ultimate transformation from preliterate to literate, oral traditions then became recorded scripts, forevermore subject to interdisciplinary analysis by non-members of a society and inevitably debate, while often simultaneously continuing to be transmitted by authoritative figures with the advantage of multi-generational insights.

4.3 Myth and Utilisation

Intellectual approaches to mythology have seen the emergence of a diverse array of abstract means by which to extrapolate and analyse insights from the commentators in both ancient and modern civilisations. Historians have long sought to reconstruct past events by analysing mythical narratives in conjunction with such archaeological evidence as ancient ruins, burial sites, skeletal remains, artefacts, remains of housing, eating utensils, legal documents, clothing styles, early art and so forth. Homer, the attributed author of the Iliad and Odyssey, chronicled the Trojan War waged at Troy; a location disputed as the modern-day archaeological site of Hisarlik in Turkey. First excavated by the amateur English archaeologist Frank Calvert (1828-1908), Hisarlik has continued to be scrutinized and argued as the very same city to which Paris of Troy abducted the famed Helen. In 1998, this particular archaeological site was added to the UNESCO World Heritage list, which aims at preserving and protecting sites deemed of significance to the common heritage of humankind. (New Zealand's Tongariro Park, Westland and Mount Cook National Park, Fiordland National Park and Sub-Antarctic Islands are on the World Heritage List, (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/convention/>). Of course archaeologists, not altogether focussed upon the historical aspects

as such, refer to mythic narratives in order to interpret the significance and the use of unearthed artefacts. Myths remain a crucial resource for understanding archaeological finds as a means by which to authenticate theories of utilization, application and social relevance.

Approaching mythology from the psychological vantage point enables a greater comprehension of cognitive intellectual behaviour and mechanisms, both in the narratives themselves and as they are reflected within a society. Applying the principles of psychology, Carl Jung (1875-1961) emphasised his theory of the collective unconscious in an effort to explain cross-cultural similarities in mythology, as well as introducing in-depth analyses of archetypes, dream interpretation and the personalized meaning of myth within the individual psyche; regardless that the components of a myth were shared throughout members of a society. By contrast, Jung's former master and older contemporary Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), with whom he collaborated before parting ways, preferred to analyse and hypothesise about myths as containing embedded notions of religious origin, as well as ritual processes and systems. Notably, and contrary to Jung's more useful works in this field, Freud's own efforts focused more on the social perspective shown within myths. Much has been written regarding the significant works of both Jung and Freud; espousing their evident commonalities as much as their clear divergences. Nonetheless they each explored mythologies in order to assert their own ideas, albeit the more materialistic and reductive Freudian psychoanalysis versus the comparatively spiritualistic and holistic Jungian analytical psychology.

Sociological examinations of myths have tended towards sharing insights relevant to contemporary collective group behaviour. Both Malinowski and Levi-Strauss looked at the underlying elements revealed within myths, going beyond assumptive reality, those 'taken for granted' aspects, in order to distinguish patterns which define particular groups and entire societies. The importance of Malinowski's analyses is that he noted that

the mythological beliefs in spirits were used to support practical knowledge and practices. Myths typically reveal hierarchical systems, whether of aspects of nature (earth, wind, and fire), animals (eagle, bear, and buffalo), deities (gods, demi-gods, angels) or humans (kings, princes and commoners). Sociological analyses go beyond such renderings in order to comprehend notions of social order involving ideas such as totemism, animism, pantheism and other social chains of command. In this manner the scholastic analysts can further hypothesise about a society's value system(s), codes of conduct, laws, customs, and traditions. By interpreting the underlying and implicit descriptors and narrative ideology, historians can even convincingly suggest an entire society's foundational bases. A cursory glance at the mythologies of the ancient Romans quickly reveals the considerable extent to which this formidable single empire was in fact comprised of a multitude of important and much older conquered nations that were forcibly integrated into the one political power.

4.4 Myth and modernity

Forcible integration by a conquering society, such as in the case of the Romans, is obviously not an ancient phenomenon and can be observed when we consider imperialist histories in the Pacific. Just as in ancient Rome, numerous South Pacific societies integrated their unique cultural systems with the newly introduced system, and indigenous myths were not left untouched. As a singular example, the supreme reach of an indubitable, a priori, omnipotent entity, namely God, is manifestly evident in Pacifican and Māori rituals today; now often alongside native deities. The preaching of the Christian story from the 1820s onwards, often initially by non-European evangelists, such as Tahitians, caused a direct confrontation with local beliefs in the indigenous divinities and in many cases, rejection and iconoclasm. In such cases Christian myths were used to support new religious and cultural ideologies and the subsequent

suppression, and at times destruction, of earlier indigenous myths as well as their associated artistic representations. In the opening of her article *Once You Saw Them, Now You Don't* Dr Wendy Cowling writes:

The introduction of Christianity in the third decade of the nineteenth century, plus the effects of the colonial administrations of Great Britain and New Zealand, had a dire effect on the maintenance of many traditional places in the Cook Islands. In the 1820's, numerous residents of the southern group of islands, after converting to Christianity became iconoclasts. They destroyed carved representations of their local divinities or handed them over to Tahitian evangelists... (2006:1)

The concomitant spread of adult literacy in various decades of the nineteenth century, supported by the translation of the *Bible* into local languages, enabled local participation in religious rituals as well as the introduction of a societal-reforming ideology based on Christianity's own distinct myths. The meeting and clash of the colonial and indigenous religious concepts led to the subjugation of the indigenous - so it was on earth, it became in heaven. However, in recent years the deities, which to varying degrees were suppressed in colonised nations such as Hawaii and in Aotearoa, have emerged, intact, from their secreted sites. In an article published in the quarterly *Anglican Taonga*, Reverend Turi Hollis alludes to the pre-contact spiritual connectedness of Māori, identified in their socially maintained oral genealogical histories:

Te Atuatanga describes how Māori perceive, understand and relate to all that is: seen and unseen. *Te Wairua Māori* describes how Māori are connected to all that is: seen and unseen. It is peculiar to Māori because it flows out of Māori *whakapapa* (story, history and genealogy)... Eru Potaka-Dewes is correct when he states that *Te Atuatanga* accommodated Christianity. *Te Atuatanga* pre-dates Christianity in these lands because as a religion Christianity did not officially arrive until 1814... Māori were here before 1814... relating to the "Creating Power" long before the arrival of Christianity. Māori *whakapapa* tells us so. (2002:13)

For more than quarter of a century, Māori have drawn on understandings and interpretations of not only the social world of the past but also the mythologies which informed that social past, as is evident in political activism. This contextualised appreciation of the mythological and mythologised beliefs of pre-Christian Māori has increasingly been utilised to strengthen claims to tangible (such as land) and intangible property (such as intellectual property relating to knowledge of plants, skills, agriculture and so forth), in marae practices and rituals (tangihanga) as well as non-marae based rituals (such as the blessing at the opening of a new building). The increased validation of a variety of practices and knowledges, by their utilisation and performance, also validates the social world as it has progressively been re/constructed, reconstituted and operated within the present. The utility of myths in this sense reflects a confidence in the claiming of knowledge which has been enabled by a more tolerant social and political atmosphere in New Zealand (and now also observable for the Australian Aborigine). There is now, and has been for the last few decades, a particular vigilance by government agencies and authorities to accept, or at the very least acknowledge, Māori worldviews, including Māori interpretations of Māori histories and Māori spiritual beliefs. The content of discourses and categories can be seen to have exponentially expanded as Māori assert the aptness of their indigenous knowledge and practices. Land claims have encouraged people to explore their whakapapa and their links to particular places (often first focussed on the marae), to re-engage with the land (influenced also by the environmental movements), to explore the meaning of old symbols and create new symbols. As Walker states, ' Myths and traditions possess the same dynamism as the culture that bears them' (1992:182). Notably, the encouragement of the use of the Māori language is a major influence in this re-engagement.

Today in some Pacific nations, and in indigenous societies across the globe, the ongoing success of claims for historical redress in New Zealand by Māori has acted as an encouraging model by which to similarly conduct

their own reclamation efforts. Decolonisation processes have led to a restoration of pre-colonial worldviews as members of such nations seek acknowledgement and parity for their unique cultural identities and the inherent indigenous components, including the restoration of their deities and myths, and the intrinsic mystic beliefs. It is also appropriate to remain aware that such authoritative discourses are most often those of elders who did not live during the times which they so authoritatively claim to know. Nonetheless while there has been a significant degree of oral transmission involved, there is also an indubitable mystical element operating here; that is, in addition to oral transmission, there is the inference that the knowledge has been directly transmitted by tupuna to their faithful heirs. In many ways the end result has been the creation of a popular Māori culture but with a core content which should not be questioned, either by the Pākehā to whom aspects are demonstrated, or the rangatahi for whom these narratives remain a cultural legacy.

Storytellers have criss-crossed the southeastern Pacific with this heritage of tradition for the last two thousand years or more. It is so securely entrenched in the affections of narrators and listeners as to continue to be passed on orally and to survive into modern times. Wherever one goes, whether to Hawaii or to Tahiti or to New Zealand or to Samoa, one finds that most of these heroes and heroines are remembered.

Luomala 1986:4

Many former oral discourses have been transmitted to written form. Established in 1907, Reed Publishing has maintained a substantial function in the transmission and proliferation of indigenous narratives of New Zealand. In Reed's 2003 *Mists of Time*, Nga Puhi author Bunty Howearth recounts the myths and legends of her childhood. Her writing is simplistic though concise; perhaps suggesting a publishing house preference as opposed to the author's diligence. I do not claim any connection with Nga Puhi, nonetheless these narratives were enthralling and enlightening. Conversely, in 1997 Reed released *Paki Waitara: Myths and Legends of the Māori* by Queenie Rikihana Hyland, who concedes that the traditional

meaning of paki waitara was the recitation of stories by different narrators whose audiences chose, for themselves, the intrinsic meanings or conclusions. In her collection of myths and legends Hyland articulates traditional versions of easily recognizable narratives including creation myths, the entertaining legends of the mischief-maker Maui, and the popularised love-story of Hinemoa and Tutanekei. As with Howearth, her writing is simple and makes for easy reading while the material is, in my view, neatly abridged. It is a book that I would recommend to a novice or non-Māori audience. Her accounts are conspicuously void of particular genealogical and cultural details that, in the hands of other authors such as Elsdon Best, often proved cumbersome for the reader. Overall she is faithful to traditional oral accounts, although it can be argued that lacking appropriate disclosure of individual's names and failing appropriate elucidation of individual as well as intertwining genealogies raises the potentiality of culturally significant data being lost. Each collection, and a vast number of others, nonetheless function to disseminate former oral discourses, traditions and referent ideologies. By such modern means, and to again bring into play the title of Joseph Campbell's twentieth century television documentary series, so continues the power of myth.

CHAPTER FIVE

TE MĀTAURANGA PĀKEHĀ - theoretical development -

Although one might expect the field of public history to be an arena where memory studies and oral history meet, that has not necessarily been the case. Oral history and public history were for a time uneasy bedfellows.

Hamilton and Shopes 2008:xii

Communication presupposes society and all messages are social products. Hence messages of oral tradition have a social surface. They are significant to members of the communities in which they are told. Otherwise they would not be communicated at all.

Vansina 1985:94

Keywords: history, oral discourse, oral tradition, European peasantry, folk tales, classificatory systems, Type-Index, Boas, Malinowsky, Durkheim, Levi-Strauss, New Zealand, Vansina, African oral traditions, oral history, oral memories, myth, tales, epics, historical evidence, social control, validating oral tradition.

- 5.1** A history of oral discourse
- 5.2** Oral narratives in the New World
- 5.3** The new anthropology
- 5.4** Vansina: validating oral traditions

Myths have been utilised for various and diverse reasons, throughout history and even to represent history, as discussed in chapter four. However, myths were initially oral narratives and as such their utilisation has been cause for significant intellectual debate regarding the merits of oral discourse; especially in the academic discipline of History. In this chapter I examine the theoretical development of scholarly research into oral narratives as distinct, constructed, communication systems which have been (and are) present in all societies.

5.1 A history of oral discourse

It is a given that elaborate sets of ideas, beliefs and theories devised by human beings were orally transmitted for millennia before the development of systems of writing. This process was still extant in the late-colonised communities of the Pacific, including Aotearoa/New Zealand. Even when written texts were customarily being recorded, some oral discourses were considered as being superior. For example, Socrates (470-399BC), whose ideas shaped Western philosophy as we understand it today, passionately refused to commit his thoughts and lectures to written text, preferring instead to communicate his teachings in person. Similarly, the teachings of Buddha and Jesus were first communicated orally. These are but three examples of historically important figures whose teachings became influential in social thinking throughout history without ever having left any written body of thought that we can identify as their own. The orally communicated teachings of these three men were learnt and interpreted before eventually being recorded. Plato, then Aristotle, the apostles of Christ and the disciples of Buddha, were in fact the first informants and therefore principal conduits, by which the remarkable oral teachings of these three Masters remain in the world today. Not the actual, verbatim, oral statements that the teachers spoke, but rather the developed, written texts born out of the oral narratives.

However, when Europeans first encountered the communities of people who used oral narratives (and other forms of communication such as art productions) their own history of a movement from orality to literary recording appears to have been forgotten. Those communities who had not developed sophisticated forms of writing were seen as inferior. This attitude had changed somewhat by the eighteenth century.

From the late eighteenth century onwards, an era in which the European peasantry were still firmly demarcated from their fewer yet advantaged aristocratic superiors, we can discern a collective emergent scholarly interest with the oral traditions of peasant classes developing throughout Europe. George III (1738-1820) still ruled as King of Britain and Ireland, James Cook (1728-1779) had become immortalised in literary prose following his death in Hawaii, and vivid images of the French Revolution were still fresh in European minds. This was an era dominated by religiosity but was also a period in which humanist studies began to flourish as capitalism arose out of the sweeping social transformations wrought in the Industrial Revolution. Commoners were now entering into the industrial workforce thus becoming the first of the modern working classes, while the Church still dominated the cultural environment. Historically, this was the close of the Age of Enlightenment. The claiming of recently discovered lands at the Antipodean end of the globe led directly to increasing political contention over governance and control of a hoped-for wealth of resources. This was despite the fact that such lands were most definitely not terra nullius. Societies throughout Oceania either already were or quickly came under the overpowering influence of Western imperial powers who were, in the most part, still ignorant of the unique virtues of indigenous populations who were generally regarded instead as primitive savages.

2.1 Oral narratives in the New World

The world was being redefined politically and socially, as the sciences began to come of age. Political boundaries were shifting as various alliances extended domains, and vast new classificatory systems arose to differentiate all manner of social categories and aspects of nature. These included Linnaeus's distinctly Latin classification of plant-life and the racialised classification of humankind, as well as Darwin's theory of evolution and natural selection. Also emphasised was the anonymous although renowned Great Chain of Being hypothesis, in which everything known was classified according to a unilineal process, beginning with God (as the most advanced being) and his heavenly host. This was the theory in which black men were regarded as distinctly lower and therefore inferior to their white counterparts and women were distinctly inferior to men.

At the time Europe's peasant populace still largely lacked literacy skills and the oral narratives which were in circulation in these communities became an area that attracted scholarly curiosity. For example, Serbian linguist and folklorist Vuk Karadzic (1787-1864), who as a signatory to the 1850 Vienna Agreement was important in his nationalist political reformations, collected several volumes of Slavic folk poetry, proverbs and songs, in the main learned during his childhood and documented from memory in later-life (Michaelis-Jena 1970: 178-180). Slovene writers of this time also undertook projects so as to depict the life of their provinces realistically, combining attention to detail with social criticism. Under the influence of foreign literature, particularly Russian realism, Slavic literature developed particularly modernist tendencies, a fact which was not lost on the scholars of the region who quickly recognised the contemporary impact of oral patterns (McGlathery 1988). The theoretical examination of the oral narratives was mainly from the viewpoint of linguistic patterning and much of the work of this period can be seen to have illustrated a particularly

nationalistic emphasis. This was also evident in the lyric poetry of the period in which traditional themes of patriotism and love were changed for other subjective, more complex themes and modes of expression. Distinguished by an overt nationalistic spirit that was rife throughout Europe as political leaders strove to emphasise their local and regional identities, scholarly studies strongly emphasized the significance of particular language and oral patterns. Karadzic's political and nationalist agendas, linguistic training and own peasant legacy had contributed to the burgeoning historiographic method which his German contemporaries, the Brothers Grimm, would come to develop.

Nationalistic impulses directed the effort to describe and recapture the traditions of the primitive nation. For brothers Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm, the publication of *Kunder und Hausmärchen* [*Children and Household Tales* (1812-15)], *Deutsche Sagen* [*German Legends* (1816-18)], and *Deutsche Mythologie* [*German Mythology* (1835)] was an effort to document the poetic and spiritual character of the Germanic people. The Grimm's were concerned with the reconstruction of the ancient Teutonic mythology which had been destroyed by the incursion of Greek, Roman and Christian civilisation. The materials used for this reconstruction were the tales, games, sayings, names, and idiomatic phrases still to be found among the peasantry. (Oring 1986:5)

The now renowned body of folk tales collected, reconstructed then published by Jacob (1785-1863) and Wilhelm (1786-1859) Grimm had been, as in the case of Karadzic, prompted by the brothers' philological interests (Michaelis-Jena 1970: 96). New social ideologies became incrementally introduced as the political structure of the independent German principalities came to be questioned in the face of the growing call for a unified Germany. It seems also that the desire to help preserve traditional oral narratives was foremost in their minds; as was the proliferation of such oral resources subsequently written and recorded for posterity. As the amalgamation of dialectically distinct regions came to pass, the successful publications of the Brothers Grimm encouraged writers of other nations, including the Danish author Hans Christian

Andersen (1805-1875), to publish similar materials. In considering comparable European collections which depicted recurring and correlating complex plots and thematic details, the assumption of a common Indo-Germanic antiquity and source of transmission gained currency. This theory stimulated the further collection and archiving of folkloric material into what eventually became known as the Finnish historiographic collection. As in the case of the works of the Brothers Grimm, many traditional oral narratives were bowdlerised in the transmission process from the oral form to that of the written word. The Grimms noted particular similarities of themes, motifs and characters in their own collections and, in due course, began to compare their works with folktales obtained in other peasant communities in Europe. According to Wilhelm Grimm, these geographically widespread tales collected by other folklorists and which presented evocative semblances, could ultimately be traced back to a singular common point of origin, as was believed to be the case with language (McGlathery 1988).

Coincident with a more rigorous approach to scientific experiment, and perhaps because Church ideologies were still so entrenched, classificatory systems came to be constructed with the specific intent of establishing, amongst other things, the hypothetical Ur-type with its diffusion as having originated in Europe. This was influenced by a religiously motivated Protestant agenda, clearly based on confident notions of a primal superiority and contiguous genealogical precedence stemming from the myth of Adam and Eve. Additionally, the developing precepts of evolutionism, in which Western societies were positioned at the highest level, came to be invoked as an explanatory model. Premised on the theory of evolution which worked well when applied to biology, it failed when applied to human societies. Nevertheless, the combined early scholastic works of philologists, such as the Brothers Grimm and Vuk Karadzic, mark the beginnings of the view that oral tradition was a worthy and fruitful field of study. By 1846 the traditional oral narratives of the peasant classes had become so widespread, in the main by means of their

publication as children's literature, that the English antiquary William John Thoms (1803-1885) coined the word folklore. While the initial intellectual motivation behind such works appears to have been philological, the focus had shifted to the written records that had been reconstructed and interpreted from oral traditions and sources. The work of the Grimm's had explicitly postulated a common Indo-Germanic origin for folktales. Conversely, the German philologist Theodor Benfey (1809-1881) and the Scottish writer William Clouston (1843-1896), proposed that many such narratives had been diffused by way of travellers migrating east and west from India. The German scholar Max Muller (1823-1900) held that such oral traditions originated after Sanskrit and other ancient languages began to deteriorate. Later however, when the Scottish classicist and historian Andrew Lang (1844-1912) opposed this view, oral traditions again became the subject of scholarly interest and contention. The works of these and other scholars significantly stimulated interest in oral traditions as a culture trait of all human societies. The diffusionists of the time developed various arguments including the view that culture traits originated either out of Egypt or from cultural complexes called culture circles. However, diffusionist theories, as in the case of evolutionist theories, came to be recognised as inherently flawed. They tended to be oversimplified; the deductive methodology which was used by the scholars, starting from a general principle and leading to a specific finding, was unsound. In this case, their postulation of particular causes of cultural diversity came to be regarded as *reductio ad absurdum* (McGlathery 1988).

Conversely, while the evolutionist and diffusionist theories were propounded and then discarded, multiple, well-founded classificatory systems were also developed in this period. Interest in folk tales and mythologies was particularly fuelled by the great popularity of the publication in 1890 of *The Golden Bough*, a voluminous compilation by the British anthropologist Sir James Frazer (1854-1941), which has rarely been out of print. Also, Finnish folklorist Antti Aarne (1867-1925) and American folklorist Stith Thompson (1885-1976), developed extensive geographical

and historical surveys of all the known variants of widely scattered tales, always with a focus on discovering and cataloguing the similarities, particularly of types and motifs. Aarne produced a catalogue in 1910, which Thompson enlarged and translated in 1928. This catalogue became known as the Type-Index, organising the plots of a variety of folktales as well as narrative elements, such as objects, unusual animals, special actions, or characters. Here the theoretical development of oral narratives was framed in arguably short-sighted classificatory methods, systems and theories (Campbell 1997).

Regardless of the expositor or objective, many of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century academic discussions on oral narratives tended to focus on similarities. There was no doubt that, at times, the European narratives, when compared with those found in other continents, showed strong similarities with the content of other non-European stories. However, these early scholars appear to have been particularly unaware of the vast wealth of African, Native American, Asian and Oceanic lore that existed independently of the Indo-European tradition. They believed they had devised satisfactory explanations for the narrative elements found in the stories of those selected countries that were of immediate interest to them. These early theoretical discussions of the development of oral narratives had been undertaken more in the fashion of internal research and notably these were primarily Europeans examining Europeans.

The exploration of the social significance of oral narratives challenged scholars from other societies. The ideas and subsequent foundational works discussed above originated out of an initial concern to record traditional oral narratives before they disappeared. Any analysis was conducted from a comparative and ethnocentric viewpoint, combined with a rescue mission mentality. However, the development of a scholarly, theoretical interest in traditional oral narratives was not limited to scholars in the West – a fact which I shall speak to further on. Moreover, the hitherto largely philological, linguistic, nationalist and folklorist focus on

traditional oral narratives was about to shift, as new theoretical explorations came to the fore. Social scientists were no longer content with being confined to armchair research from the vantage point of their Western society or to be constrained by old theories. As Western-derived ideologies (such as Christianity and new legal systems) were being introduced in non-Western societies, due to the spread of British, French and German colonisation, popular theories which had been applied to the behaviour of people in a 'civilised' Western society were now being tested on the people of non-Western societies; who were found wanting. While new lands and peoples were being inducted (for want of a better word) into the Western worldview, new theories regarding human mental and social functioning were being developed.

The view that traditional oral narratives should be recorded and preserved was a matter of critical importance for late nineteenth and early twentieth century anthropological pioneers such as Tylor, Boas, Malinowski, Levi-Strauss. Oral narratives were also collected by missionaries in the islands of Polynesia, sometimes with an intention of ridicule and refutation, sometimes because they were recognised as important historical accounts. Compared to the many published works which examined the traditional oral narratives of Europe, there was very little for the Pacific, including Polynesia. That was the case at least up until the early twentieth century when such examinations tended to be consequent to ethnographic research undertaken in the Pacific, including Papua and New Guinea.

5.3 The new anthropology

Academically trained in physics and geography, German-American anthropologist Franz Boas (1858-1942) had been a first-hand witness to the rise of the pre-WWI eugenicist movement in the United States of America. He was strongly opposed to the prevailing popular notions of racism and of genetic determinism. Boas introduced participant

observation as a structured approach to the study of human communities by synthesising all manner of empirical data obtained during fieldwork research. Insisting on methodological rigor, he introduced the theory of historical particularism, emphasising the necessity of obtaining empirical data by fieldwork, and the need to study societies using the lens of cultural relativism. His approach came to be seen as the first major opposing theoretical counter to earlier evolutionists and diffusionists. The significant aspect of cultural relativism became a principle which Boas fixed in the minds of his students. These included Ruth Benedict (1887-1948) and Margaret Mead (1901-1978), who also went on to become pioneers in their specialist ethnographic fields. Having undertaken fieldwork among the Central Inuit, Boas took the position that cultures are shaped by a number of determinants, some historical, some environmental, and some resulting from the interaction with other cultures "... [he] felt that the enormous complexity of factors influencing the development of specific cultures rendered any type of sweeping generalization, such as those proposed by the evolutionists and diffusionists, totally inappropriate" (Ferraro 1998: 62).

The necessity to acquire empirical data did not exist as a common practice until ethnographic fieldwork had been encouraged as a method of research. The new breed of anthropologists were expected to leave their professors' scholarly surroundings and learn from first-hand experience. The effectiveness of this approach was first demonstrated in Oceania by Boas' younger contemporary Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942), whose own research fieldwork had arisen during WWI in the Trobriand Islands of the Pacific. Utilising the concept of functionalism, Polish-born Malinowski established the tradition of firsthand data collection, setting standards for participant-observation research still practised today. For Malinowski, all cultural features and artefacts contained social meaning and utility, or social significance and functionality. Contiguous to this premise, he determined that such utility or functionality served to primarily fulfil an individual's biological and psychological needs.

British anthropologist A.R. Radcliffe-Brown (1881-1955), an admirer of French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), expanded Malinowski's ideas beyond the needs of the individual as such, to encompass the needs of an entire society; thus developing the basis of the theory of structural functionalism. In this theory, the structural functionality of an artefact or social feature, is relevant to its utility (the part it plays) within the society as a whole. In order to apply the functionalist theory to local oral narratives we would consider the individual significance and relativity of traditional oral narratives, such as those used for entertainment, information-sharing, education and so forth. When the structural functionalist theory is utilised it can be seen that the narratives are simultaneously catering to a social need to address the big questions relating to notions of social order, life and death, mortality and immortality, the existence of god(s), the purpose of life and so forth.

Using the argument that cultures were in truth collectives of individualised personalities generalised for the purpose of the culture entire, Boas' student Ruth Benedict had embarked upon her own extensive research at the same time that their mutual student Margaret Mead had begun publishing material which would also advance research into Pacific societies. Also from 195. Claude Levi-Strauss (1908 -) was advancing the structuralist theory by asserting what in time came to be regarded as French Structuralism. Levi-Strauss claimed that the sociological principle of binary coding acted as the framework of culture. He emphasised the cognitive structure of a community as determining all aspects of social behaviour. His work significantly drew upon the expanding science of linguistics. This relationship between culture and cognition was no more evident than in his argument that mythologies represented reflections of the cognitive mechanisms of a society. Levi-Strauss perceived myths as orally transmitted narratives whose original authors were unidentifiable and the origins of which were lost in time.

It would not be until the mid twentieth century that ethnographies would emerge as a discernible body of works relevant to the New Zealand social climate and environment. Captain James Cook had discussed aspects of New Zealand, as had other voyagers and their crews. However, for the Māori people as an autochthonous oral society that barely survived being forcefully colonised then vigorously westernised, the opportunities to examine the post-contact indigenous oral history and traditions of the Māori nation have remained elusive, apart from a few limited efforts that are quickly realised as poor, ethnocentric, overly primitivised (even romanticised) myopic attempts. The ethnographic efforts of the likes of Edward Tregear (1846-1931), Percy Smith (1840-1922) and even Elsdon Best (1856-1931), were well meaning although flawed representations of the indigenous peoples' personal memories' and experiences. This said, whilst several early twentieth century works spoke to the matter of oral narratives within indigenous societies of the Pacific, none had specifically sought the validation of historical integrity, at least convincingly, until Vansina introduced his complex.

5.4 Vansina: validating oral traditions

Belgian born Jan Vansina (1930 -) combined his dual academic passions of history and anthropology to pioneer several advances in the study of oral tradition. Arguing for a recognition of the historical integrity of non-Western societies, particularly African, Vansina first published *Oral tradition: a study in historical methodology* in 1973, then, almost quarter of a century later re-addressed his discussion in the significantly developed book *Oral Tradition as History* 1985. Brought up during an era rife with the assertion of the rightness of Eurocentric ideologies and authority, Vansina's eventual academic training was on the one hand constricting and on the other, holistic. History, as a formal discipline, privileged the European perspective above the non-Western, and

anthropology was still developing in the wake of the enlightened and ground-breaking works of the pioneers already mentioned, such as Boas, Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown and Levi-Strauss. Vansina's formal training in history gave him a sound foundation and framework for scholarly research, while his training in the complementary discipline of anthropology predisposed him to a uniquely holistic viewpoint, compared to that of his peers. Vansina allowed himself to think beyond the formal parameters of European approaches to history, when he began to reconstruct aspects of the African past. In so doing Vansina extended the boundaries of his formal training in the discipline. Developing his own formidable complex argument, he deliberately forced an expansion of historical approaches, subsequently operating beyond the discipline's earlier principles giving rise to an expansion of historical approaches.

Firstly, Vansina had determined that oral history involved distinctly contemporary processes. That is to say that the narratives which comprise a people's oral history, related at the time that they were happening, are proto-accounts which emerged by means of the foremost narrator(s). In Vansina's view this differs from his concept of an oral tradition which has been perpetuated beyond the life of the original informants and subsequently communicated throughout multiple generations and processes including theatrical styles of performance. It follows therefore that Vansina's concept of oral tradition deals specifically with a memorised system of verbal communication which has lasted beyond the life-spans of the original observers. 'The sources of oral historians are reminiscences, hearsay, or eyewitness accounts about events and situations which are contemporary, that is, which occurred during the lifetime of the informants. This differs from oral traditions... [that] are no longer contemporary...' (Vansina 1985:12-13). In this regard it is evident why scholars of history would find much of this material particularly contentious and Vansina goes to great lengths to substantiate his arguments, though he was by no means the progenitor of this complex field of study. He had developed his pioneering ideas from an existing

rubric, discussed in chapter three, comprising many earlier works from scholars who had already contemplated the inherent complex issues at different times, through various theoretical lenses, and with diverse consequences.

Vansina deconstructed a vast collection of African oral traditions and devised his complex, and somewhat controversial, ideas which he introduced in 1961 before expanding upon them in 1985. The basis and inspiration of Vansina's work are clearly stated when he says that: 'Communication presupposes society and all messages are social products' (1985: 94). Vansina claims a human capacity for memory retention which is reliable to the extent that individual and group memories are faithful records of a society's experiences, supported by the recall of correlating incidents and explanations. He links this highly developed memory retention with the encultured transmission of traditions. In so doing he convincingly argues that oral societies, previously perceived as lacking valid historical knowledge because they did not have documented evidence, nonetheless possess unique and valid histories in the form of these memorised oral traditions; many that have since been supported by archaeological finds. In his view these bodies of knowledge are comparable, if not equal to, the histories of literate societies.

J. century. Miler restricts traditions only to conscious historical statements. The person who tells them wants to communicate the past to us. And in practice the same author seems to imply that such statements must be narrative. He further argues that the heart of such statements consists of stereotypes or clichés, which remain very stable over time in his view and are the genuine unchanged formation that the historian must decode. But his view is far too restrictive. Traditions need not be clichés or narratives, nor is the conscious intent to testify about the past necessary. Much can be learned about the past from oral sources that are not concerned with the past and hence testify despite themselves. In deed, that characteristic makes them more reliable precisely because they are unconscious contributions. (1985:28)

Vansina claimed extant oral traditions were vital sources for reconstructing the past of tribal societies. He sees oral traditions a rich, multi-faceted phenomenon which exemplify the way in which the initially simple process of the generation of messages becomes the complex process of maintaining a memorialisation of past generations. As such, and subject to analysis and quantification, oral traditions are capable of enhancing historical texts at the same time as being themselves enhanced. Obviously the technology of writing enables the recording of detailed specificity, although in Vansina's view historians should not require a comparable specificity in oral traditions. Both oral traditions and literary technologies are systems which have problematic aspects such as linguistic interpretations, culturally specific nuances and fluid facets of continuity.

Vansina asserts that oral traditions are both a contextualised process involving multiple and diverse dynamics, as well as an expression of the process. When reading his brilliant and complex analysis it is necessary to keep in mind that he constantly distinguishes the object of thinking from the process of thinking. To better understand the latter he introduces us to an overview of what he perceives as the former, the contextualised processes. He distinguishes between oral history, which involves living informants reporting contemporary situations and events, with oral traditions, which he says relate to past situations narrated by people no longer living. Because of relevance and significance, the original oral communication has been passed down throughout the generations. Vansina introduces the reader to the processes involving the creation of oral traditions before defining them and then situating them as a source of history. Initially, he discusses varying classes of oral traditions; each with their own characteristics, points of difference, potential applications and subsequent constructs. The construction of messages which rely on eyewitness, hearsay, and visionary accounts which become hearsay, is the starting point of the transmission of News. These proto-accounts involve information which is temporally bounded to an existing time-period, although they imply some potentiality for the future. News is

distinguishable from other constructed messages such as reminiscences, commentaries and verbal art. The latter are reflexive interpretations of an experience, they are '... the product of thought about existing situations as well as about existing messages' (1985: 8). They are nevertheless original messages, albeit corresponding to proto-accounts. Vansina notes that oral historians prefer contemporary reminiscences, hearsay, and eyewitness accounts as source material.

Oral messages, which have observably exceeded their original temporal boundaries, have obviously been memorised, enabling transmission and generational retention processes. The way in which speech functions facilitates differing oral traditions. Common everyday language is employed in formulas and prayers whilst formalised speech is employed in epic discourse, and poetry conforms to special language rules. Spells, hymns and prayers which employ formulaic styles and which are often transmitted by the use of rote learning and memorised by the use of mnemonic devices, are intended to be faithfully reproduced. However, each of these is memorised with varying intents. Different degrees of reproduction occur, regardless of an overall intention to remain true to the original. Memorised speech will vary in the actual wording over time, perhaps expanding incrementally. The original form may be difficult to recognise without considerable examination. Also, the process of transmission by rote allows, in retrospect, for the reconstruction of archetypes, which is not the case with the process of reciting tales and some epics. Songs also fall into the category of memorised group traditions because they employ everyday language and the melody acts as a mnemonic device, facilitating a faithful transmission and reproduction.

Proto-accounts and original messages, when transmitted repeatedly by different people and continuously over time, become a fusion of accounts, and in time a generational-ised account of an event that may or may not reflect the original intention but has now assumed a stabilised form as an oral tradition. A class of oral traditions which Vansina refers to in a rubric

of accounts, that may be in the form of historical gossip or a personal tradition. The former originated as news or hearsay, selectively transmitted as an occasion warranted and considered of some consequence. The latter originated as reminiscences that have come to be integrated into the traditions of a family, often forming anecdotal or humorous communications which survived only briefly. However, there are a considerable number of oral traditions which are no longer temporally bound. Vansina is necessarily allowing for the developing message as it exceeds its immediate spatial boundaries and enters into critical-mass-consciousness, thereby involving further complex processes. Some messages are transmitted beyond both their temporal and spatial immediacy and, whether as proto-accounts or as the original messages, they are communicated into the wider social-consciousness, and therefore are engaged with at a more complex interactive level.

The oral memories of groups are to some extent institutionalised, regardless of whether they began as news, hearsay, reminiscences, historical gossip or personal traditions. These memorised oral communications tend to become the property of a group and are publicly recited on formal occasions by appropriately skilled and approved people. Such communications are appropriately adapted to particular circumstances and it is at this juncture that the institutionalised group account becomes incorporated into the entire historical corpus of the group as a society. In order to demonstrate this process of institutionalised oral communications being adapted to social circumstances, Vansina cites a nineteenth century case involving the Hopi people of Arizona and three obviously differing published versions of the one event. The three versions depict the same incident but each had obvious variations. Vansina suggests that differing social circumstances such as a change in leadership and land boundary charter shifts may well have arisen to cause the variations. Group accounts that include such significant information then come to be regarded as memorable and are integrated into the corpus of tradition so as not to be forgotten. These

accounts then operate according to the complex rules of a corpus of traditions. The account often becomes abraded, as is often seen in the case of traditional group anecdotes. Sometimes a corpus of narratives develops symmetrically opposed information and the accounts may be streamlined as details are emphasised or altered or even transferred into correlating accounts. So group accounts go through ongoing fusion processes which are repeated to the point that the original account will either disappear entirely or shift incrementally into the realm of traditions of origin, as clichés which, as stereotypical elements, continue to provide explanations and theories in terms of worldviews.

Vansina clearly equates oral traditions of origin with what anthropologists term myth. These origin myths are often logical constructs that combine speculative thought, pre-existing correlating information, group accounts reduced to clichés, cumulative accounts such as genealogical charters, cosmological theories and even euhemeristic elements. An assessment of origin myths will reveal conjunctions which are identifiably origin traditions, group accounts and personal accounts. In fact varying stages of the same process from which, Vansina asserts, that there generally emerges a three-tiered whole. Within Vansina's rubric of accounts genealogical charters are categorised as cumulative accounts because they are subject to continual revising. However, these oral traditions differ in that they conspicuously involve degrees of manipulation of the account in order to allow for the constant revisions which are needed to depict new relationships in social structures which necessarily connect the past with the present.

Tales, which differ from the previously discussed rubric of accounts, are considered fictional, involve particular performance techniques using common language and often employ innovative devices. As opposed to accounts, tales incorporate novel expressions and oral constructs in order to cater to an audience; consequently they change more dramatically over time. Vansina reminds his readers that in this class of oral traditions there

is no original, no beginning, composition or indeed end, as tales diffuse into other tales, blending elements from a mixture of time periods and sources. He cites the tale of 'Puss in Boots' as a classic example of a tale which does not obviously indicate an exact social setting or time period, in spite of the fact that an early eighteenth century Italian background might appear fitting. Conversely, he allows for historical tales which involve historical personages - in so much as the motifs and theme of the tale remains intact while the setting and characters will shift to enable contemporary use. Along with tales, he locates proverbs and sayings into this class of oral traditions because they are largely apocryphal, and as is the nature of an aphorism, intrinsically allusive.

Epics are also in their own class of oral traditions. They can be seen as unique in that they consist of vast numbers of verses which combine to create a complex narrative, often couched in poetic language. Epics also tend to contain a historicised dimension that corresponds with actual historical events. However, Vansina suggests that historians use epics '... more as reports about existing situations in a recent past than as a source about these persons or incidents' (1985: 25). This is distinct from pseudo-epics which lack any strict poetic form and therefore belong in the above mentioned class of tales. Vansina emphasises that a distinctive aspect of epics is the unchanging, special language used, the rules of form that allow for totally free wording.

Having discussed his classifications of oral traditions based on their distinguishing features and applications, and having differentiated oral history from oral tradition, Vansina arrives at his working definition of oral traditions 'as verbal messages which are reported statements from the past beyond the present generation' (1985: 27) in so much as a source of history. He's cautious regarding what is, and what is not, deemed adequate. Oral traditions encompass all the previously discussed classes, and may be spoken sung or recited with the accompanied of musical instruments. However, not all oral sources are oral traditions which hence

excludes them as sources of oral history. When an oral account from an observer of an event has been transmitted from informant to informant and generation to generation and an evident chain of informed transmission can be seen, the oral account is recognisable as generationalised, and is therefore an oral tradition. The chain of informants can then be looked upon as creators of an interlinked oral record, an oral tradition which should be regarded in the same way as a successive series of historical documents; albeit debatably interpreted by each informant. It is a form of derived history of which the first observer and subsequent informants are lost in the past. The message itself can be seen as continuously transmitted by oral means, until such time as a final informant allows the message to be committed to writing. As continuously transmitted oral evidence, it is perhaps secondary, but evidence nonetheless. The difference between fewer though constant mono-transmissions which involve interlinking singular channels of transmission, has to be compared with a greater number of multiple-transmissions which might distort or fuse some aspects more rapidly because there are more informants involved in the transmission process. Vansina points out that because more channels of transmission are involved, this variable then correlates with a greater control of details and therefore accuracy.

Vansina then considers forms of historical evidence contained in oral traditions. Here he differentiates descriptive information of an event which historians might consider a testimony to facts, as opposed to statements about a situation or event which would testify to opinions and values held regarding a fact. Accounts, and some poetry, can incorporate particular details of an event or situation from which the historian may derive objective testimonies which correlate with historical fact. Conversely, all classes of oral traditions, particularly tales, are statements of subjective beliefs and attitudes that in fact describe social situations and intellectual trends. The situational variables of oral traditions have to be taken into account. The inherent characteristics of an oral tradition include matters of social relevance for both the presenter and the recipient, or rather the

performer and the audience. The tales are of course significant to members of the communities which retain and maintain them. Therefore, their continuity and recitation are to varying degrees controlled, depending on the class to which they belong and the degree to which they are orchestrated. Relevant oral traditions are appropriately articulated by speakers when prompted within specific social circumstances according to genre and content. Tales, as opposed to epics, are more suited to familiar or less formal settings. Poetry tends to be recited during personal exchanges, whilst formal forums such as a political debates are better suited for historical gossip. Oral traditions function as an occasion warrants. Abridged versions may be articulated during less formal circumstances, while the recitation of the complete versions are restricted to the most formal occasions. We can see how this occurs when we consider the retention versus recitation of a genealogy. Clearly the performance of oral traditions fits within institutionalised frameworks and the content is determined by the given setting and audience.

The social control of oral tradition should not be surprising in an era during which the importance of information is continuously classified by degrees of significance and relevance. In highly stratified and centrally-controlled societies, past and present, the varying levels of social classes were linked to corresponding degrees of control regarding the dissemination and sharing of some information. Today, as in the past, information of value and significance is protected by people and processes. The more significance given to the information, the more levels and greater safety mechanisms employed. Vansina cites the example of the ancient Inca empire, but we need only look at our own society or neighbouring developed nations to observe the practice of restricting access to information, manipulating contexts and controlling the content of information, oral traditions included. Copyright law today, standardised in most nations, can be traced back to the determined efforts of politicians in the eighteenth century to protect the created expressions of an idea, whether oral or literary, as well as the potential earning rights of the

author. This legislated standard simply reflects the venerable tradition of people in communities determinedly protecting information.

Throughout his impressive analyses Vansina clearly speaks to a wide-ranging number of crucial and often inter-connected aspects, including the concept of oral traditions as critical messages and a part of culture.

All messages are a part of a culture. They are expressed in the language of a culture and are conceived, as well understood, in the substantive cognitive terms of a culture. Hence, culture shapes all messages and we must take this into account when we interpret them. (1985:124)

CHAPTER SIX

TE WHAKAKOPINGA - the conclusion -

*He aha te mea nui o te Ao ...
he tangata,
he tangata,
he tangata!*

- 6.1** Aotearoa – New Zealand
- 6.2** Kinship and modernity
- 6.3** Myth and oral histories
- 6.4** Being twenty-first century Māori

6.1 Aotearoa – New Zealand

When the name Aotearoa was given to the nation by the first known Oceanic voyagers to arrive in the islands, the people grew to be successfully self-sufficient. They consciously maintained an inherent connectedness with nature, which provided an abundance of resources, and they proved themselves socially adept, exercising pragmatic prudence throughout the ages, and as the need arose. They established a highly stratified system of social organisation in which each individual was not only an active member of a whānau, but each was simultaneously able to participate in the collective activity of a hapū and iwi. During centuries of autonomy and self-governance, they developed a formidable cultural identity comprising their own unique language, laws and lores, principals, codes of conduct, myths, oral histories and so forth; all which combined to differentiate them as distinct from other Oceanic societies. Aotearoa Māori were, without doubt, an intelligent, perceptive, highly skilled and proficient people.

With the arrival of the Pākehā came the inexorable collision of cultures as two distinct social systems and worldviews came into direct contact and the nation entire rapidly transformed from Aotearoa into the British colony of New Zealand. With this historical arrival came Western resources which Māori initially and selectively took up, initiating a portend of cultural transformations that would continue for in excess of a century. Religious ideologies, clothing fashions, steel tools, weaponry and so forth were easily integrated into the native reality of the pragmatic indigene. Contact however became conflict as Māori and Pākehā sought to etch out individual histories, leading to multiple tragic circumstances during which the imperial colonials would prefigure the downfall of Te Ao Māori. Had the first colonial settlers realised their ultimate goals of entirely conquering Aotearoa, then arguably the cultural memories of Māori would have been consigned to the annals of history. However, two contrasting histories

arose as Māori struggled to maintain their ancestral lands and indigenous identities while Pākehā constructed urban domains and the New Zealand identity. For Māori to survive they had little choice but to take up the practices of their increasingly dominant Pākehā counterparts. During the process of colonisation, with its initially veiled agenda of social assimilation, surviving generations of Māori and their progeny had little choice but to engage with the mechanisms of nineteenth century 'civilization' and swiftly burgeoning urbanisation. For vast numbers of Māori this engagement acted in two ways; as the foundation for a bicultural worldview which would eventually become a social manifesto for an entire future populace of New Zealand, and also as the means by which Māori would come to be divided.

6.2 Kinship and modernity

The collective consciousness of Māori was inherent in their worldview and social reality. Their kinship connections within the immediate whānau and wider social connectivity to hapū and iwi acted as a conduit by which to transfer knowledge, life skills, from preceding to descending generations and, just as crucially, as the exclusive means by which to perpetuate specialist skills and maintain their ancient oral histories, myths and indigenous worldview. However, the generational continuity of their unique indigenous knowledge came to be fragmented, ruptured, as new generations of Māori gradually sought modern advantages, most often to improve the lot of their families; and so Māori learnt to negotiate and compromise with the Pākehā who still perceived them as illiterate, primitive savages. Entire generations of Māori, whose overall populace was diminutive on a national scale, were faced with numerous unfamiliar and potentially catastrophic social juxtapositions. Out of this historical disarray arose the first Māori academics. Illustrious identities such as Tā Apirana Ngata and his few contemporaries, who came to foresee the tragic prospect of their people's demise and who acted concertedly to

bridge the ever-widening social divide, and to lay down the formal foundations upon which future Māori and Pākehā could stand united. The likes of Ngata, Buck, Pōmare, and Te Paea Herenga had each listened and learnt upon both the whānau paepae and within the Native School. Ngata, his contemporaries and their cohorts determinedly confronted the evident critical problems of social marginalisation, institutionalised racism and widespread discrimination. On their whenua, and others, they sought to inform and educate Māori how to develop their ancestral holdings, rural enclaves and cultural identity. Their contributions have not been forgotten by Māori, perhaps none more so than those of Ngata, who initiated, advocated and promoted the transformation of Māori arts and crafts, the increasing usage of the Māori language and the significant development of what, in time, would become recognised as the modern marae.

From the mid twentieth century, such legacies as Ngata's would prove invaluable. Māori had been given a focus thanks to the influence and labours of Ngata and his contemporaries. He had not only given over his entire life to the advancement of Māori, but the legacy from his generation meant future Māori could now enter the realms of politics, academia, economics and so forth as never before. When we consider inherent aspects of indigeneity today, Ngata is arguably the last of a bygone generation whose hard-fought legacy enabled Māori to be just that, Māori. Equally as significantly, Māori could be Māori on their own terms, and grounds, not Pākehā.

6.3 Myth and oral histories

Throughout, Māori had maintained their pre-literate and highly developed specialist skills, oral histories and ancient myths; albeit at times surreptitiously and often in the confines of their ever-decreasing ahikaa. As increasing numbers of Māori sought urban advantages there arose the inexorable great urban migration which separated generations of Māori

from their rural settings and divided matua and tamariki, kaumātua and mokopuna, cousins and siblings. The advent and ensuing achievements of what would become realised as the Urban Māori came at a cost. On the one hand, modernity was more complex and problematic than many Māori had anticipated and on the other, their rural counterparts remained in the limited social setting that facilitated the maintenance of their language, ancient histories and unique indigenous identities. Urban Māori would not only become, to varying degrees, disenfranchised, but also distinct from their rural counterparts as generational discontinuity led to compounding fragmentation.

As the ancient legacies of Māori were becoming further distant, iwi throughout the nation came to realise the necessity of developing modern means by which to perpetuate their indigenous knowledge and heritage. It was at this historical juncture that the cultural renaissance came to the fore as Māori reasserted a unified identity, wielding such means as their unique language, rich oral histories and a wealth of myths, many which spanned from before their arrival in Aotearoa. The modern marae was now an intercultural focal point as communal gathering grounds where elders and their progeny reconnected, rediscovered and redefined their political, social and economic status in the annals of New Zealand history.

6.4 Being twenty-first century Māori

Twenty-first century Māori can aspire to and achieve positions of power and authority at both a local and global level, in spite of so many barriers, many of which were constructed because of the racist perceptions of many Pakeha. (These barriers are still holding back many of the younger generation). For the individual this process has required a balancing of the various aspects of his/her cultural heritage with a broad understanding of the world of the 'other'. Many have successfully utilised the western-

focussed educational tools, while participating in the revival of the everyday use of our indigenous language. However, the transition from being a preliterate, autochthonous society to a modern literate indigenous society has taken in excess of a century, with significant impacts upon each generation concerned. There are rich resources of indigenous knowledge, including expositions of mythologies and oral histories, which are extant but as yet untapped. Making these available to the next generation is one of the primary tasks of those who have 'come through'.

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