Ngā Kai Para i te Kahikātoa: Māori Filmmaking, Forging a Path

By

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Abstract

This thesis examines and analyses Māori filmmaking in Aotearoa/New Zealand and, in particular, dramatic feature films with reference to an indigenous global context. This thesis is grounded in Kaupapa Māori theory, a theory that is founded in Māori epistemological and metaphysical traditions.

Film is an important part of identity formation and contributes to how we see ourselves as Māori. It shapes others’ perceptions of us locally and globally. There is a struggling but growing movement in the making of Māori dramatic and documentary films, which began in the late 1970s and 1980s. However, very few Māori driven and directed dramatic feature films have been made. Therefore, Māori pioneer filmmakers Barry Barclay (Ngati 1987), Merata Mita (Mauri 1988) and Don Selwyn (Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti - Māori Merchant of Venice 2002) are significant contributors to our cinematic history. Their films offer us unique and transformative cinematic representations of Māori in the form of dramatic feature films.

Little research has been conducted on the conditions of Māori filmmaking, the processes and environments and how these may create barriers or encourage Māori filmmaking aspirations. In addition, only a small body of work exists that examines Māori film and filmmaking that is grounded in Kaupapa Māori theory. This study gives voice to our history and tells part of the story of pioneers in Māori film. Articulating the political and economic nature of filmmaking, the study raises fundamental issues about filmmaking practices and Māori cinematic aspirations.

One contribution of the thesis is the development of Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework - that builds on previous theoretical work. The framework offers new ways to understand and examine films grounded in Māori worldviews and experiences. Key findings highlight how Māori identities and culture are validated through cinematic narrative and visual representations. This was a deliberate act on the part of the pioneer filmmakers who recognised the
transformative potential of cinema; offering a rare opportunity to see Māori reflected on screen in this manner.
Mihi

Don Selwyn, Barry Barclay and Merata Mita; you will never be forgotten.

E ngā kai whakairo i ngā taonga kiriata, hei tohu whāngai, hei tohu tuku wero, hei tohu ako, hei tohu pupuri i tō tātou reo pūmāu. Kia kore ai tātou e ngaro iho pēnei i te hūia.

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Kaumāta Naida Glavish was generous with her time, sharing her experiences and knowledge. This was invaluable and shaped my understandings, allowing me a glimpse of the breadth and depth of our knowledge. Through our kōrero the name for my theoretical framework and title for this thesis emerged.

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Ahi kaa: concept of historical occupation
Aotearoa: New Zealand
Aroha: love, sympathy
Haka: dance with chant
Hapū: sub tribe, kinship group of multiple whānau
Harirū: form of greeting that includes the pressing of noses, kissing and handshakes
Hawaiiki: Māori ancestral homeland
Heitiki: pendant carved in an abstract form of a human
Hīkoi: march, walk
Hīnaki: nets (eel pots)
Hui: a gathering or meeting
Hūrai: Jew
Ihi: unique quality or special power that everything has, including animals and plants
Iwi: nation, tribe
Kai: food
Kai karanga: women performing welcome call
Kaitiaki: guardian
Kaitiakitanga: guardianship and associated responsibilities
Kanaka Ma’oli: indigenous Hawai’ians
Kapa haka: Māori performing arts
Karakia: incantation, chant, prayer
Karanga: call of welcome
Kaumātua: respected elder (male or female)
Kaupapa: underlying base, general principles, topic, platform
Kāwanatanga: governance
Kete: flax kit
Kia ora: a greeting e.g. hello
Kōauau: flute
Koha: gift, donation
Kōhanga Reo: pre-school Māori language nests
Kōrero: conversation
Koro, Koroua: old man, grandfather
Korowai: woven cloak
Kotahitanga: Māori unity but its historical meaning was connected to iwi unity
Kotuku: white heron
Kuia: an elder who is a woman
Kura Kaupapa: Māori language immersion schools
Manaakitanga: hospitality, respect, taking care of one another
Mana: authority, related to Māori sovereignty and power
Mana motuhake: Māori sovereignty, independence, control
Mana whenua: customary authority over an area
Manuhiri: visitors, guests
Marae: gathering places, ancestral meeting place
Marae ātea: open space or courtyard in front of the meeting house
Mataku: afraid, to fear
Mātauranga: knowledge
Mate Māori: Māori sickness
Maunga: mountain
Mauri: life-force
Mere: short flat club
Mihi: form of address, greeting
Moana: sea
Moko: tattoo
Moko kauae: chin tattoo
Mokopuna: grandchild, descendant
Mōteatea: ancient Māori songs, laments
Noa: free from restriction
Pā: fortified village, term of address to a male elder
Pākehā: people of European origin
Papatūānuku: Earth Mother
Patupaiarehe: fairy-like beings
Pāua: abalone
Pepeha: set form of words
Pito: umbilical cord
Piupiu: flax skirt
Poi: a light ball with a string attached that is swirled rhythmically
Poroporākī: farewell to the dead
Pou: post, pole
Pounamu: greenstone
Pounamu heitiki: greenstone pendant carved in an abstract form of a human
Pōwhiri: formal welcome in a Māori setting
Pūtātara: conch shell used as a wind instrument
Pūtorino: flute
Rangatahi: youth, adolescent
Ritenga: Māori custom, habits, the basic customs of society
Rongoā: Māori methods of healing including practices and knowledge
Rōpū: team, group
Rua: storage pit
Ruru: owl, morepork
Taiaha: long club
Tāne: men, male
Tāngata whenua: indigenous people of the land
Tangihanga/Tangi: Māori process of mourning, funeral based on Māori practices/tikanga
Taonga: treasure, something that is highly prized
Tapu: a complex concept that describes a state separate from the mundane or ordinary. It is also translated as restricted or prohibited and inadequately explained as sacred
Teina: younger sibling of the same gender
Te reo Māori: Māori language
Tikanga: Māori protocols, practices or processes
Tino rangatiratanga: chieftainship, self-determination
Tohunga: a skilled person, an expert, priest, healer
Tuakana: older sibling of the same gender
Tukutuku: woven panels
Tūmanako: hope
Tupuna: ancestor, forebear (singular), tūpuna (plural)
Tūrangawaewae: Sense of belonging in respect of where you are from, a place to stand
Tūrehu: fairy-like beings
Urūpā: cemetery
Utu: complex Māori notions of revenge, restoring balance and social order
Wahine: woman (singular), wāhine (plural)
Waiata: song, chant
Wairua: spiritual essence
Waka: canoe
Waka taua: war canoe
Wānanga: place of learning
Wero: challenge
Whaikōrero: formalised speech making, oratory
Whakairo: carvings
Whakapapa: genealogy, connections. An integrated relationship between Māori ancestry, ethnicity, culture and identity
Whakapono: truth,
Whakataukī: proverb
Whānau: extended family groupings and structures
Whanaungatanga: relationships, collectivity
Wharenui: meeting house
Whenua: earth, placenta, afterbirth

Note: Meanings are indicative only. I use macrons in this thesis but do not apply them to people’s names (generally these were impossible to correctly ascertain) or when they are not present in original titles e.g. film titles and book titles; evident in the film Ngati which would usually have a macron (ngāti). Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti was not as clear cut because I was able to access two versions of the film. The version distributed as an educational resource had macrons whereas the general release did not. I chose to use macrons for this film.
Acronyms

CNZ: Creative New Zealand

MASPAC: Māori and South Pacific Arts Council

MTS: Māori Television

NZBC: New Zealand Broadcasting Commission

NZFA: New Zealand Film Archive

NZFC: New Zealand Film Commission

NZOA: NZ On Air or New Zealand on Air formerly the New Zealand Broadcasting Commission (NZBC)

QE II Arts Council: Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand (Now named Creative New Zealand)

TMP: Te Māngai Pāho

TVNZ: Television New Zealand. A State-owned enterprise. Their two main free to air channels are TV One and TV2.

TV3: Independently run free to air television channel

UN: United Nations

Mass media television in Aotearoa predominantly refers to the free to air television channels, TV One, TV2, TV3 and Prime Television. These channels primarily cater to a Pākehā or white audience. I generally avoid using the term ‘mainstream’ as it reinforces the marginalisation of Māori. Pihama challenges the term 'mainstream broadcasters’ saying that the “key players in the market are not casting broadly at all.”

Preface

The first question many Māori ask is: “ko wai koe?” This does not ask for your name but “who are you?” generally meaning “where you are from?” Ko wai au says, “This is who I am, this is where I am from.”

Ko Kapowai te maunga
Ko Waikare te awa
Ko Tūriki te marae
Ko Ngātokimatawhauroa te waka
Ko Ngāpuhi nui tonu te iwi
Ko Te Kapotai te hapū

Ko Pewhairangi te moana, Pewhairangi ko au, Ko au ko Pewhairangi. The Bay of Islands is the moana, I am the moana (sea) and the moana is me. This study is profoundly influenced by who I am and where I am from.

A number of elements led me to undertake this study – my experiences as a Māori woman, my research and work in health and media, including the production of videos ranging from health education, telling iwi based stories to music clips. In a working partnership with my sister, Helen Moewaka Barnes, I learnt all aspects of video production which meant that I had a turn behind the camera, editing, scripting and the occasional cameo spot. During this period of my life I also experienced sexism where my competency was questioned resulting in, among other things, difficulties accessing equipment. At the same time I received great support and was fortunate to work with Māori and Pākehā groups and individuals who freely shared their knowledge and time.

My interest in visual media, as sites for a multitude of Māori expressions led me to examine Māori documentary makers working in the prime time television broadcast sphere for my Master’s thesis. At the time, Māori Television had not gone to air and a concern raised during this study was that success does not guarantee further success. Following the Māori directed films Ngati (1987), Mauri
(1988), *Te Rua* (1991) and *Once Were Warriors* (1994) there was an eight year gap before *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti, Māori Merchant of Venice* (2002) was produced, highlighting the ongoing limitations in terms of access and inequitable resource allocation for Māori driven work. These early films are significant because they are the first Māori directed dramatic feature films that tell Māori stories and *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti, Māori Merchant of Venice* remains the only dramatic feature length film in te reo Māori.

As part of my Master’s study prior to undertaking a thesis, I talked to Māori about the films, *Ngati* directed by Barry Barclay, and *The Piano* (1993) directed and written by Pākehā Jane Campion. What stood out for me was the role *Ngati* played in validating and centring Māori identity and culture. In contrast, it was argued that Māori characters in *The Piano* provided a ‘native’ backdrop. Participants felt that the representations of Māori in the film were far removed from their experiences, offensive and belittled Māori identity and culture.

The screen is a seductive site and plays a major role in shaping identity and culture taking into account diverse spectatorship negotiations that occur when creating meaning of media representations. As tāngata whenua (indigenous people of the land), we know the power of film and how we are individually and collectively affected by media representations. Storytelling in feature film has the ability to convey a range of indigenous experiences in detail for a sustained length of time. It is an opportunity to make visible the lives of marginalised groups and give expression to our diverse realities and experiences. Mass media representations have historically marginalised Māori experiences and perpetuated stereotypical constructions. Our experiences and histories are important and need to be told and this includes the stories behind the making of the films. Māori were innovative and quick to respond to new technologies and techniques. This is evident in the advanced pā systems of trench warfare developed by Māori to resist the British military that differed from traditional and British models, as well as

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2 *Ngati, Mauri* and *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* will be covered in-depth in the case studies. *Te Rua*, directed by Barclay examines the return of Māori treasures. *Once Were Warriors* is directed by Lee Tamahori and focuses on a dysfunctional working class urban Māori whānau.

3 *The Piano* is set in the 19th century. It tells the story of an elective mute woman, Ada (Holly Hunter) who travels from Scotland with her daughter Flora (Anna Paquin) to Aotearoa as the result of an arranged marriage to settler Stewart (Sam Neill).
early trading and horticultural innovations.\textsuperscript{4} Although Māori struggled to gain access, they were quick to appreciate the advantages of media technology and the Māori pioneers in film developed ways to represent Māori that challenged dominant filmmaking practices.\textsuperscript{5} In addition to the local impacts of Māori filmmaking, formal and informal discussions with Māori and overseas reviews made me increasingly aware that cinematic representations frame not only local, but global perceptions and understandings of Māori. Film can offer alternative constructions of Māori identity and glimpses of Māori experiences and realities that are not only relevant to Māori but resonate with indigenous peoples globally.\textsuperscript{6} Brendan Hokowhitu proposes that film can be a site of resistance where indigenous groups are able to maintain their autonomy in the age of globalisation.\textsuperscript{7}

During my Master’s studies I developed relationships with a number of exceptional Māori working in film and television. I particularly want to note the support and encouragement I received from Barclay, Don Selwyn and later, their whānau (families). Both filmmakers did not hesitate to speak to me and were open and generous with their kōrero (conversation). However, I found little research, written resources or analysis of Māori filmmaking, the process, environments and texts, and even less work centred in Māori worldviews. These reasons alone were grounds to undertake this study.

In order to engage with the processes of filmmaking and the film texts from a Māori perspective I built on Kaupapa Māori theory and developed Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework in order to apply it and explore the utility of its application to film.\textsuperscript{8} There is a small body of writing on Kaupapa Māori theory and for this reason I frequently reference texts from

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{4} James Belich, \textit{The New Zealand Wars} (Auckland: Penguin, 1988), 291-98.
  \item \textsuperscript{5} Barry Barclay, \textit{Our Own Image} (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1990), 17.
  \item \textsuperscript{6} The term indigenous peoples is used in a collective sense while acknowledging differences. It refers to “peoples who have been subjected to the colonisation of their lands and cultures, and the denial of their sovereignty, by a colonising society that has come to dominate and determine the shape and quality of their lives, even after it has formally pulled out.” In Linda Tuhiwai Smith, \textit{Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples} (London: Zed Books, 1999), 7.
  \item \textsuperscript{8} Kaupapa Māori theorists include Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Graeme Hingangaroa Smith, Leonie Pihama and Helen Moewaka Barnes.
\end{itemize}
theses and to a lesser extent journal papers. Broadly speaking, Kaupapa Māori theory is grounded in Māori worldviews and experiences and is linked to notions of resistance and transformation. Kaupapa Māori film theory as articulated here, was developed alongside the work and thinking of a number of Māori working in the field. This includes Māori filmmakers and in particular Barclay, Merata Mita and Selwyn. Informal discussions with filmmaker and theorist Leonie Pihama gave me a broad understanding of the field. I am particularly grateful to Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Helen Moewaka Barnes who provided insights and discussion in relation to Kaupapa Māori theory and the theoretical framework, \textit{Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework}. An early interview with Tuhiwai Smith provided a foundation for thinking about Kaupapa Māori film theory and ongoing discussions with Moewaka Barnes advanced the conceptual development of \textit{Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework}. I was also fortunate to have access to Māori with a wealth of knowledge who were patient with their explanations, given that I am not fluent in te reo Māori (Māori language). In particular, Naida Glavish gave generously of her time and knowledge.

There is much that the English language cannot convey, resulting in difficulties expressing the depth of Māori knowledge and concepts. In particular the intangible elements of our world such as the spiritual element of wairua are inadequately expressed in English but nonetheless must be investigated. In this realm there is never a simple question or simple answer. Therefore, translations of Māori words into English can only offer a broad interpretation. There is much I have learnt that is not put into words here but will remain with me and forever inform my life and work. At times I struggled with the requirements to name and categorise, aware of the potential to limit our knowledge, concepts and aspirations. However, as theorists including Moewaka Barnes and Pihama advocate, there are advantages in developing and articulating our theories and understandings.

The writing of this thesis allowed me to reflect on the many challenges facing Māori working in a dominant culture. I am aware that film is an expensive medium with many constraints and being a small country there are additional
problems, but I am driven by my conviction that as tāngata whenua we have the right to represent ourselves on film and have access to the resources to achieve this in a sustainable manner. This doctorate attempts to convey my thinking and approach at this point in time.
Introduction

The intention of this thesis is to create a theoretical framework, a space that examines the path forged by Māori filmmakers and their films to elucidate and develop Māori understandings that contribute to wider theoretical and media debates about indigenous representations and creativity. The study examines the practical, political and theoretical aspects of Māori filmmaking, exploring the potential of Māori creative work within the film industry in Aotearoa. This offers a valuable addition for understanding and analysing Māori filmmaking and films that utilise Māori as subjects or themes.

The Struggle to Name our Theory

Moewaka Barnes argues that there is no easy indigenous response to the question “What is your theory?” 9 Indigenous communities have struggled to name and validate their theories in the face of long established western epistemological and critical traditions. It is relevant to note that I deliberately employ the lower case for western in this thesis as it is a description or adjective as opposed to a noun. Similarly I use lower case for the term indigenous in these contexts. What is valid theory and what is not, is the subject of much discussion and debate.10 With overwhelming priorities requiring attention, Māori seldom get the opportunity to reflect on practice, but Kaupapa Māori theory however has been prioritised. Moewaka Barnes suggests that it provides us with a foundation on which we can build and legitimate our work, “without genuflection to western academic disciplinary silos.”11 However, validating our theory remains a highly contested area despite its growing national and international significance.

Indigenous theorist Nancy Shoemaker proposes that there is scepticism and suspicion of dominant western theorists and the generality of that theory by

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10 Ibid., 4.
11 Ibid.
indigenous communities. She suggests that even theorists such as Edward Said and Frantz Fanon who write from their experiences as colonised peoples remain foreign and distant from North American perspectives.\textsuperscript{12} In a Māori context Pihama speaks of her resistance to writings about western knowledge and western theories in ways that centre those understandings and as a result struggles to see herself in these theories.\textsuperscript{13} Corrin Columpar raises similar concerns that require the questioning of the ideological assumptions underpinning a theory and whether the theory can travel.\textsuperscript{14} Recognising the hegemony of western theory and the diverse experiences of colonisation, there is validity in Shoemaker’s argument that theory generally, and even misguided theories, can play a role in clarifying thinking; assisting us to get to the heart of the matter.

I am privileged to belong to a community of scholars that do not attempt to replicate western traditions but engage from multiple traditions of scholarship. Some western forms of scholarship do not progress our aspirations and we often find ourselves fighting to claim and defend our own theoretical spaces. The notion of making space is raised by Moewaka Barnes in her examination of what is claimed as legitimate theory and as indigenous peoples what we feel comfortable with claiming. She refers to Shoemaker who adopts the Native American metaphor of “clearing the path.”\textsuperscript{15} This originates from northeastern American Indian ceremonial processes and negotiation that alludes to the removal of obstacles so trade and travel between nations could prosper. In a theoretical context Shoemaker uses it to demonstrate how theory can “open up ways of seeing the past.”\textsuperscript{16} This action brings clarity and understanding to indigenous experiences through an examination of what has gone before.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{12} Nancy Shoemaker, \textit{Clearing a Path} (New York: Routlege, 2002), x.
\textsuperscript{15} Moewaka Barnes, “Arguing for the Spirit in the Language of the Mind: A Māori Practitioner’s View of Research and Science”, 3-5.
\textsuperscript{16} Shoemaker, \textit{Clearing a Path}, vii.
\textsuperscript{17} Moewaka Barnes, “Arguing for the Spirit in the Language of the Mind: A Māori Practitioner’s View of Research and Science”, 4-5; Shoemaker, \textit{Clearing a Path}, vii.
The approach I take in this thesis is to bring together theory and practice in the filmmaking and media environments. This reflects the political settings Māori must operate within, both in the field of film and in the wider national arena. As Pihama reminds us “we need to be clear, everything that is about struggling for the position of Māori is political.”\textsuperscript{18} Despite advances and the diversity of mainstream films there remains little room for Māori and indigenous projects. My intention is to privilege that which is frequently unprivileged and look at how we can progress for the collective good. Therefore, I centre Kaupapa Māori theory as it privileges Māori voices, experiences and aspirations for self-determination. The framework offers ways to explore film, but does not seek to apply a right or wrong way for examining Māori filmmaking and texts. This recognises the danger that reification of a term like Kaupapa Māori will itself produce certain conventions and ossifications.

There is ongoing discussion concerning the defining of Kaupapa Māori and whether this is counter productive. But without some boundaries it “becomes all things to all people, the primary characteristic being that it is about being Māori.”\textsuperscript{19} Kaupapa Māori film theory is counter hegemonic and validates being Māori in its complexity and diversity, challenging dominant ways of seeing, interpreting and valuing. Counter discourses and their oppositional nature can in turn entrench hegemonic discourses, but the paradigmatic challenge of Kaupapa Māori theory that is far more than an internal counter discourse, can seriously destabilise established praxis and critique. Like Barclay’s discussion of Fourth Cinema, Kaupapa Māori film theory offers an indigenous space premised on indigenous worldviews and experiences.\textsuperscript{20} This demands a critical understanding of the position of Māori in the wider society in which the films were created and produced. Struggle is implicit and requires an examination of colonisation and power. Therefore, my position is not neutral or objective and I do not remove myself from this study and the collective issues that emerge for Māori. While

\textsuperscript{18} Pihama, "Tīhei Mauri Ora Honouring Our Voices: Mana Wahine as a Kaupapa Māori Theoretical Framework", 81.
individual outcomes are one aspect of this thesis, collective outcomes are important.

An analysis of the film texts signalled key themes that informed the following six categories for the Kaupapa Māori film theoretical framework: Māori voices; Māori worldviews and concepts; collectivity and relationships; responsibility and accountability; challenge and resistance and; transformation. These categories inform the direction of this thesis and will be discussed in detail in the chapter on Kaupapa Māori film theory.

**The Filmmakers**

**Ngā kai para i te kahikātoa**

_Clearing away the manuka (tree)_

The above is a uniquely Northern Māori saying and refers here to the Māori pioneers of film, the trailblazers, who forged ahead with their visions despite the obstacles. In doing so they challenged orthodoxies and cleared the path for others. This links to the previous discussion that through an examination of the past, new and enlightening understandings can be applied to indigenous experiences.21 The case studies within this thesis examine the first dramatic feature length films of Māori directors Barclay, Mita and Selwyn who made films from a distinctly Māori position. These films convey diverse expressions and experiences. In addition, an understanding of the filmmakers’ histories and intentions is crucial to an examination of their films. These individuals are Māori pioneers in the film landscape and their knowledge, experiences and texts are taonga.

Ngā taonga tuku iho is identified by some Māori theorists including Hingangaroa Smith and Sam Cruickshank, as a principle of Kaupapa Māori theory.22 It is relevant as an overriding tenet in the case studies. In this context, ngā taonga tuku

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iho means treasures handed down from our tūpuna (ancestors). Tohunga (expert, healer, priest) and philosopher Māori Marsden identifies taonga as something that can touch the soul or heart. Therefore, taonga is a treasure, something precious and this may be “tangible or intangible, spiritual or material.”23 This thesis proposes that the three films examined in the case studies are taonga and the achievements of Māori filmmakers demand acknowledgement, documentation and support.

It is important to examine the achievements of Barclay, Mita and Selwyn to gain insights into the past, present and future generations of Māori film and filmmakers that include cultural, political and aesthetic elements. This may be perceived to be an auteur approach in the context of classic cinematic theory, but it is Kaupapa Māori film theory that is strategically utilised and centred.24 The approach allows for understandings grounded in Māori epistemologies, mātauranga (knowledge) and aspirations. In addition, the three case studies examined in this thesis occur within a tight time frame of filmmaking that encompasses documentary and television and is substantial in output. I realise the danger of constructing a hagiography and while I sit alongside the people I talk about, I critically engage with the work.

**Methodology**

The aim of this study was to gain an understanding of Māori filmmaking, its products, and the environments and contexts within which Māori filmmakers must operate: cultural, political, economic, social, technological and aesthetic. My objectives were to:

1. Analyse a selection of films made by pioneering Māori filmmakers;
2. Document and analyse the factors involved in the conception, funding, production and screening of a selection of three Māori films;

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3. Explore the cultural, aesthetic, political and theoretical issues raised by these works;
4. Develop a Kaupapa Māori film theoretical framework; and
5. Examine the texts utilising this framework.

The study draws on academic literature, press and television coverage, promotional material, industry reports, unstructured discussions, conferences, hui and personal interviews with filmmakers, key stakeholders including writers and funders, theorists and kaumātua (respected elders). Basic research including academic and media coverage was undertaken to gather sufficient information about the filmmakers; very little is written about Selwyn in particular.

**Theoretical Underpinnings**

This thesis is grounded in Kaupapa Māori research and theory and draws on academic media and film studies and international indigenous and local theoretical writing. Kaupapa Māori research takes for granted the legitimacy of Māori, including culture and language, rejecting the notion of objectivity and positivism. Kaupapa Māori research asserts the importance of Māori worldviews, philosophy and principles, is related to being Māori and is committed to Māori aspirations and the struggles of self-determination. The research is undertaken by a Māori researcher, not a researcher who happens to be Māori.

**Selection of Participants**

In-depth discussions were conducted with experts, revealing personal insights and experiences that contributed to the overall study. Through my existing networks and connections within the wider Māori filmmaking community I was able to draw on key commentators and practitioners of film. This included people working in film such as actors, directors, producers, writers and technical crew as well as kaumātua and Māori theorists and funding organisations. Face-to-face interviews were conducted wherever possible and interview times varied from

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25 For example, Linda Tuhiiwi Smith, Helen Moewaka Barnes, Fiona Cram and Leonie Pihama advance this position.
27 Ibid., 184.
thirty minutes to two hours. On some occasions the interview was followed up with email enquires. When willing participants could not meet face-to-face, phone interviews were conducted. For example, two of the participants live overseas. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the participant and transcribed. Participants were then offered the option of reading the transcripts and making changes. This option was taken up by some of the participants and where requested, changes were made.

Many of those interviewed contributed to more than one area of my thesis including the practical, political, cultural and theoretical aspects of filmmaking. I am therefore reluctant to confine their contributions to one specific area and below I offer an overview only of their roles. For example, Barclay is a filmmaker, philosopher and theorist and his interview contributed to the case study of Ngati and the theoretical dimensions of this thesis. Drawing on more than two generations of filmmakers in the interviews substantially contributed to the historical context of filmmaking in this study. The thesis drew extensively on interviews with the following people.

**Interviews:**

*Ainsley Gardiner:* Producer and on the board of Te Paepae Ataata. Personal interview

*Barry Barclay:* Director. Personal interview for Master’s Thesis, April 2003 and informal communication, 2007

*Briar Grace-Smith:* Writer. Personal interview, November 2007

*Don Selwyn:* Director and producer. Personal interview for Master’s Thesis, December 2002 and informal communication with his whānau

*Graeme Cowley:* Cinematographer. Personal interview, December 2008

*Larry Parr:* Producer. Personal interview, April 2008

*Linda Tuhiwai Smith:* Theorist. Personal interview, April 2007

*Naida Glavish:* Kaumātua. Personal interview, May 2009

*Reina Webster-Iti:* Director. Personal interview, May 2008

*Rena Owen:* Actor and filmmaker. Personal interview, August 2008

Tainui Stephens: Director. Consultant/advisor for NZ On Air (NZOA) and the New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC). Personal interview, September 2007
Tearepa Kahi: Director. Personal interview, March 2008

Funding Organisations

John Bishara: Chief Executive Officer, Te Māngai Pāho. Personal interview, February 2008
Trevor Moeke: Former Chief Executive Officer, Te Māngai Pāho. Personal interview, June 2010
Hone Kouka: Development Executive, NZFC. Personal interview, February 2008
Lindsay Shelton: Marketing Director, NZFC (1979-2001). Personal interview, February, 2011
Ruth Harley: Chief Executive Officer, NZFC. Personal interview, February 2008
Glen Usmar: Television Manager, NZOA. Personal interview, February 2008
Bird Runningwater: Associate Director, Native American and Indigenous Programme, Sundance Institute. Personal interview, May 2008

Due to the untimely deaths of both Selwyn (2007) and Barclay (2008) during the early stages of writing this thesis, I was not able to conduct formal interviews. I am fortunate because I interviewed both filmmakers earlier for my Master’s thesis and with the support of their whānau draw on these discussions in this study. The interviews are taonga and need to be preserved, leading me to occasionally include long excerpts. I also had informal discussions with Barclay that further informed my thinking. Although attempts were made, I was unable to secure an interview with Mita who sadly died in 2010.

Case Studies

Three case studies, Ngati (1987), Mauri (1988) and Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti, Māori Merchant of Venice (2002), were selected. This allowed for close readings of the films and to explore the processes involved in their production, including the filmmaker’s intentions giving due attention to industry contexts. Barclay directed Ngati, frequently referred to as the first feature film to be directed, written and predominantly made by Māori and Mita was the first Māori
woman to direct and produce a feature-length film, *Mauri*. Selwyn broke new ground with *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti, Māori Merchant of Venice* as it is, to date, the only feature-length film in te reo Māori. The case studies were chosen for the reasons discussed earlier, and in addition they each represent a first in dramatic feature film in their particular area. They were directed by Māori who had a history of advocating for Māori participation in both film and television. Their films validate and legitimate being Māori, are counter hegemonic and offer hope.

Articulating filmmaking practices highlights the additional complexities facing Māori who attempt to incorporate Māori worldviews and tikanga in the processes of production. Kaupapa Māori film theory works best in discussion and engagement with the filmmakers and it is possible to cover production practices in reasonable detail in the *Ngati* case study because Barclay spoke and wrote about his filmmaking experiences. However, because of limited information, the same level of analysis cannot be applied to the production processes of *Mauri* and *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*.

Using the concept ‘ko wai koe’, discussed earlier as a structural reference, the case studies begin with a pepeha type format that gives a brief personal history followed by a more in-depth work history of each of the filmmakers. This allows for personal insights and reflections on the filmmakers’ lives and work history, providing both important documentation and a context for the analyses of *Ngati, Mauri* and *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*.

**Analysis**

I transcribed all the recorded interviews. This provided me with an in-depth knowledge of the content of the interviews and ensured the accuracy of the transcripts. In addition, I carried out multiple readings of the interviews to draw out themes and information pertinent to this study. In light of film theory and Kaupapa Māori, key themes emerged that resonated with Kaupapa Māori theory.

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28 Tikanga refers to Māori protocols, practices and processes.

29 Pepeha is the information used in a reply to “ko wai koe” and includes where you are from, connections and place.
and contributed to the creation of Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework. Further research, including academic texts and media items such as press clippings drew out dominant themes and relevant information that contributed to the chapters.

**Textual Analysis of Films**

An analysis of film texts required the viewing of feature films, television dramas and short films. The three case studies required multiple viewings and detailed analyses of the texts grounded in the Kaupapa Māori film theoretical framework. The Kaupapa Māori film theoretical framework was tested and revised throughout the study and in particular during the textual readings of Ngati, Mauri and Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti. This also allowed for an analysis about the nature of the representations.

**Chapter Breakdown**

Chapter One, Colonisation, Racism and Representation surveys the theoretical terrain, drawing on media and indigenous theorists. Issues of representation are explored and it is argued that they are neither neutral nor objective. The chapter clears the path for later discussions on Kaupapa Māori film theory which is centred in this study. Chapter Two, Concise History of Aotearoa, sets the scene by giving a brief history of Aotearoa to contextualise the following chapters. It covers key events that frame Māori film and filmmaking, privileging Māori history in Aotearoa since colonisation. For example, tropes of land confiscation are seen as significant to this study. The following chapter, A Historical Overview of Māori Filmmaking identifies key developments in Māori filmmaking in Aotearoa, and to a lesser extent television. This includes an examination of funding environments, policies and legislation that impacted on Māori cinematic development. Selected films with significant Māori content that were not creatively driven by Māori are also discussed as they raise issues that are directly relevant to Māori representation. The Fourth Chapter, Kaupapa Māori Film Theory, provides a foundation for theoretical engagement from distinctly Māori worldviews. This chapter gives an overview of the development of Kaupapa
Māori theory and then outlines the key categories and elements of Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework developed as part of this study. The fifth, sixth and seventh chapters are case studies of the three films mentioned earlier, Ngati, Mauri and Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti. Each case study begins with a brief personal background of the director and an overview of his or her work history following the style of pepeha mentioned previously. The format provides a context for analyses of the three films in the case studies and advances the proposal that these films are taonga tuku iho. The background is followed by an analysis of pre-production and production elements including funding arrangements and then an in-depth textual analysis of each film utilising Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework. The Conclusion draws together the key themes that emerged from the application of Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework to the case studies. The themes and the efficacy of the theoretical framework are discussed and analysed. The study demonstrates the important contribution these filmmakers and their films made not only in the media field but to Māori and society in general.
Chapter One

Colonisation, Racism and Representation

Introduction

Whakataukī
Rurea, taitea, ka tū kō taikākā anake
Getting to the heart of the matter

The above whakataukī (proverb) lays the foundation for this chapter as the following discussion draws on diverse theories and experiences in order to get to the heart of the matter. It is consistent with Shoemaker’s assertion, raised in the introduction, that theory from a wide range of disciplines and places can assist us in the search to understand and explain complex issues. However, theories from other lands and experiences are employed with care. For example, ‘post-colonial’ literary theory differs greatly between countries, where some have experienced the retreat of the coloniser, and others still remain in its grip. The processes of colonisation and the dispossession of land, language, culture and people have local specificity that differs not only between minority and immigrant groups but among indigenous communities on a global scale. Although there are commonalities, there are also differences as theories and experiences emerge from distinct indigenous systems in response to diverse colonial forms. It is with these issues in mind that the following discussion engages with a range of theoretical arguments that are useful to an analysis of Māori film and filmmaking.

The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section explores the pervasiveness of colonisation and the concomitant constructions of race and

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30 Shoemaker, Clearing a Path, viii.
31 Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 70.
representations of the Other with particular reference to Aotearoa. Hegemony and the associated technologies of power are examined as this sheds light on the complex issues of colonisation and racism and the durability of colonial constructions of race and culture.

The second section examines acts of resistance and strategies of the oppressed and indigenous that challenge and disrupt dominant constructions and processes of indigenous marginalisation with reference to television and film. Indigenous peoples have strategically and effectively used visual media including film as a vehicle for self-expression, to contest dominant narratives, reclaim histories and assert liberatory and transformative ways of being. The following discussion clears and illuminates a path for a later examination of Māori filmmaking in relation to Kaupapa Māori film theory.

Colonisation and Notions of Race

An understanding of the nature and ongoing effects of colonisation is crucial to a discussion of Māori film and filmmaking. The colonising history of Aotearoa (which will be elaborated on in the following chapter) oppressed and disconnected Māori people, communities and identities. Tuhiwai Smith highlights these issues and reinforces the need for indigenous communities to articulate their experiences:

Imperialism frames the indigenous experience. It is part of our story, our version of modernity…Writing about our experiences under imperialism and its more specific expression of colonialism has become a significant project of the indigenous world.

Therefore, the term ‘post-colonial’ poses problems for indigenous communities as it suggests colonisation has come to an end and a new state is in progress. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam argue that even for previously colonised countries, the

33 Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 19.
The retreat of the coloniser seldom equates to an end to hegemony. The writings of Tuhiwai Smith, Pihama and a number of other indigenous authors support Māori understandings of the persistent and enduring nature of colonialism, arguing against any notion of a ‘post-colonial’ society in Aotearoa.

Colonisation brought with it notions of race, a set of technologies of categorisation and marginalisation, by which the ideology of racial hierarchies could be imposed that favoured the coloniser. Recognising the problematic nature of the term ‘race’, a discussion of racism is nevertheless critical to an analysis of Māori/Pākehā relations in Aotearoa. Prior to colonisation the concept of race or racial difference did not exist for Māori. Social organisation and identity was developed in relationship to whakapapa (genealogy/connections), whānau (extended family groupings), hapū (sub tribe) and iwi (tribe), strengthened through whanaungatanga (relationships). Racism, grounded in defining the racial difference of the Other in order to justify and maintain domination is described by Albert Memmi as:

A generalising definition and valuation of biological differences, whether real or imaginary, to the advantage of the one defining and deploying them, and to the detriment of the one subjected to that act of definition, to the end of justifying (social or physical) hostility and assault.

Setting out to both name and establish the inferiority of the colonised was an unrelenting iterative global colonial strategy. Indigenous peoples were classified as primitive and uncivilised, lacking intellect, histories, knowledge systems, theories and cohesive social structures. This is seen in the categorisation of American Indians as possessing inferior intelligence and who were subsequently called upon to prove their humanness and ability. Ethnographers in Aotearoa including Elsdon Best and George Grey described Māori in terms of savage,

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35 Further examples include Ranginui Walker, Sheilagh Walker, Papaarangi Reid, Helen Moewaka Barnes and Moana Jackson
barbaric and uncivilised. In binary opposition, the coloniser was constructed as civilised, intellectual, with superior systems of knowledge and developed social structures. The classification of race, difference and the established binary distinctions of civilised/primitive and virtuous/depraved supported the imperialistic agenda, and the colonial experience in Aotearoa was not exempt. These binary characteristics included physical and biological features and the associated distinctions between the civilisation and intellect of the west or the ‘white’ race with the primitivism and backwardness of the colonised. Colonialism and its adjunct imperialism provided concepts that defined humanity and what counted as fully human.

Social Darwinism played an important role in the entrenchment of racial hierarchies. Justifying these constructions was the theory of natural selection and ‘survival of the fittest’ who were, unsurprisingly, European. Therefore, the extinction of the inferior Other was to be expected as a natural consequence of evolution. Memmi argues that alongside the classification of the inferior Other, drawn from biological models, was the definition of the depraved and morally inferior Other, “warranting punishment or at least sanction.” Defining indigenous peoples as simultaneously inferior and depraved left no doubt that systematic colonial regimes and systems of oppression were justified. Pihama reaffirms Memmi’s argument when she writes:

The legitimation of unequal power relationships through the ‘scientific’ premise that some ‘races’ are proven to be inferior occurred not due to confusion but because it directly maintained the privilege of colonising nations.

39 Shohat and Stam, Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media, 91.
40 Memmi, Racism, 185.
41 Ibid.
Information Relative to New Zealand is one of the earliest texts in Aotearoa’s colonising history. Compiled for the early colonists by John Ward, the Secretary of the New Zealand Company, the text intends to convey something about the country including its flora, fauna, geography, native inhabitants, and economic potential. In what must have been an influential text, Māori are simultaneously described as a “physically and intellectually superior race” in comparison with the “new Hollanders” [an early reference to Aboriginal Australians], yet “essentially a savage people.”

The contradictory evocations of hierarchies of race with the associated damaging construction of the Other as noble savage was aptly described by researcher Tim McCreanor as, “deeply entwined in the European consciousness.” Further examples of this dichotomy follow in Ward’s text. McCreanor demonstrates that alongside the noble/savage these constructions produced “crucial seeds for the nascent Pākehā cultural project” that were powerful and adaptive. In her analysis of stereotypical media constructions of Māori, Melanie Wall proposes that early representations of the Other as spiritual/irrational and primitive, savage warrior persist. These ambivalent and repressive historical patterns contain what Michel Foucault calls the silent “breath” or the “not-said” that dwell in discourses as they change over time without ever acknowledging their origins. Hokowhitu relates this to his examination of colonial constructions of Māori men as ignoble/noble savage, arguing that notions of an oppressive Māori male ‘physicality’ emerged and inhabit these types of narrative patterns as an invisible “breath.” As a result of their enduring qualities these powerful threads remain embedded in current discourses and constructions of Māori demanding interrogation.

44 Ibid., 62.
46 Ibid.
Shohat and Stam argue that the birth of cinema reflected imperialistic motivations with the most prolific silent film producing countries, Britain, France, United States and Germany, adopting genres that supported the agenda of superiority, conquest and adventure.\(^{50}\) A local example is the silent film *Glorious New Zealand* (1925), a publicity film produced to attract settlers and tourists with scenes of empty and beautiful landscapes, peopled occasionally with predominantly Pākehā men. Helen Martin and Sam Edwards write that it “provides a fascinating insight into prevailing attitudes and popular myths about Aotearoa as a geographical location and as an emerging society.”\(^{51}\) The depiction of Aotearoa as sparsely populated with beautiful landscapes continues to be promoted and the more recent 100% Pure New Zealand campaign is one illustration.\(^{52}\) *Once Were Warriors* (1994), directed by Lee Tamahori plays with this trope and opens with a scene of a mountain range and lake, only to pull away to reveal it as a billboard situated in a working class, predominantly Māori, urban environment.\(^{53}\) As a result of its storytelling abilities, early cinema was the ideal vehicle to advance narratives of nations and empires that had previously been the domain of novels and newspapers and particular narratives are pervasive.\(^{54}\) Early European Cinema in the 20\(^{th}\) century inherited and promulgated racist and colonial discourses that underpinned colonising agendas.\(^{55}\) Filmic representations of Aotearoa, through a selection of short documentaries made about Māori, reinforced a range of constructions of Māori as noble, friendly, or nearing extinction and will be covered in more detail in Chapter Three: A Historical Overview of Māori Filmmaking. This is evidenced in newsreel items produced by American Fox Movietone News including *Rotorua NZ* (1930), and *The Māori: Everyone Bathes on Washing Day at Rotorua* (1930) that Martin Blythe proposes supported the myth of Māori as a dying race.\(^{56}\)

\(^{50}\) Shohat and Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, 100.


\(^{52}\) This was a global tourism campaign launched in 1999. The visual media campaign predominantly focused on Aotearoa’s rural and under-populated landscapes, including mountains, bush and lakes.

\(^{53}\) *Once Were Warriors* focuses on a dysfunctional working class urban Māori family.


\(^{55}\) Ibid., 92.

\(^{56}\) Martin Blythe, *Naming the Other; Images of the Maori in New Zealand Film and Television* (London: The Scarecrow Press, 1994), 64.
**Hegemony and Power**

Antonio Gramsci’s theory of hegemony provides a useful framework to explain complex issues of power and domination and the durability of colonial constructions of race and culture.\(^{57}\) Hegemony can broadly be described as rule by the dominant group through a dynamic exercise of coercion and consent by engaging civil and state power that may or may not occur in conjunction with violence. Gramsci’s theory draws distinctions between civil and political society; civil incorporates social formations such as schools and family and the political relates to state institutions that are more directly associated with force. Gramsci writes that hegemony is characterised by:

…a combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally, without force predominating excessively over consent. Indeed, the attempt is always made to ensure that force will appear to be based on the consent of the majority, expressed by the so called organs of public opinion – newspapers and associations – which, therefore, in certain situations, are artificially multiplied.\(^{58}\)

Hegemony exerts power at a number of levels including the political and ideological spheres. The ideological dimension of hegemony does not require force as consent is achieved by convincing the subordinate group that certain values and ideas are ‘common sense’ even when those values are not in the interests of the subjugated. Powerful groups have a stake in maintaining dominant ideologies and the media, and by extension cinema, functions ideologically.\(^{59}\) Media theorist, Stuart Hall, describes the media as a site where “messages and meanings are constructed within them, or where ideologies are transformed.”\(^{60}\) Here, information is disseminated and messages and meanings can be suppressed or perpetuated. Media academic, Sue Abel, discusses the presence of dominant ideologies perpetuated by the mass media in her analysis of television coverage of


\(^{58}\) Ibid., 80.


\(^{60}\) Ibid., 33.
Waitangi Day in 1990.⁶¹ She identifies the familiar construction of unity in the television coverage, promoting the ideology of ‘one people, one nation.’⁶² This denies Māori tāngata whenua status and masks power imbalances presenting us with a clear example of how ideology can promote the privilege of a dominant group.

Hegemony is in a constant state of negotiation as different interests compete for legitimacy. The dynamic nature of this ‘war of position’ suggests that a space exists for the oppressed to challenge and establish counter hegemonies although the insidiousness and underlying power relations of dominant hegemonies cannot be underestimated. In Gramsci’s sense, ideological struggles resist dominant hegemony in the battle for the hearts and minds of the people. Pihama stresses the need to be on guard for what is essentially a struggle for beliefs saying:

There is no doubt in my mind that challenging the hegemony of colonial assumptions, beliefs and expectations is a battle, it is a battle of minds, of knowledge, of ideas, of culture, of reo, of tikanga.⁶³

Resisting and challenging hegemony is central to the indigenous struggle against domination in Aotearoa. Hingangaroa Smith applies Gramsci’s ‘war of position’ to the State’s claim of ownership over kaupapa Māori educational initiatives that he saw as having both positive and negative outcomes. The establishment of these educational initiatives will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, but broadly speaking Māori challenged dominant hegemonic structures and practices by founding education immersed in te reo Māori and Māori these initiatives indicated their success but negatively, Crown control, can potentially incorporate and legitimate kaupapa Māori within Pākehā dominated state structures. In doing so kaupapa Māori education is then claimed by Pākehā,

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⁶¹ Sue Abel, *Shaping the News: Waitangi Day on Television* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1997). Waitangi Day is a public holiday falling on the 6th February to commemorate the first day of the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (1840) at the Waitangi grounds in Northland. Commemorations occur around the country and Waitangi is a key site that attracts government dignitaries. Māori gather to discuss issues related to Te Tiriti and challenges to the Crown’s lack of commitment to honouring Te Tiriti are voiced.

⁶² Ibid., 37-66.

⁶³ Pihama, ”Tīhei Mauri Ora Honouring Our Voices: Mana Wahine as a Kaupapa Māori Theoretical Framework”, 286.
homogenised and diluted. This is the constant struggle of positioning and claiming of knowledge that Māori encounter in all spheres of life.

Cinema is a critical site that offers opportunities for Pākehā hegemony to be challenged, extending beyond the film text into the areas of film production and exhibition. The films by Barclay, Mita and Selwyn in the three case studies discussed later in this thesis, challenge colonial hegemony and resist dominant ideologies, discourses and representations. They offer us Māori identities, worldviews and experiences that validate and centre Māori realities.

In relation to cinema Foucault’s notion of governmentality (the relationships between the technologies of domination of others and those of the self) and the associated technologies of power are useful as it is directly linked to hegemonic practices and assists understandings of the complexities and execution of power. Foucault challenged the notion of power as a solely unitary system exercised in a top down approach. Consistent with Gramsci’s notion of power Foucault identified power as circulatory; it is everywhere, providing a framework for understanding power and its engagement at multiple sites. These sites include the hierarchical exercise of power and extend to strategic relations and societal and cultural control, occurring in institutions and between individuals and groups. This implicates the oppressor and the marginalised, although on unequal terms. Through the processes of governmentality, control is exerted whereby governments and institutions produce and legitimate certain forms of knowledge, understandings and practices through discursive and structural technologies.

Like Foucault’s notion of governmentality, institutional racism requires careful analysis of political and social organisations; their structures, systems, and practices in the exercise of power across their spheres of influence. This expands on Memmi’s earlier description of racism that does not fully account for the complexities of racism where “individuals do not have actively to express or

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64 Smith, "The Development of Kaupapa Maori Theory and Praxis", 161.
67 Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," 16-49.
practice racism to be its beneficiaries.”

Mitzi Nairn offers a useful definition of institutional racism that is relevant to Aotearoa describing it as:

Perpetuation by organisations, institutions or agencies of policies and practices that operate to the advantage of the powerful group and to the disadvantage of particular racial or cultural groups.

Paul Spoonley relates this practice to the institutions of health and education in Aotearoa where “racial disadvantage” occurs when an ethnic group cannot access nor have equity of access to resources and services. Adding to its complexity is that discourse and practice become so ‘normalised’ and institutionalised that the dominant group who benefit are largely unaware of their implication in maintaining Pākehā domination and Māori subordination. However, it must be stressed that this does not excuse racist practices or the maintenance of those practices through inaction. The force and longevity of racism testifies to the resilience of notions of race and practices of racism alongside the ongoing effects of colonisation, unequal power relations and ideologies that maintain Pākehā dominance and privilege in Aotearoa.

Institutional racism is relevant to media academic Jo Smith’s assertion that Foucault’s concept of power, as a complex set of strategic relationships, is valuable to film studies in Aotearoa as it requires an examination of practices of the State including crown agencies that distribute funding and develop policy. A critical analysis of funding environments is directly relevant to this study given that the major funder of films in Aotearoa is the State funded NZFC. There have been numerous public challenges made by Māori filmmakers concerned at the lack of investment in Māori filmmaking and the Commission’s ad hoc approach to supporting Māori initiatives. Recently this led to the introduction of the

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70 Paul Spoonley, *Racism & Ethnicity* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1993), 109. Racism is defined here as the negative beliefs and attitudes that may or may not lead to discriminatory actions.
Commission’s first formalised policy on Māori film – Te Paepae Ataata – that has specific funding allocated for the development of Māori film.

**Regimes of Representation and Truth**

Edward Said’s broader articulation of the role that cultural hegemony and dominance exerts over, describes and locates the Other is relevant to a discussion situated in Aotearoa. The power exercised by the ‘West’ over the ‘East’ exposed in his critique of ‘Orientalism’ assists an understanding of the nature and power of representations, validations of knowledge and systems of dominance. The ‘Orient’ becomes the exotic Other, the imaginings of a place and people in opposition to the ‘West’. In addition ‘Orientalism’ produces fixed racist stereotypes. Said urges the reader to realise that constructions of the ‘East’ are not merely a collection of myths that are easily dispelled. If that were the case then ‘Orientalism’ would easily be demolished by exposing them as a collection of lies by the truths of others. In Aotearoa a function of myth has been to support and justify the ongoing act of colonisation. One dominant myth proposes that Māori ‘accidentally’ discovered Aotearoa, possessing no scientific knowledge systems, and another implies that Māori women were absent from the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Tiriti). The latter represents a discursive strategy that diminishes the role of Māori women and is congruent with the premise that racism “travels in gangs” with sexism, classism and homophobia. There is considerable economic, social and cultural benefit in the systematic presentation of the Other in ways that maintain the superiority and power of the coloniser.

Studies on a smaller scale reinforce Said’s analysis of the role power plays in constructions of the Other. For example, African American writer Toni Morrison examines the American literary tradition and the role of “Africanism” in *Playing in the Dark; Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*. Her analysis reveals that the dominant culture (white Americans) defines and controls the creation and

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74 Ibid., 6.
75 Te Tiriti o Waitangi was a document signed in 1840 by Māori and the Crown and will be elaborated on in the following chapter.
definition of the literary tradition, which she names as “literary whiteness” where the issues of race and difference are marginalised.77

Constructions of the Other appear on the surface to be neutral. They form a volume of information and accumulation of representations that act as a legitimate and authoritative reference within which every representation gains meaning.78 Creating common understandings (or misunderstandings) assists with the imperialistic motivations to colonise people and land.79 This is especially critical for agrapha cultures such as Māori where ‘literature’, histories and knowledge are expressed in stories, whakapapa, marae (gathering places), landscape, diverse practices of everyday existence, names, carvings, waiata (song) and weaving as examples.80 These systems of storage and preservation have been undermined through the hegemony of western systems including the written word that is validated and ranked over indigenous systems of knowledge and recording.

The systematic suppression and silencing of knowledge, histories and worldviews are examples of indigenous experiences of colonisation. Driven by a number of deliberate colonial agendas including economic and cultural policies, colonised peoples experienced disconnection from their histories, “their landscapes, their languages, their social relations and their own ways of thinking, feeling and interacting with the world.”81 Said proposes that knowledge is never neutral, raw, unmediated, or simply objective.82 Knowledge that is claimed and named by the ‘West’ is seen as superior and ‘universal’. In contrast those knowledge systems identified as indigenous are deemed inferior, static and primitive.83 Indigenous knowledge is frequently regarded as invalid. Paradoxically, assertions of

78 Said, Orientalism, 93-94.
79 Ibid., 123.
81 Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 28.
82 Said, Orientalism.
indigenous knowledge and histories can be perceived as a threat to western colonial supremacy. The contestation of knowledge and histories has been a powerful tool in the coloniser’s claiming of cultural, economic and social power; one that the colonised have recognised and challenged.

The colonial imposition of hierarchies of knowledge and histories particularly in the form of taxonomic regimes reaffirms existing power relations. Paulo Freire’s notion “name the word, name the world” is relevant here. He refers to the coloniser’s deliberate strategy of renaming and claiming the indigenous world, thereby exercising symbolic power. By renaming geography, topography, and flora as well as fauna, colonialism asserts its claim to dominion over these resources. Māori have actively struggled to resist colonial claims by reclaiming Māori names for the land and in the process reaffirm iwi connections and histories as a part of their strategies for self-determination.

Hall expands on the power of neo-colonial discourse in his notion of ‘racialised regimes of representation’. Referring to the black experience he argues that this phrase articulates “the whole repertoire of imagery and visual effects through which ‘difference’ is represented at any one historical moment.” He explains:

Power, it seems, has to be understood here, not only in terms of economic exploitation and physical coercion, but also in broader cultural or symbolic terms, including the power to represent someone or something in a certain way –within a certain ‘regime of representation’. An aspect of regimes of representation is the stigmatising of difference. Homi Bhabha and Hall expose the construction of the Other as an exercise in colonial power that requires expressions of difference through dimensions that include race, ethnicity, gender and class. These reduce and essentialise the Other in

85 Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 51.
87 Ibid., 338.
discourse that reveals power relations that are seldom neutral. Hall identifies the ambivalent nature of these depictions of difference and the associated “secret fascination of otherness.” This contradiction can mask what Shohat and Stam describe as an “attraction to its [perpetrators of racism] own hated object [where]…repulsion can overlay desire.” Therefore, regimes of representations based on ethnicity, race or physical perceptions for example produce a form of racialised knowledge of the Other that is circulated and legitimated. Limited systems of representation or regimes of truth that Said exposed in the ‘West’s’ discourses about itself and the ‘East’ are described by Bhabha as a recycled and limited system of representation that create knowledge and operate as the authority of truth. Colonial discourse simultaneously constructs the colonised as the Other but an Other who is entirely knowable. Bhabha explains that this “resembles a form of narrative whereby the productivity and circulation of subjects and signs are bound in a reformed and recognisable totality...a regime of truth.” What is important to understand is that power operates at multiple levels to enforce what counts as the ‘truth’ and Bhabha argues that it is enacted through a mode of governmentality where all aspects of activity are required to be controlled.

The proposition that historical hegemonic constructions of race profoundly shape contemporary constructions is supported by understandings of regimes of representation and truth. Historical colonial discourses in Aotearoa inform and structure contemporary narratives and patterns. One pattern identified by McCreanor in his examination of contemporary Māori/Pākehā relations reveals the categorisation of good Māori/bad Māori that strongly resonates with the historical representation of Māori as noble/savage in 1840 by Ward, Secretary of the New Zealand Company. The construction of good Māori/bad Māori also

89 Hall, "The Spectacle of the Other," 326.
90 Ibid., 324.
91 Shohat and Stam, Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media, 20.
92 Bhabha, The Location of Culture, 71.
93 Ibid.
perpetuates the ideology of national unity by dividing Māori into those who do not challenge the status quo (good Māori) and those who assert sovereignty (bad Māori). This resonates with Abel’s analysis of news media constructions of Māori on Waitangi Day as “wild” Māori and “tame” Māori. She explains that “tame” Māori sits within the limits of tolerance whereas “wild” Māori sits outside of these limits, threatening to disrupt the status quo. These familiar constructions establish a regime of truth where Foucault’s notion of the silent “breath” dwells within the shifting patterns and discourses about Māori.

In her analysis of stereotypical constructions of Māori in the media, Melanie Wall identifies four contemporary stereotypes of Māori derived from their colonial antecedents. The four categories are: Māori as a stereotypical “comic Other” that reflects colonial constructions of Māori as childlike and simplistic; Māori as “primitive natural athlete” derived from the trope of the noble savage but situated in a socially acceptable environment; Māori as “radical political activist” resonating with the violent primitive savage and deviant; and the “quintessential Māori” with the associated notions of the primitive and exotic. The stereotype of Māori as “radical political activist” sits comfortably with McCreanor’s, “bad” Māori, “and Abel’s “wild” Māori constructions. More recently Sean Phelan and Fiona Shearer’s examination of the print media’s representation of the 2003/2004 coverage of the foreshore and seabed debate where Māori challenged the Crown over ownership of the foreshore and seabed uncovers the historical hegemonic patterning of “radical” and “activist” Māori. This supports Wall’s argument that these types of constructions are resurrected when threat is perceived and in particular in instances of Māori challenge and calls for self-determination.

Wall’s category of Māori as “primitive natural athlete” draws powerful parallels with Hokowhitu’s more recent examination of particular representations of Māori men. He deconstructs dominant contemporary discourses of Māori men as

95 Abel, Shaping the News: Waitangi Day on Television, 164-65.
96 Wall, “Stereotypical Constructions of the Maori ‘Race’ in the Media,” 41-44.
97 Ibid.
99 Wall, "Stereotypical Constructions of the Maori ‘Race’ in the Media," 41.
naturally athletic, derived from the historical constructions of Māori as the noble savage and racist notions of a Māori masculine physicality. This is only one of many representations of Māori men but is pertinent to a discussion of cinematic representations. Hokowhitu refers to Bhabha’s regime of truth and the degenerate stereotyping of the savage Other in need of civilisation by the worthy colonisers.

For example, the film *Utu* (1983) he explains is “crammed with Māori male violence.” A key illustration occurs when one of the protagonists, Te Wheke, beheads a clergyman and waves the visage in front of a predominantly Māori congregation. *Utu* presents Te Wheke’s beheading of the clergyman as a random act of violence but this is drawn from actual historical events that were embedded in violent colonial oppression. Hokowhitu cogently argues that the dominant construction of a Māori hypermasculinity as physical and inherently violent reproduces Pākehā hegemony.

*Once Were Warriors* is a film vigorously debated on the grounds that it reinforces negative and limited stereotypes of Māori men as warriors. The film can be regarded as perpetuating a regime of truth about Māori that represents Māori men as inherently violent. The authority of truth is reinforced by an ‘authentic’ Māori authorship (Alan Duff) in combination with a Māori director and the emerging intertextual references to a variety of situations in which Māori make bad news, as living ‘once were warriors’ lives. In his Master’s thesis, Cruickshank analyses the constructions of Māori men in local feature films. He concludes that Māori men are constructed within the stereotype of the “Scary Black Bastard” supporting dominant racialised regimes of Māori men as inherently violent. Hokowhitu demonstrates that these constructions of Māori masculinity have limited, homogenised and reproduced an “acceptable and imagined Māori

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101 Ibid.: 262-63.
102 *Utu* (1983) is a historical drama that depicts the struggles between Māori and Pākehā during early colonisation in Aotearoa. It is directed and co-written by Pākehā Geoff Murphy.
104 Ibid.: 263-64.
masculinity that has gained hegemonic consent from many tāne [Māori men].”106 The noble savage construction harks back to early colonial representations of Māori that Hokowhitu points out reflected a romanticised notion of the Other as living closer to nature than their western counterparts yet naïve and primitive.107 These types of constructions affirm Pākehā hegemony by asserting their superiority and civilised nature. In contrast Māori are established as inferior and driven to act on instinct rather than intellect confirming the justification of colonial conquest and rule.

The dominant constructions discussed above have predominantly focused on Māori men. Wall argues that the stereotypes she identified are masculinised notions and feminine representations are notably absent.108 However, Māori women appear to be constructed within a very limited set of representations and Sturma writes that historically the coloniser eroticised and romanticised the female Other. He argues that women in the Pacific became a symbol of feminine sexuality that he classifies as the “nubile savage.”109 Patricia Johnston and Pihama cite early colonial references to Māori women as flirtatious, skittish and lustful.110 Building on Hokowhitu’s examination of the dominant construction of a Māori male hypermasculinity as physical and inherently violent, there is a dominant construction of a Māori female hypersexuality as the exotic and erotic Other. This is a familiar representation of Māori women in cinema and present in early films including Hinemoa (1913), a remake in 1914 and Loved by a Maori Chieftess (1913).111 The Piano (1993) recycles the construction of the exotic, erotic and savage feminine Other with primitive, sexualised and immoral Māori women happily offering sexual favours to the white male settler.112

107 Ibid.: 268-69.
108 Wall, "Stereotypical Constructions of the Maori ‘Race’ in the Media," 41-44.
111 Martin and Edwards, New Zealand Film 1912-1996, 20-23. The three films referred to here all describe the exotic alongside the familiar theme of forbidden love.
Indigenous peoples globally experience ongoing hegemonic representations in film. In their critique of Australian Cinema, Collins and Davis identify the “black tracker” as a key trope in Australian fiction prior to 1970.\(^{113}\) Beverley Singer, Native American film director and writer, expresses concern about the stereotypical nature of representations in all areas of the media with the earliest representations of Native Americans as savage and heathen.\(^{114}\) As a result, indigenous communities have debated and challenged filmic representations that perpetuate dominant discourses and stereotypes, understanding that “something vital is at stake.”\(^{115}\) Freire, in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, proposes that oppression, perpetrated by the dominant group, constitutes violence.\(^{116}\) Violence in this sense can be perpetrated through visual representations including symbols, literature and media discourse and is an example of how power is exercised in its variant forms. In her critique of *The Piano*, Pihama proposes that recurring filmic representations of Māori that “perpetuate negative belief systems about Māori and which contribute to the reproduction of stereotyped images of our people are dangerous.”\(^{117}\) Therefore, racist and limited stereotyping in cinematic representations is a key site in the exercise of violence and power.\(^{118}\)

Writer Patricia Grace argues that books are potentially dangerous if they reinforce negative and insensitive discourses about Māori or deny Māori existence by silences and absences.\(^{119}\) In an analysis of film, video and television representations of Aboriginal people, Aboriginal rights advocate and academic Marcia Langton argues that one of the most “natural” forms of racism in representation is the act of making the other invisible.\(^{120}\) Invisibility can take the form of absence and preliminary findings from a recent study of Māori stories in mass media news in Aotearoa, excluding sports, on TV One, TV3 and Prime

\(^{114}\) Beverley Singer, *Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 1.
\(^{115}\) Shohat and Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, 181.
\(^{117}\) Pihama, “Are Films Dangerous? A Maori Woman’s Perspective on the Piano,” 239.
\(^{118}\) Hall, "The Spectacle of the Other," 338.
News found that out of a total of 1,133 items only 29 (less than 3 percent) could be classified as Māori stories or stories that examined Māori issues or events.\(^{121}\) This echoes an earlier examination of TV One and TV3 news items that showed a predominance of negative and stereotypical representations of Māori as well as an absence of Māori stories in the news agenda.\(^{122}\) Previous studies also highlight the low levels of te reo Māori used on mass media news.\(^{123}\) International theorists, including Hall, express concern regarding not only the absence or marginalisation of the black experience but the simplification and stereotypical nature of these representations.\(^{124}\) Portrayals of the injustices and effects of colonisation and racism are also rare in film and television. *The Piano* is silent on these issues and representations of Māori only serve as an exotic backdrop to the ‘real’ story.

Pihama asks where are the cinematic representations of Māori that contain the colonial experience and challenge the impacts of colonisation on Māori?\(^{125}\) These types of representations are scarce because of the pervasiveness of limited systems of representations. Struggles over meaning matters and an audience ignorant of the colonial historical context will have very different readings to those who do.\(^{126}\)

Shohat and Stam argue that the ‘burden of representation’ or negative effects of representation sits firmly with the oppressed.\(^{127}\) They refer to Memmi’s notion of the “mark of the plural” that describes the characterisation of the colonised (with their inherent depravity and deviance) by the coloniser as a collective undifferentiated entity. Therefore, any negative individual actions by a member of that group are representative of the entire group’s perceived deviance.\(^{128}\) As a result, the oppressed group becomes “sorely overcharged with allegorical


\(^{126}\) Shohat and Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, 179.

\(^{127}\) Ibid., 182-84.

\(^{128}\) Memmi, *Racism*, 151.
meanings,” making it an almost unbearable experience. Representations of the dominant group do not suffer the same condition and an aberrant individual member is not seen to be representative of the group as a whole. It suggests that negative stereotyping generally is hurtful but representations do not all “exercise the same power in the world.” This is relevant to an analysis of the media in Aotearoa. For example, an examination of stories in mass media news and in particular crime stories found a distinct theme that universalised ‘bad’ Māori in comparison to the framing of Pākehā offenders as ‘bad apples.’ It is therefore vital to acknowledge the effects of misrepresentations on indigenous peoples and the power they exert.

Media commentators including bell hooks and Langton establish that film and television play a powerful role in the dissemination of information and understandings of oppressed people. These are crucial sites of struggle because they not only determine how we as indigenous people see ourselves but also how the world gets to ‘know’ us. Māori theorists and filmmakers in Aotearoa including Mita and Pihama also raise these concerns in relation to representations of Māori in film as they have the power to “perpetuate or transform dominant colonial presentations of Māori” not only within Aotearoa but also to the world.

Knowing that something “vital is at stake” raises the question of limits and should indigenous peoples place limits on how we represent ourselves in order to guard against prevailing rigid, essentialising and dehumanising representations. What might be used against us if we tell stories that reinforce these representations even if the stories are within the Māori experience and need to be told? I build on Smith’s understandings of Foucault where she argues that the task is to “work at the limits of what is seeable and sayable about a specific object; to provide different ways of thinking about who we are.” I ask, from a Māori position,

130 Ibid.
133 Pihama, "Re-Presenting Maori: Broadcasting and Knowledge Selections [Paper]."
134 Smith, "At the Limits of the Seeable and Sayable: Identity Politics and New Zealand Film Studies [Paper]."
what is seeable and sayable? In asking these questions it is Māori themselves who must have this debate and make determinations. The accumulation of rigid and dehumanising representations and the context within which they are read requires these questions to be raised. We cannot be confident our stories will be placed within a discourse and understanding of colonisation and racism but rather read within dominant regimes of representation and truth. This is consistent with Foucault’s examination of the nature and limits of the thinkable, how it is restrained by the interpretative resources available and how this changes over time. What is seeable, sayable and thinkable is an ideological struggle and effectively exercised by those who hold power.

Identity

Pratibha Parmar writes that the ideological nature of imagery “determines not only how other people think about us but how we think about ourselves.” In the exercising of “cultural power and normalisation” by the dominant group, not only are black people identified as Other but also come to experience themselves as Other. Marginalised groups can internalise racist perceptions. The difficulty encountered in breaking out of hegemonic frameworks is frequently articulated by marginalised groups and Trinh T. Minh-ha writes that “hegemony is most difficult to deal with because it does not really spare any of us.” The problematic internalisation of regimes of truth on Māori masculinity by Māori men is raised by Hokowhitu and more generally Pihama proposes that the notion of Māori as a

135 Refer to: Pihama, "Repositioning Maori Representation: Contextualising Once Were Warriors."
137 Pratibha Parmar cited in hooks, Black Looks; Race and Representation, 5.
139 For example John Ward’s Information Relative to New Zealand (1840) includes the following: “Their most conspicuous passion is war, and they kill and sometimes eat their vanquished enemies, scalping and exhibiting their heads as trophies…Infanticide is not uncommon, particularly of the female offspring. The spirit of revenge is implacable in their breasts; the law of retaliation is their only rule for the reconcilement of differences, and their hatred of their enemies is deep and deadly.” 62
warrior race has been unproblematically internalised by both Māori men and women.\textsuperscript{141}

Ngahuia Te Awekotuku explains the effects of racism in Aotearoa as a “reality that leaks into the consciousness of every inhabitant...as victim, or antagonist, acquiescent or aggressive.”\textsuperscript{142} Psychiatrist and theorist Frantz Fanon’s discussions related to skin colour and the interrelated behaviours of both oppressed and oppressor raises similar dynamics. He wrote of his personal fight against internalising racism and the associated myths and symbols categorising the ‘Negro’.\textsuperscript{143} His notion of the ‘epidermalisation’ of inferiority is useful to this discussion. ‘Epidermalisation’ refers to the processes by which the object of racism internalises the inferiority promulgated through the discourses and hegemony of the oppressor.\textsuperscript{144} Māori speak of similar and painful experiences. In her book, \textit{Mihipeka: Time of Turmoil Ngā Wā Raruraru}, kaumātua and writer Mihipeka Edwards talks of the shame she experienced being Māori and the resulting hatred of the colour of her own skin, leading her to pass as white.\textsuperscript{145}

Passing theory, where the oppressed subject attempts to pass as a member of the dominant culture, is relevant as it engages with issues of racism and privilege. Notions of passing are particularly examined in American cinema. E. Ann Kaplan refers to black female characters in both \textit{Imitation of Life} (1959) and \textit{Illusions} (1982) where passing as white implies a rejection of black culture and a desire to access privileges associated with white culture.\textsuperscript{146} However, this position is complicated in \textit{Illusions} where passing sits alongside the character’s desire to

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\textsuperscript{142} Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, "Conclusion," in \textit{Tauiwi Racism and Ethnicity in New Zealand}, ed. Spoonley Paul et al (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1984), 244.
\textsuperscript{143} Frantz Fanon, \textit{Black Skin White Masks} (New York: Grove Press, 1967).
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., 11.
\textsuperscript{146} E. Ann Kaplan, \textit{Looking for the Other: Feminist Film and the Imperial Gaze} (New York: Routledge, 1997), 230-31. \textit{Imitation of Life} directed by Douglas Sirk follows the lives of two widows, one white and one black, who develop a relationship as they struggle to survive in New York City. One of the daughters, who is black, attempts to pass for white. \textit{Illusions} directed by Julie Dash locates the story in Hollywood and explores the complexities of identity, passing and racism. Black novelist Nella Larsen also examines issues of passing. For example, a black heroine chooses to pass as white in order to access white privilege. In Nella Larsen, \textit{Passing} (New York: Random House, 2000).
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promote black experiences on screen in her role as a studio executive. The ambiguities associated with passing are consistent with the claim by Jose Esteban Munoz that the subject who passes “can be simultaneously identifying with and rejecting a dominant form.” Edwards recalls the pain she experienced in her youth as a result of her pretence to be Pākehā; a pretence that required her to hide her identity. Edwards’ passing was fraught with contradictions and not founded on a real desire to be Pākehā but a desire to access white privileges that were not available to her as Māori. She passes in order to “escape social injustice and structural racism.” Her position is reflected in Fanon’s notion of ‘lactification.’ He explains that the desire to ‘become’ white, the assumed destiny of the colonised black man, leads to acquiring the privileges and status of whiteness. This resonates with Māori experiences that are not confined to earlier generations. Actor and writer Rena Owen spoke of reclaiming her Māori identity when she was eighteen years old because she grew up in generation that “harboured remnants of an inferiority complex about being Māori.”

A recent study in 2005 undertaken by Belinda Borell examined identity formation among South Auckland rangatahi (youth) who identified as Māori. Her research found that some respondents internalised prevailing racist, negative and stereotypical representations while maintaining pride in “being Māori.” Notions of poverty, violence and dysfunctional parenting, continually reinforced by society, became dominant markers of Māori identity.

Wider societal racism against Māori as played out, for example, in the media and social statistics, is not only powerful in the force of the negative images created (the internalisation of which is apparent in some of these findings) but also in the deficiency of positive images of Māori;

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147 Jose Esteban Munoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (Minneapolis: Regents of the University of Minnesota, 1999), 108.
150 Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, 11&47.
151 Rena Owen, Personal Interview, August 2008.
yet all participants in the study were eager to describe their pride in being Māori.152

Sociologist Tracey McIntosh writes that forced identity from marginalisation can result in the internalising and normalising of negative perceptions, but the strength is the “recognition that through sustained collective action and activism change is possible.”153 These discussions highlight the influence media representations have on identity constructions and the complex ways images are contested and rejected to create positive alternatives.154

**Counter Currents and Strategies**

There are a variety of responses to counter limited systems of representation that emerge from a desire to challenge and transform regimes of truth. Dominant representations play a key role in shaping identity making it an important site of contest and struggle. Within this context notions of identity are a critical and complex area of debate. One notion of identity is premised on an ‘essence’ or ‘pure’ state that is shared by an ethnic group and relates to a pre-colonial past. This ‘pure’ state or the desire to return to an idealised past is an area of much debate and as an end point is frequently rejected as it potentially limits the struggle.155 Theorists including Bhabha and Hall argue against this form of essentialism and the dubious effectiveness of such a strategy, while recognising the appeal of primordialism. Hall rejects essentialist arguments by proposing a strategic notion of identity as fluid that he claims is the only way to truly understand colonisation as a traumatic experience.156 In this sense identity is neither fixed or essentialist. Hall argues that conceptualising identity as fluid

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154 Borell, "Living in the City Ain’t So Bad: Cultural Identity for Young Maori in South Auckland," 204.
156 Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," 435.
provides opportunities for transformation. 

Acknowledging historical experiences is critical but equally important is the notion of fluidity and change, where identity is neither fixed in the past or the present.

Although recognising its limits, essentialism plays a critical role in the struggles of marginalised people in the effort to hold onto a sense of self and community and the fight against extinction and assimilation. For indigenous cultures it is also about the claiming and naming of indigenous rights. This resonates with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s strategic essentialism where essentialist formulations can be engaged in liberatory struggles. It is a useful political tool that can empower the colonised. Essentialist ideas related to a pre-colonial past validates knowledge and worldviews including language, histories and culture.

Chadwick Allen points out the similarities between indigenous struggles during the early formation of identity politics. Contrary to the models proposed by anti-essentialist theorists including Hall and Fanon, he supports the necessity for indigenous communities to maintain essentialist markers of identity for without this, “indigenous minorities risk their total engulfment by powerful settler nations.”

The concepts of authenticity and essentialism are entwined and employed differently by the coloniser and colonised. Associated with the power to define a culture is the power to legitimise and define authenticity. Tuhiwai Smith writes that the term authentic is used by the west to determine who “really is indigenous, who is worth saving.” This necessitates a fixed culture because changing means losing claims to authenticity. In The Myth of Authenticity, Gareth Griffiths discusses the power of the media to assign value to a particular authentic indigenous voice. The representation of authenticity not only legitimises a
chosen discourse but positions the voices of the indigenous against each other giving a preferred reading that is judged ‘authentic’ by the dominant group. A dominant construction of authentic identity is frequently associated with the belief that the indigenous identity is fixed and only the coloniser has the freedom to be “complicated, internally diverse or contradictory.”

Defining notions of difference from an indigenous perspective in the construction of identity is political and challenges the position of the dominant culture to fix the Other in a knowable regime of truth. Māori have identified the power of speaking from our worldviews and experiences as opposed to being defined, or to speak from the position of the Other. Pihama advocates that it must be Māori who define difference in conjunction with an analysis of colonisation and unequal power relationships and this can occur within a Kaupapa Māori framework. Moewaka Barnes raises the problematic nature of defining difference as a colonised people; a practice the dominant culture rarely faces. On the one hand it is a process of validation and survival but on the other hand it can limit who we are and what we can become.

It is argued that counter strategies can be adopted because meanings are not fixed and are constantly negotiated and contested. Therefore, the exposure and analysis of dominant representations and discourses are viewed as strategies to encourage change. Said argues that exposing the “worldwide hegemony of Orientalism and all it stands for” enables it to be challenged. Intrinsic to this is an understanding and identification of the role power plays in promoting and maintaining the position of the dominant group. Pihama explains that an analysis of power allows Māori to “create forms of resistance that seek to both challenge and transform.” For example, Māori theorists including Pihama, Tuhiwai Smith and Hingangaroa Smith speak of ‘theorising back’, ‘writing back’ and ‘talking

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165 Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 74.
166 Pihama, "Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring Our Voices: Mana Wahine as a Kaupapa Māori Theoretical Framework", 274.
168 Hall, "The Spectacle of the Other."
back’ to those theories that serve the interests of the dominant group.\textsuperscript{171} This distinctly Māori space centres the experiences and worldviews of the indigenous, analyses colonisation and develops strategies for self-determination.\textsuperscript{172} The creation of an indigenous space of this nature is aligned to Barclay’s notion of Fourth Cinema that will be discussed later in this chapter.

Talking back to colonial hegemony has resonance with Bhabha’s third space – a metaphorical site that works against notions of essentialism and binary categories; where meaning can be negotiated, formed and transformed.\textsuperscript{173} Bhabha argues that the ambivalent nature of power and knowledge, allows positioning that enables resistance. It assumes that the Other is not passive or locked into dominant representations and discourse but can be active and subversive.\textsuperscript{174} The third space attributes a degree of agency to resist constructions, to fracture, invert and transform. For example, subversion may take the form of ‘mimicry’ or ‘sly civility’ and these actions can rupture and reveal colonial discourses.\textsuperscript{175} This occurs when the colonised subject assumes the coloniser’s cultural habits. The action does not result in a simple reproduction but can threaten, as mimicry is not far from mockery. Bhabha proposes that this strategy has a profound and disturbing impact on the “authority of colonial discourse.”\textsuperscript{176} These strategies attribute the subaltern with a sense of agency and voice.

Another strategy is the deliberate employment of positive imagery by oppressed groups that contest negative stereotypes.\textsuperscript{177} However, some theorists including bell hooks, Hall, Robert Stam and Louise Spence argue that engaging in positive imagery is a questionable strategy.\textsuperscript{178} The success of simply reversing prevailing stereotypes is debated because while this may critique the status quo, or hold up a mirror, reversal does not overturn, subvert or transform. Reversal may

\textsuperscript{171} Ibid., 72-75; Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 7.
\textsuperscript{172} Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 7.
\textsuperscript{174} Bhabha, The Location of Culture, 86.
\textsuperscript{175} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{176} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{177} Hall, “New Ethnicities,” 199.
inadvertently replace one stereotype with another. Nor does it remove it from the power dynamics inherent in the construction of the Other.\textsuperscript{179} For example, the creation of positive images occurring within wider oppressive narratives will serve the interests of the coloniser not the colonised. Images of this nature do not challenge racism or oppressive power relations as Stam and Spence argue:

We should be equally suspicious of a naïve integrationism which simply inserts heroes and heroines, this time drawn from the ranks of the oppressed, into the old functional roles that were themselves oppressive.\textsuperscript{180}

The authors also raise the problematic issues related to thinking in the binary code of positive and negative images, arguing that this can lead to a form of essentialism that eludes complexities and creates reified categorisations. The intervention may also fail to account for variance and change including how imagery might be shaped by economic changes.\textsuperscript{181} Hooks also promotes the need to move away from dualistic thinking of good and bad and to think from worldviews that are not created and promoted by the dominant group.\textsuperscript{182} This requires critically examining representation and identity that crosses boundaries and enables new ways of thinking to emerge.\textsuperscript{183} She writes:

\ldots a fundamental task of black critical thinkers has been the struggle to break with hegemonic modes of seeing, thinking, and being that block our capacity to see ourselves oppositionally, to imagine, describe, and invent ourselves in ways that are liberatory.\textsuperscript{184}

Despite drawbacks, positive imagery has a place within a comprehensive methodology that includes an analysis of power and is transformative in nature. Māori filmmakers and theorists have identified liberatory modes of representation as a tool of resistance that has the ability to challenge oppressive Māori stereotypes. Representations controlled and presented by indigenous peoples have

\textsuperscript{179} Hall, “The Spectacle of the Other,” 342; hooks, \textit{Black Looks; Race and Representation,} 4.
\textsuperscript{180} Stam and Spence, "Colonialism, Racism and Representation,” 9.
\textsuperscript{181} Shohat and Stam, \textit{Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media}, 199.
\textsuperscript{182} hooks, \textit{Black Looks; Race and Representation,} 4.
\textsuperscript{184} hooks, \textit{Black Looks; Race and Representation,} 2.
the power to challenge hegemonic representations, present the complex issues facing indigenous peoples and offer solutions.185

Acts of Cinematic Resistance and Challenge

Cinema is a site where the indigenous can address the systematic suppression and silencing of indigenous voices. Faye Ginsburg’s “screen memories” is useful and refers to the indigenous employment of cinema as a site where indigenous stories, knowledge and histories can be expressed. This includes the traumatic experiences of colonisation that were silenced by the hegemonic constructions of histories that threatened to engulf indigenous memories.186 Ginsburg gives a number of examples including the use of film by the Inuit to “resignify cultural memory on their own terms.”187 The intervention potentially averted the loss of social and cultural knowledge of Inuit life. Similar strategies were adopted by Aboriginal media in Australia as a way to voice the effects of colonisation where relationships to the land, indigenous practices and knowledge were fragmented. In addition, the media provided a site where current positive initiatives that addressed issues of colonisation specific to Australia could be aired.188 Māori filmmakers utilise film, television and video in similar ways. One recent example is the establishment of Māori Television where programmes offer an alternative set of values, language and worldviews to those on mass media television.

Ginsburg speaks of the “Faustian dilemma” facing indigenous and minority media producers. Media plays a unique and useful role in addressing aspirations and countering dominant ideologies. Conversely, the hegemonic role of media has abetted and aided the oppression of the very groups that access the technologies for counter hegemonic purposes.189 However, Ginsburg offers a positive outlook by proposing that indigenous images offer “a face and a narrative that reflects them [Aboriginal Australians] in the present, connects them to a history, and

185 Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 151.  
187 Ibid., 42.  
189 Ibid.: 96-97.
directs them toward a future as well.”

Indigenous peoples have used media including film as a vehicle for self-expression, to contest dominant narratives, reclaim histories and assert liberatory and transformative ways of being.

**Third and Fourth Cinema**

Third, and more directly, Fourth Cinema are relevant cinematic frameworks to discuss because they address the politics and perspectives of marginalised and indigenous filmmaking. Encompassing creative and political elements, Third and Fourth Cinema are associated with strategies that challenge imperialistic and colonialisit impositions, including dominant and reductive representations.

Third Cinema broadly described as anti imperialist and counter hegemonic, is predominantly situated in Africa and Latin America. In contrast, Barclay’s notion of Fourth Cinema is more specifically located in indigenous experiences and emerges from Aotearoa.

Third Cinema, pioneered in the 1960s, is described by theorist Teshome Gabriel as emerging from the need of ‘Third World’ people to have their own voice to challenge dominant imperialism, class oppression and dominant ideologies while simultaneously deconstructing and constructing images through cinematic expression. Third Cinema emerged from notions of dependency and is culturally inflected not by indigeneity, but by mestizaje or hybridity, and this is particularly relevant to Brazil and Cuba. This category of cinema is consciously political and revolutionary, reinventing cinematic codes for the purposes of constructing new images, redefining history and assisting liberation. The shared experiences of oppression and the desire for social change are uniting elements. Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino locate Third Cinema in a framework of decolonisation that is comprised of films that reject or oppose the bourgeois capitalistic and imperialist in nature. Second Cinema is identified as the expression of art-house cinema of the middle classes and individualistic aspirations. In Michael Chanan, “The Changing Geography of Third Cinema,” *Screen* 38, no. 4 (Winter 1997): 375-76.

representational system. They argue that mass communications, education and imposed nationalism are powerful tools that acculturate and work against any form of liberation or resistance by the colonised. This is articulated in the following quote:

Cultural penetration, educational colonisation, and mass communications all join forces today in a desperate attempt to absorb, neutralise, or eliminate expression that responds to an attempt at decolonisation.194

Solanas and Getino propose that Third Cinema, rather than other forms of communication, has the potential to be liberating and is “the most important revolutionary artistic event of our times.”195 Cinema in this context is a cinema of destruction, destroying the ideologies and images produced by the oppressor and a cinema of construction, reconstructing and presenting realities of the colonised who oppose colonisation. This allows for the “revolution of consciousness.”196 As a strategy for change, Third World filmmakers advocated for the need to flood the market with films of a “similar cultural and political intent” to be effective.197 This acknowledges the power associated with the accumulation of knowledge and representations that establish a legitimate and authoritative body of reference. Later writings by Getino, who recognised the strategic requirement of the time to adopt “guerrilla cinema,” questions the current validity of this approach post 1973 and the inability of Third Cinema to saturate the market and reach a wider audience.198 The importance of the spectator is also stressed in Third Cinema as they are not regarded as passive recipients. Tomas Guieterrez Alea writes in detail about the potential agency of the film spectator who has the capacity to move beyond contemplation to practical transformative actions.199

194 Ibid., 39.
195 Ibid., 57.
196 Ibid., 47.
Essential to the notion of Third Cinema as political and subversive, is the requirement to not only address content, aesthetics and ideology but to also develop suitable methods of production, distribution and exhibition. Rejecting the ‘Hollywood’ style of cinema it is argued that the act of Third Cinema filmmaking requires new approaches that do not simply mimic dominant styles but find ways that sit comfortably with Third Cinema ideology.200 As a result, film conventions perceived to be associated with ‘Hollywood’ were rejected and this rigid approach was a key criticism of Third Cinema.

Gabriel analysed Third Cinema in the Third World arguing that because a body of theoretical and practical work exists, an attempt could be made to determine a unifying aesthetic.201 Despite the fervour of this manifesto, a common aesthetic was only marginally apparent in cinematic practice. Gabriel also identified five key themes of Third Cinema: class; culture (including cultural identity); religion; sexism and; armed struggle. Class as a theme in Third Cinema emerges as class antagonism, culture is related to the preservation of culture and identity threatened by imperialism, religion has special significance in cinema to reveal, sexism is the struggle for the emancipation of women and armed struggle refers to the anti imperial position of Third Cinema.202 Third Cinema does not propose to be neutral and openly challenges dominant and bourgeois ideologies and practices. It is not clear in Gabriel’s work whether references to religion and spirituality are interchangeable but examples of spirituality are associated with religion such as Christianity, suggesting that they are. Solanas and Getino are careful to avoid applying any prescriptive aesthetics to Third Cinema, arguing for infinite categories.203

Third Cinema embraces the notion of community and the individual as a part of the collective. Gabriel writes that a single character does not portray individualistic aspirations but conveys the aspirations and viewpoints of the

201 Ibid.
202 Ibid., 15-20.
individual in relationship to the community and history.\textsuperscript{204} This resonates with indigenous filmmakers including Barclay and Mita who cinematically embrace the concept of the collective and Kaupapa Māori film theory that will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Third Cinema filmmakers promoted notions of ‘truth’ and an ‘authentic’ identity. Authenticity is about not misrepresenting a culture; however in this process what is considered authentic can become fixed. While this is an important tool in the struggle against oppression it remains problematic as it has the potential to locate authentic identity and culture in terms of ‘traditional’ notions, limiting the potential to be complicated and diverse. Proponents of Third Cinema optimistically attributed film with the ability to record ‘truths’, underestimating the ways technology and the processes of filmmaking mediate subject matter. Realism, Alea argues, is not the capturing of reality or to portray it “just like it is,” but rather a technique for making the connections between what may be seen as isolated events.\textsuperscript{205} This relates to Third Cinema’s strategic intent to recover the past in order to understand it and instigate change.\textsuperscript{206}

Third Cinema’s proposal that identity and cultural origins are important modes of resistance is relevant to the indigenous struggle in Aotearoa. However, Third Cinema is predicated on notions of hybridity not indigeneity and is based on a Marxist model that tends to collapse identity politics into class politics. This is why Barclay’s Fourth Cinema and Kaupapa Māori theory that are grounded in indigenous politics are critical tools for any discussion on Māori filmmaking. The exclusion and absence of analysis concerning indigeneity and related issues of colonisation may have led Barclay to describe Third Cinema as belonging to the “Modern Nation State” that from an indigenous perspective sits in the category of invader cinemas alongside First and Second Cinema.\textsuperscript{207} Contrary to Gabriel’s assertion that a key characteristic of Third Cinema is not the location or who makes the film but the ideology and consciousness presented, Kaupapa Māori film theory and Fourth Cinema assert the importance of Māori and indigenous control

\textsuperscript{205} Alea, “The Viewer’s Dialectic,” 122.
\textsuperscript{207} Barclay, “Celebrating Fourth Cinema,” 10.
in filmmaking.\textsuperscript{208} However, Third Cinema strategies of transformation, alternative filmic practices and community focus are relevant to an examination of Māori filmmaking.

**Fourth Cinema**

Barclay recently promoted the new category of Fourth Cinema that is also known as Indigenous Cinema. He argues that indigenous filmmaking does not fit comfortably in the previous three cinematic categories of First, Second and Third Cinema. In addition, indigenous cultures remain outside the national orthodoxy and this includes spiritual beliefs and practices.\textsuperscript{209} Barclay writes that:

\begin{quote}
...we have done enough to know that what we’ve done does not fit in the previous categories. We know this from reflecting on what we were trying to do when we set out to make the films; we know this especially from screenings, both in our country and abroad, and both to Western and Indigenous audiences. We learn also from the reactions to our films, especially to details in the films.\textsuperscript{210}
\end{quote}

Fourth Cinema is an emerging category and Barclay identifies dramatic feature film as the main component but it could extend to documentary and short films that are creatively controlled by indigenous filmmakers, primarily for an indigenous audience and set in an indigenous world.\textsuperscript{211} Unlike Third Cinema’s initial rejection of dominant film styles, Fourth Cinema does not preclude the indigenous filmmaker from accessing other cinematic practices and frameworks nor does it impose rules that must be rigorously applied.

Fourth Cinema validates and affirms indigenous experiences and identities in a cinematic context involving both the film text and the filmmaking processes. Firmly situated in Aotearoa, and emerging from a Māori context, Fourth Cinema is conceptually and practically informed by tikanga Māori and Māori

\textsuperscript{209} Barclay, "Celebrating Fourth Cinema," 9.
\textsuperscript{210} Ibid.: 8.
\textsuperscript{211} Ibid.: 7-11; Barry Barclay, "Address to Ngā Aho Whakaari Conference," (Rotorua, June 2006).
epistemologies that have resonance with global indigenous communities such as the importance of wairua. Wairua and the concepts of whanaungatanga, aroha (love) and manaakitanga (hospitality, respect) have a significant role to play in the conception of Fourth Cinema. For example, some Māori filmmakers follow Māori protocols when they screen their films and take the films back to the communities involved in their creation.212 Barclay was a leading advocate of this practice and exhibited Ngati in the community in which it was filmed.

The notion of Fourth Cinema audience is fundamentally different to the economic motivations of commercially driven film that aim for the largest audience. This is also expressed by the NZFC’s goal to fund films that can compete in a global market by attracting a multiplex audience.213 Rejecting driving motives of profit and market place competitiveness, Barclay suggests a deliberate departure and new way of looking at cinema. In his cinematic vision, indigenous filmmakers would pay the audience to attend, cover venue costs and extend manaakitanga by feeding the audience.214 I have included Barclay’s response from a personal interview (apart from repetition) in its entirety. This is an important and unique record that contributes to the conceptualisation of Fourth Cinema.

It [film – historically] works by making a project and then you screen it in a public venue and you charge people something to come in and you make your money…That is how it works. It is presumed it’s made that way. But it’s an art form. What say you think back to your own world…making money is not that important. What’s important is that I take a gift to Hawai’i. But then I start thinking of manaakitanga and aroha and all of those sorts of things, tapu [restricted] too and I think well that’s what counts…So…you think of cinema as orientated towards taking money…[but] we pay them to come and we give them food. Now why can’t we think of cinema that way? In effect actually, many countries do

213 Ruth Harley, NZFC Chief Executive, Personal Interview, February 2008.
without knowing it. Even here we don’t really expect to make money out of cinema.\textsuperscript{215}

Such a notion appears outrageous in the context of current commercial objectives. At the least, this concept challenges the thinking that film and by association Māori culture is a commodity. It supports the idea of indigenous representation for indigenous audiences as a necessary form of sustenance and empowerment.

What is also useful is the notion of Fourth Cinema, not only as an aesthetic or conceptualisation, or as a way to read or critically engage with films, but as the strategic creation of an indigenous cinematic space where none previously existed. This space is created and claimed by the indigenous and premised on key Māori principles and worldviews as well as wider shared indigenous understandings and aspirations. Barclay articulated a similar view saying:

\begin{quote}
You know when you are making something in the Māori world and you don’t fit. And I said let’s call it Fourth Cinema and that has an effect on the way people think.\textsuperscript{216}
\end{quote}

Fourth Cinema is a space that claims, validates and names. Centring indigenous identity and culture, Fourth Cinema privileges Māori knowledge and experiences including tikanga and te reo Māori. It is premised on the thinking that film has the potential to be transformative and uplifting. It is these aspects of Fourth Cinema that fit well with Kaupapa Māori film theory.

Barclay’s notion of ‘talking in’ is useful to end this discussion. As a proponent of the right of Māori to control their images, he identified the need for Māori filmmakers to be able to speak confidently on their own terms about their culture and experiences – to ‘talk in’. ‘Talking in’ creates and claims a cinematic Māori space where the filmmaker speaks directly to a Māori audience without translating

\textsuperscript{215} Barry Barclay, Personal Interview, April 2003.
\textsuperscript{216} ———, “Interview with Barry Barclay,” (Te Ahi Kaa, Radio New Zealand National, 2 December 2007).
meanings for a non-Māori audience.\textsuperscript{217} This results in film that speaks on a deeper level as opposed to film that explains an indigenous culture to others.\textsuperscript{218}

Summary

In this chapter an analysis of theories from a range of disciplines, including cinematic theory, was applied to a Māori politic and in doing so gets to the “heart of the matter.” Practically the chapter provides an account of colonisation, race and representation with specific reference to the Māori experience in Aotearoa. Colonisation brought with it notions of race, a set of technologies of categorisation and marginalisation by which the ideology of racial hierarchies could be imposed in favour of the coloniser. Issues of race and racism must be addressed, as they are directly relevant to dominant and persistent constructions of racialised difference and the binaries that profoundly shape current ideas about race and ethnicity. Their longevity is not the result of force as the work is done by the perpetuation of dominant constructions and discourse that reproduce Pākehā hegemony. I have argued that analyses of constructions of Māori must include an analysis of power and colonisation. The exercise of power, including cultural power, hegemony and dominant ideologies are significant to a discussion on indigenous film and filmmaking.

Representation is a crucial site of struggle where the intersection between colonial ideologies and representations of Māori must be exposed and resisted. There is considerable economic, social and cultural benefit in the systematic presentation of the Other in ways that maintain the superiority and power of the coloniser. In addition, much of society’s knowledge and understandings of Māori are shaped through visual and written representations. Given the tenacious and enduring stereotypes of Māori as Other, cinematic representation is a key site of struggle.

The power to claim, name and reconstruct the Other has been powerfully waged by the coloniser silencing, marginalising and rendering indigenous knowledge, histories, experiences and worldviews invalid. Māori continue to struggle to

\textsuperscript{217} Barclay, \textit{Our Own Image}, 74-80.\textsuperscript{218} Ibid.
present their identity, experiences and culture in a manner that embraces complexity and diversity. Notions of essentialism and the defining of difference are important indigenous strategies but they remain problematic. Simply reacting against definitions made about the indigenous can result in the establishment of equally restrictive categories. Knowing that something ‘vital is at stake’ results in a constant state of negotiation for indigenous peoples as to what stories can we tell, what are the limits of the seeable and sayable? What might be used against us and read within dominant regimes of representation and truth?

Colonisation, racism and the power to define provide understandings from which further indigenous issues and thinking can be explored. Revealing power imbalances, colonial discourses and hegemonic representations of Māori supports the creation of counter hegemonic and transformative images. Māori continue to actively seek ways to claim and name spaces that centre Māori, including Barclay’s notion of Fourth cinema and Kaupapa Māori theory that will be elaborated on in this study. These are sites of resistance and spaces for potential transformation.
Chapter Two

Concise History of Aotearoa

Introduction

The following chapter provides a historical context because “everything that is about struggling for the position of Māori is political.” Māori experiences of disenfranchisement, resistance and self-determination are themes that inform Kaupapa Māori theory and an analysis of Māori filmmaking. I build on Kaupapa Māori theory in relation to film studies because I believe it is a critical project. Historical events that shed light on these areas and in particular Māori struggles and achievements have been selected. Current debates are founded in assumptions about the past and those with power create regimes of truth that perpetuate myths and maintain conspicuous silences. This chapter recounts history grounded in Māori experiences and analyses, uncovering colonial acts of oppression. It is not intended to be a comprehensive examination of history in Aotearoa but rather sets the context for a Kaupapa Māori analysis.

Early Contact

Prior to European colonisation in Aotearoa, land was communal, there was an abundance of food and Māori were healthy. Māori were organised into whānau, hapū and iwi groupings with a slow yet steady population growth. As an ethnic group there was no single encompassing name but with the arrival of Europeans the word Māori, meaning normal or ordinary, was adopted to differentiate the indigenous people from the incoming settlers who were referred to as Pākehā.

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221 Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 94.
By the time of the first European contact, a European ship captained by Abel Tasman in 1642, Māori had occupied Aotearoa for hundreds of years.\textsuperscript{222} It would take over one hundred years before James Cook voyaged to Aotearoa in 1769.

The early settlers generally established peaceful relations and Māori were quick to see the benefits of this encounter. As skilled horticulturalists and traders, Māori supplied food to the European locally and internationally and marriages occurred that benefited both Pākehā and iwi.\textsuperscript{223} Moana Jackson explains that the new wealth emerging from trading with Pākehā and the resulting power supported Māori resistance against the Crown’s attempt to exert absolute sovereignty. However, over time the settler invasion impacted negatively on Māori and the sovereignty of iwi was relentlessly contested.\textsuperscript{224} The arrival of the missionaries in the early 1800s and the introduction of Christianity led by Samuel Marsden in 1814 are described by Ranginui Walker as the forefront of the cultural invasion.\textsuperscript{225} Missionaries challenged and undermined Māori epistemology and tikanga. For example, their objections extended to the inclusion of genitalia on carvings which led to the disappearance of the art of carving in Northland.\textsuperscript{226} The trading in guns, where missionaries played an active role, led to the musket wars that saw Māori waging armed war on each other with high casualties. This resulted in some Māori turning to the missionaries who were seen to offer a promise of peace and entire iwi converted to Christianity.\textsuperscript{227}

\textsuperscript{222} The time span of Māori settlement is contested and as well as archaeological evidence there are differences in iwi narratives. It is likely that settlement and occupation occurred between 800 and 900 AD. In Ibid., 28.
\textsuperscript{223} My whānau narratives suggest that during the early years of colonisation missionaries refused to marry Māori and Pākehā. My tupuna was married in a Māori ceremony in 1844 and approximately ten years later by Church of England rite in 1852.
\textsuperscript{225} Walker, \textit{Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End}, 78-85.
\textsuperscript{227} Ibid.
The 19\textsuperscript{th} Century Treaties and Legislation

During the 19\textsuperscript{th} century Māori signed two significant documents: the Declaration of Independence (1835) and Te Tiriti o Waitangi (1840). The Declaration of Independence was intended by the Crown to maintain British domination in reaction to French attempts to colonise the Hokianga in Northland. It nevertheless represented a form of Māori nationalism and recognition of indigenous rights, and for Māori the Declaration asserted and continues to assert iwi sovereignty. Thirty-four chiefs from the North Island convened at Waitangi to sign the Declaration of Independence and James Busby, who was appointed British Resident, collected signatures up until 1839.\textsuperscript{228} Walker points out that the word \textit{mana} written in the second article of the Declaration was “equated with sovereignty and power, a point that was to become significant in Te Tiriti o Waitangi.”\textsuperscript{229}

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is also a document of significance in Aotearoa and more widely known than the Declaration of Independence. The signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi began on 6 February, 1840 at Waitangi where Hobson is reported as saying “he iwi tahi tātou” (we are one people). This established the myth of an egalitarian society and the ideology of assimilation that was resolutely advanced well into the 20\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{230} Te Tiriti was taken around the country and while 540 signatures were obtained, not all chiefs and hapū agreed to sign. Contention exists because English and Māori versions were drafted and the vast majority of hapū, who were not speakers of English, signed the Māori text. This created differing interpretations that raises the question as to whether Māori signed with their “free and intelligent consent.”\textsuperscript{231} It is useful to briefly discuss the Articles of Te Tiriti and the arising contentions between the two versions. There are three written articles and a fourth article that was not written into the document. Article One of the Māori version agrees to \textit{kāwanatanga} (governance), not a ceding of the rights and powers of sovereignty as stated in Article One of the English version. The equivalent of sovereignty in Māori is \textit{mana} and this was not included in Article

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{228} Claudia Orange, \textit{The Treaty of Waitangi} (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992), 21-22.
  \item \textsuperscript{229} Walker, \textit{Ka Whawhai Tōna Matou: Struggle without End}, 88.
  \item \textsuperscript{230} Ibid., 96.
  \item \textsuperscript{231} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
One of the Māori version. Therefore, the chiefs did not knowingly or willingly sign over their mana (sovereignty). Article Two in the Māori version guarantees iwi tino rangatiratanga (chieftainship, self-determination) over lands, homes and possessions, supporting the meaning of kāwanatanga or governance in Article One. Therefore hapū and iwi agreed to an unknown concept of governance that guaranteed them continued tino rangatiratanga. Article Two also includes o rātou taonga katoa (all their treasures), a wider reaching concept than the property rights referred to in the English version. The Fourth Article was not written into the document but nevertheless retains authority and guarantees te ritenga (Māori custom, habits – the basic customs of a society). This establishes the right to practice Māori beliefs as determined by Māori – for example tikanga.²³² It is also relevant to raise the contra proferentum rule that states when two versions of a treaty exist, and in the event of ambiguity or differences, then the indigenous text should take preference over the language of the contract’s author.²³³ This is not widely known outside of legal and indigenous circles and is seldom articulated or practiced by colonial governments.

Concerns regarding the intentions of the Crown and the efficacy of Te Tiriti articulated by some Māori during the time of signing became increasingly evident as time progressed. When Te Rarawa chief, Nopera Panakareao signed at Kaitaia, he optimistically said: “The shadow of the land has passed to the Queen, the substance has remained with us.” Within a year he reversed his statement, and Walker points out that since this time Māori activism has been characterised by a “restless search to recover and reassert that lost sovereignty.”²³⁴ Therefore, aspirations of tino rangatiratanga and mana motuhake (sovereignty) are not recent responses but are founded in the 19th century resistance and struggles of our tūpuna.

Following the signing of Te Tiriti constitutional practices entrenched Pākehā systems of governance and systematically acquired Māori land for Pākehā settlers.

The 1852 New Zealand Constitution Act paved the way for a New Zealand Parliament and violated Te Tiriti as Māori men were effectively excluded from voting rights alongside all women. At first hapū and iwi willingly sold land, unaware that they were soon to be outnumbered by the unrelenting wave of settlers. This led to increasing Māori resistance to the sale of their land. A series of Acts countered this, alienating Māori from their land, securing Pākehā ownership and contravening Te Tiriti. For example, the 1862 Native Lands Act allowed individual title over land and was designed to erode Māori communal ownership. The Act also removed the Crown’s right of pre-emption, the sole right of the Crown to purchase Māori land under Article Two of Te Tiriti, thereby opening land purchases up to settlers. This Act was superseded by the 1865 Native Land Act establishing the Native Land Court. The Act initiated the legal process of transferring iwi ownership of land to individual title so Māori land could be sold. Land Court sittings were prolonged causing many Māori to build up huge debt requiring them to sell land. During the 19th century Māori land ownership halved. As a result Māori communities were forced to move from the pā (fortified village) to coastal areas where the new homes were poorly constructed and overcrowded. The consequences of alienation extended beyond economic concerns, adversely affecting Māori identity, health and social structures. Mason Durie writes:

Land was part of the internalised identity, providing individuals and groups with a tangible past, a tūrangawaewae, or place where they could feel secure, confident, and supported.

Land loss, disease, alcohol and war exacerbated declines in the Māori population. The early advantages gained by contact with Europeans were rapidly eroded. In 1840 the estimated Māori population was 100,000, declining in 1852 to an estimated population of 59,700 and in 1896 to 42,113.

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235 The Act states that only men over twenty-one years of age who hold individual title to property over a certain size are eligible to vote. At this time, land that remained in Māori control was owned collectively.
238 Ibid., 35.
239 Ibid., 37.
240 Ibid.
During the 1860s legislation was introduced that not only allowed for confiscation of Māori land, but served to quell ‘seditious’ Māori. The Suppression of Rebellion Act (1863) allowed Māori to be punished for rebelling against the Crown with no right of trial prior to imprisonment. In the same year the New Zealand Settlements Act gave the Crown powers to confiscate land of a person or persons who were perceived to be rebelling against British rule. Over three million acres of Māori land was confiscated under this Act. Increasing powers under the Public Land Works Act of 1864 allowed the Crown to take Māori land compulsorily. The Act was to have ramifications in the 20th and 21st centuries. For example, land given by chiefs in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) in 1859 for defence purposes was retained by the Crown under the Act in 1950 and earmarked for state housing.241 These are indicative of the numerous Acts passed in the mid to late 19th century that alienated Māori from their land, sought to suppress Māori aspirations of tino rangatiratanga and entrenched racism.

Expressions of Tino Rangatiratanga

Māori actively asserted dynamic political and transformational aspirations of tino rangatiratanga and mana motuhake throughout this period.242 Leaders emerged who advanced Māori aspirations and were supported by the collective will and strength of Māori communities.243 This was particularly evident in the mid-19th century as iwi worked together to achieve common goals.244 For example, the King movement sought kotahitanga (unity) by consolidating Māori aspirations in order to stop inter-iwi warfare and protect what remained of Māori land. In 1858 the first Māori King, Te Wherowhero, was installed at Ngāruawāhia.245 The movement was perceived to be a threat to the Crown and Governor Grey, described by Walker as the “hit man of colonisation,” waged war.246 Troops

241 Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 216-17.
244 Durie, Whaiora: Maori Health Development, 28.
245 The King movement was not actively supported by Ngāpuhi, Hawke’s Bay or Taranaki chiefs. In Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 112.
246 Ibid., 103.
invaded the Waikato in 1863, crushing the movement and a million acres of Waikato land was confiscated.\textsuperscript{247}

The Land Wars or New Zealand Wars that began in the 1840s were waged by the Crown against iwi across the North Island in a contest for land and sovereignty.\textsuperscript{248} The armed conflict had devastating affects on iwi and the resulting land confiscations reinforced the injustice and violence of Crown actions. An outcome of the wars was the creation of messianic movements such as Pai Marire that aimed to unify iwi against a common oppressor and recover land. These movements were not new and were preceded by the Papahurihia founded in the Hokianga in the 1830s. The earlier movement was anti missionary and followers were called Hūrai or Jews in recognition of their commonalities with the Israelites rather than Protestant religion.\textsuperscript{249}

Pai Marire was formed in the early 1860s with a vision to unify all iwi. It was led by Te Ua Haumene in Taranaki against a backdrop of war and land confiscations. Also known as Hauhau, the movement expanded to the East Coast and it was here that Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki was denounced as a Hauhau sympathiser although he was fighting on the side of the Crown at the time. Te Kooti was eventually imprisoned without trial and founded the Ringatū Māori church movement in the late 1860s. Escaping to the mainland in 1868 he led a guerrilla campaign against the Crown and was pursued for six years by Government forces in the Urewera ranges.\textsuperscript{250} Here, Tūhoe offered him sanctuary and support and suffered the Crown’s wrath because of their insubordination. Government forces, including Māori recruits, invaded the Urewera and destroyed food, livestock and crops, and burnt homes in an attempt to undermine Te Kooti’s supporters. Men, women and children died as the result of starvation and disease during the winters of 1870-1871. However, the Ringatū faith survived and is now an officially recognised church.

\textsuperscript{247}———, "The History of Maori Activism [Paper]."
\textsuperscript{248} Belich, The New Zealand Wars; Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 129.
\textsuperscript{249} Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 130.
\textsuperscript{250} Ibid., 132.
As a result of these devastating events, pacifism became an alternative way to express self-determination. In the latter part of the 19th century and pre-dating Ghandi’s resistance to British imperialism, leader Te Whiti o Rongomai emerged as a symbol of non violent Māori struggle. With his followers and co-leader Tohu Kakahi they established the community of Parihaka in Taranaki. They resettled land that had been confiscated by the Crown during the Land Wars and abandoned. When surveyors moved in Te Whiti’s supporters pulled up the pegs, ploughed Pākehā designated land in protest at the land confiscations and determinedly farmed and lived on ‘confiscated’ land. Like those before him, Te Whiti and his people were viewed by the Crown as a threat and obstacle to the colonial agenda. On the 5th November 1881, the Government sent in 1,500 men from the armed constabulary to crush the 2,200 unarmed Māori at Parihaka. Over four hundred Māori were jailed, including Te Whiti and Tohu Kakahi who were jailed indefinitely with the introduction of legislation under the West Coast Peace Preservation Bill. As a result, the people of Parihaka were dispersed and their houses destroyed. Despite the Crown’s violent responses the community was rebuilt and annually commemorate their struggles and achievements.

Māori persisted with their struggle for sovereignty and in 1888 the Kotahitanga movement was formally established with the now familiar aspiration of Māori unity, halting land sales and maintaining the mana of Māori. They attempted to introduce a Native Rights Bill to establish a Māori Parliament but were unsuccessful because of intense opposition from Pākehā members of Parliament. The organisation was to continue into the 20th century but in a new form. Durie writes that as a result of the Kingitanga and Kotahitanga Movements, the concept of mana became applicable to Māori people generally.

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251 Ibid., 159.
253 They were eventually released in 1883
255 Ngāpuhi worked towards re-establishing mana motuhake. The concept of kotahitanga gained popularity during the second half of the 19th century conveying Māori unity but its more correct meaning is connected to iwi unity.
256 Walker, "The History of Maori Activism [Paper]."
Mana Māori was a measure of the control and authority which Māori people were able to exercise as distinct from the authority of the government.257

The earlier Māori Representation Act (1867) provided Māori with four seats in Parliament when they should have been allocated twenty seats on the basis of population. Representation in the colonial Parliament was not something Māori leaders actively sought as it was contrary to aspirations of self-determination that they believed would be more adequately realised through the establishment of a Māori Parliament.258 However, these four seats remain today and although hotly contested on the grounds of ‘racial’ privilege, they guarantee Māori a voice (although limited) in the parliamentary system. The situation remained grim for Māori in the late 19th century, with the rapidly declining population and alienation from land. Durie writes that by 1890, with the threat of extinction, the fate of Māori survival remained in the balance.259

**Early to Mid-20th Century**

The following section raises key issues and describes Māori movements during the earlier part of the 20th century. This includes messianic movements, the role of Māori women leadership and legislation that entrenched the hegemony of Pākehā knowledge, language and culture.

Against the depressing backdrop of the late 19th century, two new messianic movements emerged in the early 20th century. They were led by pacifists and healers Rua Kenana in the Urewera and Wiremu Tahupotiki Rātana in Whanganui. The former, Kenana, established a community at Maungapōhatu in the Urewera ranges in an effort to exercise tino rangatiratanga and escape the influenza and smallpox epidemics that were decimating Tūhoe. Here they built houses and farmed the land, but were constantly battling against the authorities’

257 Durie, Whaiora: Maori Health Development, 28.
258 Walker, "Colonisation and Development of the Maori People.”
259 Durie, Whaiora: Maori Health Development, 32.
distrust. Reminiscent of the Crown’s actions against Te Whiti thirty-five years earlier, armed police marched on the community in 1916. They forcibly removed Kenana, killing his son Toko and another young Māori man, Te Maipa Te Whui. Walker points out that the police raid was on the pretext of illicit supply of liquor but the “underlying agenda was Pākehā paranoia, accusations of sedition and assertion of dominance.” Kenana was imprisoned at Mt Eden jail in Auckland, awaiting trial. His trial lasted for forty-seven days and Kenana was only convicted of a lesser charge of resisting arrest that required him to serve further time in jail. Facing legal costs and the effects of the police invasion, the community collapsed. The second form of this resistance emerged in 1918 with the Rātana Movement led by Rātana who was not only a healer but also an advocate of pan tribal unity and Te Tiriti. From 1922 after rejections and obstruction from the government, the Rātana Movement became a political force as well as a religious force; one that continues to have a strong following today.

During this era, Te Puea Herangi, a Māori woman leader from the Waikato region, led exceptional community development in her iwi. She fought for compensation from the Crown for confiscated land and strongly opposed conscription during World War I (1914-1918), asking why Māori should fight for a coloniser who had invaded and taken their lands. This was contrary to views held by the Māori members of Parliament, Apirana Ngata, Peter Buck and Maui Pomare who advocated for Māori conscription. Ngata in particular argued that drafting was the price of citizenship.

Māori not only had to endure alienation from land enforced through legislation and armed invasions, but they also faced assaults on culture, language and knowledge. The Tohunga Suppression Act (1907) sought to eliminate Māori healing practices by making them illegal. Peter Webster suggests that the section of the Act prohibiting prophesising was deliberately intended to assist...

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260 Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 182.
262 Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 183.
264 Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 190.
265 Māori doctors trained in western medicine, Peter Buck and to a greater extent Maui Pomare, supported this legislation. They were concerned that tohunga practices inhibited the management of infectious diseases. In Durie, Whaiora: Maori Health Development, 46.
with the arrest of Kenana. By criminalising Tohunga (Māori healing specialists), this legislative act forced healing practices underground. Even though it was repealed in 1964, it nevertheless privileged western medical models, reinforcing the dominance of western methods of health, and consequently marginalised Māori healing into the present.

Prior to European contact, te reo Māori was the only language spoken. It remained the dominant language during the early stages of colonial engagement. With the advent of increasing systematic colonisation, the Crown actively suppressed Māori knowledge and culture by suppressing language and customary practice. The effects of these policies privileged European values and language, and threatened the survival of te reo Māori, as a living language.

The suppression of te reo Māori and culture was strategically advanced through educational policies and practices that assisted with the underlying agenda of assimilation. Native Schools were established under the Native Schools Act in 1867 requiring instruction to be in English where ‘practicable’. Evidence shows that as early as 1883 schools developed policies banning the speaking of te reo Māori by both parents and children within school grounds. After 1900 the blanket banning of te reo Māori in all schools was enforced through the use of corporal punishment. English became the language of instruction in Native and general schools until 1931. Consequently, the speaking of te reo Māori and teaching of Māori culture (e.g. waiata and tikanga) became very limited.

Although Native schools and the associated policies gained some support from Māori they also faced considerable opposition and resistance. For example, the King movement set up their own te reo Māori immersion schools and followers of Kenana refused to send their children to school. Nevertheless, the banning of te reo

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269 Ibid., 161.
270 Ibid., 164.
reo Māori in schools contributed to the dramatic decline of fluent speakers in te reo Māori. This so called ‘civilising mission’ was aimed at diminishing the very foundation of Māori knowledge and identity. Although practices were to change later in the century, Walker argues that “the underlying notions of ethnocentrism and cultural superiority that motivated it remained.273

Numerous accounts in the 20th century refer to Māori as a ‘dying race’ both metaphorically and factually.274 Artist Charles Frederick Goldie, known for his depictions of Māori, named his paintings within the context of Māori as a noble yet dying race, no longer relevant or viable in contemporary New Zealand. His titles included: *A Noble Relic of a Noble Race* (1907), *A Noble Northern Chief* (1912) and *The Last of the Cannibals* (1911). However, this characterisation belied the spirit and reality of Māori who did not passively await a fate of extinction.

At the turn of the 20th century there was a halt in the rapid decline of the Māori population that contradicted these earlier forecasts. Leaders emerged in parliament who chose to advance Māori through mainstream politics. Apirana Ngata is described by Walker as the instigator of the cultural revival, focusing on constructing carved meeting houses because this represented iwi traditions, identity and mana.275 These developments began in rural Aotearoa where the majority of Māori lived until the 1930s. Urban Pākehā remained largely unaware of the transformation, continuing to believe Māori were a ‘dying race’.276 Inaccurate assumptions about ‘extinction’ were also based on western theory that this was the fate of an inferior colonised race faced with progress and thereby justified a colonial agenda.277 In the main, the overall recovery was due to the efforts of Māori to counter assimilation and marginalisation and assert their identity and aspirations. Durie writes that:

275 Walker, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End*, 188.
276 Ibid., 186.
Had Māori participation not been as decisive as it was, it is unlikely that the positive trends throughout the 20th century would have occurred at the same pace or with the same results.\textsuperscript{278}

With the advent of World War II (1939-1945) Māori were encouraged to move to the Pākehā dominated cities and work in essential industries. This brought about huge changes for Māori who were now required to become bicultural, living in two worlds, in order to survive and resist the Pākehā agenda of assimilation. Walker explains that this meant Māori had to develop three key skills in order to survive; urban survival skills, “maintenance of cultural continuity and a political response to Pākehā domination.”\textsuperscript{279} Further impacting on Māori were the high casualties sustained by the 28th Māori Battalion in World War II. Those that did return were treated as heroes but government policy meant that they did not receive compensation equitable to that given to Pākehā.

Durie writes that if “genocide was the fear of the 1800s then ethnocide replaced it as a major threat for Māori by the mid-1900s.”\textsuperscript{280} Māori migration to the cities led the Government to follow a policy of ‘pepper-potting,’ that originally came out of a belief that mixing classes through state housing policies would lead to a more integrated society. The intention was that Māori housing should be scattered throughout urban areas in order to ‘integrate’ Māori into Pākehā society.\textsuperscript{281} This was viewed as preferable to the alternative of Māori developing distinct urban Māori communities.

As a result of the post-war struggles by Māori to maintain and nurture Māori development and culture there emerged the consolidation and visibility of a new wave of Māori women leaders. They formed the Māori Women’s Welfare League in 1951 and with a pan-tribal focus advanced Māori objectives in a variety of areas including health, education, housing and discrimination, with a focus on

\begin{footnotes}
\item[278] Ibid., 41.
\item[279] Walker, "Colonisation and Development of the Maori People," 158.
\item[280] Durie, \textit{Whaiora: Maori Health Development}, 47.
\item[281] Jack Kent Hunn, "Report on Department of Maori Affairs," (Māori Affairs, 24 August 1960), 7. Under Housing, section (32) the report states: “to achieve an integrated community some of the sections in Māori subdivisions should, if possible, be sold to Europeans.”
\end{footnotes}
women and children. The organisation exists today and although it has changed in style it remains the oldest active Māori health organisation.

Further legislative acts during the 1950s resulted in the continued decline of Māori land ownership, although some attempt was made to repatriate land after leases had expired. A significant piece of legislation in this era was the Māori Affairs Act (1953), establishing the Māori Affairs Department. The agency was mandated to purchase Māori land for the Government. Under the Act, Māori land could be compulsorily purchased by the Government at state valuation if it was perceived to be uneconomically viable and estimated to be worth less than fifty pounds in value. As a result of this legislation the Crown acquired large amounts of Māori land.

The 1960s and 1970s

During the 1960s the dominant discourse changed from one of Māori assimilation to integration which remained assimilative in intent. Although it was never explicitly stated, integration assumed that Māori would become more like Pākehā. The Hunn Report on the Department of Māori Affairs in 1960 promoted this aim. It was the first official report to highlight the gaps between Māori and Pākehā in the cities, with Māori more likely to be poor, unhealthy and living in substandard housing. An unforgettable direction of the Report was support for the future and inevitable assimilation of Māori into dominant Pākehā society. Assumptions were made that Māori would or should aspire to these goals. For example, arts and crafts, the marae and language were referred to in the report as “relics” of ancient Māori life. Māori language proponent Hana O’Regan argues that the propaganda of assimilation convinced the “majority that te reo Māori had no place in a modern, global world.” The principles identified in the Hunn Report were followed by governments until the 1970s. Historian Angela

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283 Durie, Whaiora: Maori Health Development, 48.
284 ———, Ngā Tai Matatū: Tides of Māori Endurance, 21.
285 Hunn, “Report on Department of Maori Affairs.”
286 Ibid., 15.
Ballara explains that these principles allowed successive governments to disregard Māori demands for change. However, the policies of integration and assimilation did not convince Māori who continued to call for tino rangatiratanga. Resistance to Pākehā policies and the desire to maintain a Māori identity in an urban environment resulted in the building of urban marae in addition to those existing urban marae of the mana whenua (customary authority over an area). Building projects such as these successfully transplanted Māori tikanga to the cities. Te Puea was the first formal urban marae and was opened in Māngere, Auckland in 1965. This was followed by Te Ūnga Waka and church-based marae operated by Māori such as Tātai Honi, an Anglican Church in Khyber Pass.

Māori leadership during the 1960s became more formalised and Walker points out that it was taken over by the Māori Council that was established in 1962. The Council supported Government legislation in some areas, but opposed legislation that would result in Māori loss of land. The Council argued for policies that would assist Māori to develop land. However, the advice of the Council and general Māori opposition to legislation that would further alienate Māori from tribal lands was not heeded by the Government who introduced the Māori Affairs Amendment Act in 1967. This legislation ostensibly dealt with land issues but it was couched in assimilationist terms that echoed the direction of the Hunn Report and the desire that the two races move forward as one people. The Act ignored Māori relationships with the land as tāngata whenua and provided for a reclassification of Māori land, allowing acquisition of ‘uneconomic’ units for sale to others who would make the land productive. Walker describes this as the “Europeanisation” of Māori land and by eliminating the Māori problem realises the Pākehā dream of one people. For Māori, retaining shares in land regardless of the size, maintains a spiritual connection and tūrangawaewae that is in direct conflict with the commodification of land. Many Māori saw the Act as the ‘last

288 Ballara, Proud to Be White?, 134-36.
289 Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 201.
292 Ballara, Proud to Be White?, 137.
land grab’ by Pākehā and was key to the formation of the Māori land rights movement that emerged in the following decade.293

In the 1970s Māori leadership diversified with the emergence of young Māori advocacy groups and in particular Ngā Tamatoa and Te Reo Māori Society, who grew out of a conference organised by the Māori Council. Te Awekotuku, a member of both groups, explains that Ngā Tamatoa played an important role in bringing issues into the public arena that had previously been ignored or dismissed.294 These were not new concerns for Māori, but what changed was the shift of debate from the marae to the public arena. Ngā Tamatoa predominantly consisted of young urban Māori who were not fluent in te reo Māori. They were angry at successive attempts of assimilation and were prepared to openly challenge Pākehā hegemony. Te Reo Māori Society was made up of native speakers and emerged from a University environment where they aimed to provide opportunities for Māori students to study te reo Māori, tikanga and history. Te Reo Māori Society was also highly politicised and promoted the protection of te reo Māori. The two groups worked together to progress key issues including te reo Māori, land and broadcasting.295 For example, they pushed for a Māori language day that has now become a week long promotion. Ngā Tamatoa challenged the Crown’s ongoing contraventions of Te Tiriti, including the wearing of black arm bands on Waitangi Day calling it a day of mourning.296 With Pākehā supporters they attempted to stop the celebrations to expose the myth of cultural harmony to the world.297 The actions of Ngā Tamatoa in particular, were a portent of increasing public demands by Māori for self-determination. It is significant that the ranks of Ngā Tamatoa and Te Reo Society included people such as Mita, Barclay and Robert Pouwhare who became prominent Māori media producers.

293 Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 207.
295 Angela Moewaka Barnes, “Kanohi Kite a Te Maori: Maori Documentaries, Negotiating the Complexities of Television in Aotearoa” (M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 2003), 29.
296 The New Zealand Day Act 1973, introduced by a Labour Government, made the 6th February a public holiday but changed the name from Waitangi Day to New Zealand Day. This became a focus for Ngā Tamatoa.
297 Awatere, Maori Sovereignty, 98; Walker, "Colonisation and Development of the Maori People,” 163.
Strong and public articulations of Māori aspirations and in particular those of Ngā Tamatoa led the Government to seek the advice of the Māori Council. The Council drew up a comprehensive submission outlining fourteen violations against Article Two of Te Tiriti and acknowledged their support of Ngā Tamatoa. Four years later in a somewhat belated response, the Government passed the Treaty of Waitangi Act (1975) establishing the Waitangi Tribunal.\(^298\) However, the Tribunal had no decision-making power, was limited to hearing claims related to contraventions of Te Tiriti after 1975 and could only make recommendations to Parliament. Although the formation of the Tribunal was a positive move, the growing feeling that the Tribunal was ineffectual in addressing Māori claims was reinforced by the first two cases in 1977.\(^299\)

Māori were not placated by a Tribunal with little substance. They expressed growing dissatisfaction with the Crown and laws that continued to erode Māori land ownership and rights.\(^300\) Whina Cooper, the first president of the Māori Women’s Welfare League in the 1950s, expressed concern about the lack of opportunities for Māori and supported self-determination.\(^301\) In 1975 she convened a hui (a gathering or meeting). This event launched the Land March, given the name Te Rōpū o te Matakite. The marchers set off from Te Hāpua, near the top of the North Island in the same year and as they progressed southward, support and politicisation grew resulting in a powerful unity of purpose.\(^302\) The March triggered a land rights movement that unified Māori across Aotearoa.

When the National Government attempted to subdivide the land of Ngāti Whātua at Takaparawha, Bastion Point, in Auckland in 1977 Māori drew on their solidarity from the Land March to present unified opposition. In the same year the Ōrākei Māori Action Group, with supporters from across the country, occupied

\(^{298}\) Walker, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End*, 212.
\(^{299}\) One case was found by the Tribunal to have little foundation. In the other case recommendations were not made because the Electricity Department backed down on its intention to build a power station on the Manukau Harbour. Criticisms were made about the process and recommendations were developed for future hearings to occur on marae where tikanga governs. In Ibid., 245.
\(^{300}\) Ibid., 212.
\(^{301}\) Durie, *Whaiora: Maori Health Development*, 51.
the land and built temporary accommodation. After 506 days they were forcibly removed by the police and military and the buildings were demolished. This was reminiscent of the Crown’s past actions in their attempts to repress the communities of Te Kooti, Te Whiti and Kenana. Other land struggles were occurring around the country at this time, including those of iwi Ngāti Wai, Tainui (Raglan Golf Course), Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Maru and Te Arawa. As the past revealed and future struggles would reinforce, Māori refused to capitulate to Pākehā agendas and hegemony.

By the end of the 1970s, some aspects of Māori rights activity moved into mainstream politics. As a result of politicisation and disillusionment with governments’ repeated failures to address Māori self-determination and attempts at assimilation Matiu Rata, a Labour Party Minister who held the Northern Māori seat, resigned in 1979 on the grounds that the dominant Pākehā ideology of one people failed Māori. The establishment of the Mana Motuhake movement, spearheaded by Rata, called for ratification of Te Tiriti and Māori self-determination, but from a more conservative position than the Māori sovereignty later proposed by Donna Awatere of Ngā Tamatoa. In her groundbreaking publication, Māori Sovereignty, Awatere describes sovereignty as the:

Māori ability to determine our own destiny and to do so from the basis of our land and fisheries. In essence Māori sovereignty seeks nothing less than the acknowledgment that New Zealand is Māori land. At its most conservative it could be interpreted as the desire for a bicultural society…It certainly demands an end to monoculturalism.
Māori struggles were not isolated from international movements. During the
1970s they were influenced by the American Civil Rights movement of the 1960s
and global indigenous struggles. The writings and actions of African Americans
such as Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Eldridge Cleaver and Angela Davis
influenced a generation of Māori thinkers. Moana Jackson, a Māori indigenous
rights lawyer and theorist, was personally influenced by indigenous writer Vine
Deloria and believes that the influence of international movements on Māori
politics should not be underestimated.308

The 1980s

Māori struggles of the 1970s carried over into the 1980s with two central themes
dominating: a continued focus on Te Tiriti and tino rangatiratanga. Highly
politicised Māori groups emerged during this decade including He Taua and the
Black Women’s group. He Taua challenged engineering students at the University
of Auckland who, despite frequent requests, continued to parody the haka (dance
with chant).309 The Black Women’s movement held their first hui in 1980 to
discuss issues of relevance that had been marginalised by western feminism.310
This was reminiscent of earlier Māori women’s groups who sought to find a space
where they could focus on issues that they identified as important for Māori
development as well as address the complexities of Māori women’s lives.
Waitangi Day demonstrations, initiated by Ngā Tamatoa, continued. With an
increase in Māori rights campaigners at Waitangi there was an equal increase in
police presence who were determined that the celebrations would continue. The
use of riot gear (helmets and long batons) was not new to Aotearoa or to Māori.
Māori had experienced direct encounters with the Red Squad, a specialised police
riot control unit who had been trained during the 1981 South African Springbok
rugby Tour. The rugby Tour created huge divisions in Aotearoa and those
opposed to the Tour, including Māori and Pākehā, mobilised on the streets where

308 Jackson, "Interview with Moana Jackson."
309 The use of the term Black Women was political and later the name was changed. He Taua
directly challenged engineering students at Auckland University who parodied the haka despite
earlier pleas to stop.
310 Pihama, "Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring Our Voices: Mana Wahine as a Kaupapa Māori
Theoretical Framework", 239.
the games were occurring in an attempt to stop play in protest at the South African system of apartheid.311 In the mid-1980s Te Hīkoi ki Waitangi brought together the Māori political movements including Kotahitanga and Kingitanga for a peace walk to Waitangi to seek justice. With over ten thousand marchers, including Pākehā, the hīkoi (march) began at Turangawaewae marae and progressed to Waitangi. There was much debate during the journey that culminated in a strong Māori voice at Waitangi. The late 1970s and 1980s signalled a changing socio-political landscape with the emergence of increasing Pākehā support, albeit in small numbers, for Māori aspirations.

In the 1980s the implementation of neoliberal policies began a move from state monopoly capitalism to global capitalism.312 Driven by the Labour Government and headed by Finance Minister Roger Douglas, this is frequently referred to as the era of ‘Rogernomics’. An integral part of the vision was to restructure the state sector and economy. What followed was a reformation process of devolution, deregulation and reduced state dependency that supported national economic objectives where ostensibly devolution supported Māori aspirations for greater autonomy.313 These aspirations were discussed at the Hui Taumata of 1984 where participants called for a Decade of Māori Development founded on self-sufficiency and control.314 However it was soon realised that calling for greater Māori control and independence could be “construed as offering implicit support for privatisation or at least for reduced State provision of services.”315 Neoliberalism on the one hand offered greater autonomy, but it also absolved the State of responsibility for historical injustices.

Law academic and critical commentator on issues of globalisation, Jane Kelsey, analysed the reforms from 1984 to 1989. She points out that the State transference of its resources through privatisation and its power through devolution reduced its ability to monitor State performance for Te Tiriti responsibilities and left “little in

311 Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 220-33.
314 Durie, Whaiora: Maori Health Development, 149.
315 Ibid., 150.
the hands of the Crown for Māori to exercise rangatiratanga over.”316 The ramifications of reduced state spending in key areas such as health, housing, education and employment, left Māori in a position of increased disadvantage, widening the disparities between Māori and non-Māori.317

Despite the obstacles, Māori continued to seek advancement. Without these efforts, Tuhiwai Smith argues neoliberal reforms, that had a disproportionately negative impact on Māori, would have run a devastating course for Māori.318 A key transformational response occurred in education. Tuhiwai Smith explains that Māori posed a risk to the legitimacy of neoliberalism because their aspirations were “deeply located in history, in cultural differences and the values of collectivity.”319 It was from these aspirations that the groundbreaking and counter hegemonic education initiatives of Kōhanga Reo and later Kura Kaupapa Māori (Māori language immersion schools – primary and secondary) emerged. Despite the reversal of earlier education policies that suppressed te reo Māori, the language remained in a precarious state. To ensure the survival of the language, Māori aimed to establish immersion pre-schools nationally. Sitting alongside this would be the inclusion of tikanga and Māori worldviews that had previously been absent or marginalised in state education.320 These alternative models were driven by Māori communities with little government support initially. There were early objections to Kōhanga Reo that Durie concludes were “based on a prejudice against Māori and a fundamental belief in assimilation.”321 Despite the obstacles, Kōhanga Reo flourished and the initiative was instrumental in reversing the decline of te reo Māori.322 Concerns then arose about the standard of te reo Māori taught at primary and secondary schools. This led to the formation of Kura

319 Ibid., 249.
Kaupapa Māori in 1985 and Wānanga to cater for Māori tertiary educational needs.\textsuperscript{323} Kaupapa Māori, tino rangatiratanga, with Māori governance, control and management characterised these initiatives. This challenged the hegemony of schooling and demonstrated how Māori could create change in a tactical and effective manner.\textsuperscript{324} From this environment emerged the important Te Reo Māori claim that was lodged with the Waitangi Tribunal.

A hui convened to discuss Te Tiriti recommended that the Waitangi Tribunal be given retrospective powers to 1840. As a result, the Treaty of Waitangi Amendment Act was passed in 1985 giving the Tribunal increased staff and resources. Some did not expect many claims to be heard but within months large claims were lodged by Ngāi Tahu, Tainui and Atiawa tribes. Te Reo Māori claim was lodged in the same year by Huirangi Waikerepuru and Ngā Kaiwhakapūmau i te reo Māori. This claim was unique because it was submitted on behalf of all Māori and was not iwi specific.\textsuperscript{325} They argued that the Crown not only failed to protect te reo Māori but actively supported its decline through policies and practices of assimilation including the banning of te reo Māori in schools and the promotion of English as the superior and primary language.\textsuperscript{326} Identifying a number of Acts that were inconsistent with the principles of Te Tiriti it was argued that Māori were discriminated against because they were not able to “have the language spoken, heard, taught, learnt [or] broadcast.”\textsuperscript{327} The claimants asserted that te reo Māori was a taonga (something treasured) and as such must be protected by the Crown under Article Two of Te Tiriti.\textsuperscript{328} The Waitangi Tribunal produced \textit{Te Reo Māori Report} (1987) that strongly criticised government policy and ruled that te reo Māori was a taonga of both tangible and intangible elements and as such must be actively protected by the Crown.

\textsuperscript{323} Whare Wānanga (House of higher learning) were traditionally places of specialist learning and now offer tertiary education. Te Wānanga o-Raukawa, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi are current examples. In Durie,\textit{ Te Mana, Te Kāwanatanga: The Politics of Māori Self-Determination}, 65.
\textsuperscript{324} Smith, “Fourteen Lesson of Resistance to Exclusion: Learning from the Māori Experience in New Zealand over the Last Two Decades of Neo-Liberal Reform,” 250.
\textsuperscript{325} Durie,\textit{ Te Mana, Te Kāwanatanga: The Politics of Māori Self-Determination}, 59.
\textsuperscript{326} Ibid., 59-60.
\textsuperscript{327} Ibid., 59.
\textsuperscript{328} Walker, \textit{Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End}, 268.
Shortly before the release of *Te Reo Māori Report*, the Māori Language Act (1987) was introduced establishing te reo Māori as an official language of Aotearoa. This became law in 1987 and established what is now known as *Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori* (The Māori Language Commission). The Commission’s role is to promote te reo Māori and assist and advise the Crown on matters related to the implementation of the Act. At the time it was estimated that only 12 percent of the Māori population were Māori language speakers. This was the first time te reo Māori was formally recognised by the Crown but it was not the panacea to the survival of the language as sustained and innovative Māori driven initiatives such as Kōhanga Reo were crucial to save te reo Māori from extinction. Owing much to Māori driven initiatives and advocacy, Māori language speakers increased.

With urbanisation in the 1980s Māori accumulated knowledge about the workings of Pākehā culture and institutions that led to strategic actions to further Māori aspirations. For example, some Māori negotiated directly with the Crown or through the Courts. Walker explains that the 1980s saw the continuation of Māori campaigning by “activists” and “behind the scenes conservatives,” with a refocus on laws that failed and dispossessed Māori. The State-Owned Enterprises Act (1986) focused Māori action against the Crown’s ongoing failure to protect Māori rights. The Act was consistent with the Government’s aim to restructure the commercial activities of the state sector where profit would be the main measure of performance. It allowed Crown land to be transferred to the newly established State-owned enterprises and sold on without restraints, regardless of any current or potential Māori land claims. In response, the Māori Council took out an injunction against the Crown on the grounds that the Act was inconsistent with the broader principles of Te Tiriti and also contravened a clause incorporated into the Act itself that referred to Te Tiriti. In a landmark decision the Court of

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330 Ibid., 62.
332 Ibid., 158.
333 Walker, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End*, 244.
335 Television was one of the enterprises facing restructuring. The newly formed Television New Zealand (TVNZ) was to operate as a new SOE from 1 December 1988.
Appeal found that the Crown unlawfully breached the principles of Te Tiriti and the Crown could not transfer land to State-owned enterprises until they had safeguarded Māori interests. This reinforced Crown obligations under Te Tiriti and dramatically reversed Judge Prendergast’s ruling in the previous century that Te Tiriti was a nullity. The Government then passed the Treaty of Waitangi (State Enterprises) Act (1988) that effectively meant that Crown land, if sold, could be returned to Māori if a claim was proven. The legal action taken by the New Zealand Māori Council resulted in aspects of Te Tiriti being incorporated into law, and because of this, court rulings could be made.

It is useful to briefly describe biculturalism, an ideology that promotes equity between Māori and Pākehā and gained momentum in the 1980s. The definition of biculturalism was widely debated but generally incorporated at the least the recognition of Māori culture, Te Tiriti, Māori status as tāngata whenua and the redistribution of resources to Māori. It is for these reasons that Māori argued Aotearoa must become a bicultural society before aspiring to becoming a multicultural society. Walker writes that Māori intellectuals promoted the ideology of biculturalism in an effort to “bring about equalising transformations for the benefit of Māori.” This occurred when seeking government support for Māori driven educational and te reo Māori initiatives such as Kōhanga Reo. The success of biculturalism is widely debated and it is argued that while some gains were made, the practice was also superficial and as a result compromised Māori. For example some government departments adopted Māori designs and Māori protocols, but the structures and processes of the organisation remained monocultural. Māori, including Awatere, were disillusioned with biculturalism as a model for Māori development and continued to advocate for Māori sovereignty. Awatere argues that biculturalism meant Māori “learnt to operate on two levels of consciousness and this training in many ways is still with us and...
is a hindrance.”

Awatere’s assertion is supported by Walker who writes that because of colonisation and the unequal power dynamics, Māori by definition are bicultural because they have had to function in two worlds to survive. As a consequence, Māori have surrendered more and lost “more in the practice of bicultural aspirations.” Pākehā have not experienced the same imperative. Biculturalism remains an ideology that challenges monoculturalism, but has been limited in its ability to address issues of power and injustice.

Walker proposes that during the 1980s the vigorous ways Māori demanded equity with Te Tiriti as the framework, increasing Waitangi Tribunal claims, successful High Court injunctions over fisheries and the State-Owned Enterprises Act, resulted in increasing “Pākehā anxieties and feelings of insecurity.” A major Pākehā concern was that Māori land claims would dispossess Pākehā landowners even though the claims were made against the Crown and the Tribunal only had the power to make recommendations. Fears were echoed in the media after the settlement of the Ōrākei claim and a New Zealand Herald editorial wrote that “many people will wonder where Māori land claims are going to stop.” A particular discourse emerged in the 1980s framing Māori Tiriti claims as unjustified and extravagant, reflecting the ongoing, divergent interests of the coloniser and the colonised.

The 1990s Onwards

During the 1990s neoliberalism drove Government agendas in Te Tiriti negotiations with iwi and Māori became increasingly concerned about the protection of Māori knowledge. Neoliberalism through the 1990s involved Crown transferral of assets to Māori management including dividends acquired from this capital. In 1990, the newly elected National Government looked to find ways to

342 Ibid., 100.
343 Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 389.
345 Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 280.
346 Ibid., 283.
speed up Te Tiriti claims and reduce costs as promised in the lead-up to the elections. Direct negotiations with the Crown were promoted to iwi with a non-negotiable fiscal cap of $1 billion for all current and future claims. This became known as the ‘fiscal envelope’. How the sum was calculated was not disclosed but it was conservatively estimated that a reasonable and fair settlement price would exceed this by more than $10 billion.348

Government policy to offer monetary recompense shifted the focus from Te Tiriti rights to one of commodification and affordability. Although there was strong widespread opposition to the fiscal envelope, some iwi were prepared to negotiate and by 1996 three settlements were reached.349 The separation of the broader Crown responsibilities related to Te Tiriti from the Fiscal Envelope proposal resulted in hui where models for constitutional change were proposed. The National Government dismissed these proposals declaring that constitutional change was not relevant to the settlement process, reinforcing their intent to commodify Te Tiriti through the language of ‘assets’ and not address aspirations of tino rangatiratanga.350

With globalisation and the associated increased international interest in indigenous knowledge, including designs and symbols, the protection of Māori knowledge became increasingly pressing. This led to the lodging of the Wai 262 claim with the Waitangi Tribunal in 1991. Its coverage was broad and related to indigenous flora and fauna as well as wider issues of cultural and intellectual property rights. The claim was initiated by elders who were concerned at the loss of native flora and fauna that they regarded as taonga, to overseas interests while having no active participation in the decision-making regarding the granting of intellectual property rights.351 The claim sought to: protect Māori knowledge from inappropriate use; protect and nurture Māori rongoā (Māori methods of healing) that were severely threatened as a result of the Tohunga Suppression Act; develop greater controls for genetic engineering, and; safeguard the misappropriation of

348 Durie, Te Mana, Te Kāwanatanga: The Politics of Māori Self-Determination, 192.
349 Tainui, Ngāi Tahu and Ngāti Awa.
350 Durie, Te Mana, Te Kāwanatanga: The Politics of Māori Self-Determination, 235.
Māori imagery and knowledge. The claimants’ lawyer, Maui Solomon, gave a number of examples including the trade-marking of Māori words and the copyrighting of Māori knowledge related to flora and fauna that motivated the claim and highlighted the inadequacies of the current intellectual property rights system for Māori. The objection was not about the utilisation of these taonga but was concerned with control over their use and appropriateness.352 In essence the claim is about tino rangatiratanga, the exercise of control over Māori taonga and the protection of Māori rights guaranteed in Te Tiriti. The claim was researched and is currently in the report writing phase. This is a contentious and complex area, and filmmaker Barclay argued that western law or an amalgamation of western and indigenous law could not effectively address Māori issues of copyright and intellectual property rights. He suggests that Māori employ the law of tikanga as it covers all the dimensions that are associated with what he calls “our traditional treasures.”353

The Crown’s strategic move away from a focus on Māori rights as tāngata whenua was evidenced in the struggle over the foreshore and seabed when the Labour Government was in power. In 1997 Te Tauihu o ngā Waka, a collection of iwi in the northern area of the South Island, became concerned about customary fishing rights, access to marine farming and lack of opportunities to participate in decision-making. This resulted in an application to the Māori Land Court as contrary to Crown assumptions, Māori believed that iwi ownership of the foreshore and seabed was never extinguished. The Court was asked to determine if iwi continued to have customary rights to the foreshore and seabed and found that “in the absence of evidence of express extinguishment, customary title to the foreshore remained extant.”354 These findings were overturned by the High Court but on the 19th June 2003 the Court of Appeal ruled that the Māori Land Court had the power to make decisions about claims to the seabed and foreshore lodged by Māori. This resulted in heated public debates regarding access, public interest, beach ownership, Te Tiriti and Māori

352 Ibid.
354 Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 379.
and indigenous rights. Dominant discourse at the time framed the debate in terms of Māori demanding ‘special treatment’, advancing the familiar ideology of one people and therefore one law for all. Government reaction was swift because of concerns that the Court might find in favour of Māori claims, combined with an eagerness to allay unjustified fears about beach access. Labour Party leader, Helen Clark, responded by saying that Māori would not get title to the foreshore or seabed and announced that legislation to this effect would be drafted, effectively removing Māori access to the courts and a legal decision.

Walker writes that the Government, by siding with the “uninformed majority, stirred up by an Opposition party desperate to get runs on the board, jeopardised all the good work the Government had done through its Treaty settlement policy.” Māori overwhelmingly rejected the Government’s proposed legislation and mobilised. Hui were called, submissions were written and an urgent Waitangi Tribunal hearing was requested. The Tribunal expressed unequivocal support for the claimants’ position and found breaches of Te Tiriti and the norms of domestic and international law. In 2005 a hīkoi to Parliament protesting against the proposed Foreshore and Seabed Bill gathered predominantly Māori from a wide range of iwi. It was a powerful statement of opposition and reminiscent of the 1975 Land March. Although the march was motivated by the Bill, the intention was wider, incorporating the ongoing struggle for Māori sovereignty, Crown breaches of Te Tiriti and domestic and international laws. Despite strong iwi and Māori objections however, the government passed the Foreshore and Seabed Act in November 2004. This undermined and overrode the rights of Māori as both tāngata whenua and citizens, reinforcing the need for constitutional change.

A new Māori political party emerged during the foreshore and seabed debates. Labour Party Minister Tariana Turia had spoken out against the Bill and threatened to cross the floor to vote against it. She eventually resigned in 2004 and founded the Māori Party with co-leader Pita Sharples. The Māori Party went on to win four seats in 2005 and five seats in the 2008 elections. Although directly emerging from the foreshore and seabed struggle, the Māori Party was formed out

355 Ibid., 382.
356 Ibid., 403.
of widespread dissatisfaction with the major political parties to honourably and adequately address Māori rights. This was fuelled by a speech given earlier in the year by Opposition Leader, National Party’s, Don Brash (Ōrewa, January 2004).\textsuperscript{357} He dismissed Te Tiriti and associated it with Māori privilege and special treatment. His argument conveniently sidestepped Pākehā privilege and silenced Māori rights issues. The ‘one law for all’ ideology was advanced by suggesting the abolition of ‘race-based’ legislation, policies and funding on the grounds that everyone should be treated equally. Furthermore, he advocated for the dismantling of ‘Māori’ departments including the Māori Language Commission and Māori Television. Despite widespread criticism, Brash gained political support that further legitimated racist and colonising agendas. Although individual Labour MPs countered Brash, the Labour Government did not defend legislation and policies that addressed Māori rights and Te Tiriti.\textsuperscript{358} They began to adopt similar rhetoric announcing that they would re-examine policies and funding that may be seen to be ‘unfairly’ based on race and privilege.\textsuperscript{359} Walker writes that “neither the government nor the media presented a coherent picture of the positive direction the nation had taken on Māori policy.”\textsuperscript{360}

**International Strategies**

Jackson proposes that globalisation with the flow of goods and services and neoliberal practices of ‘free’ trade and ‘free’ movement of capital has shaped government responses to Māori “grievances and defined how many people now think about our rights and our status.”\textsuperscript{361} As a result, Māori rights as tāngata whenua are being reworked to fit within global consumer interests where economic development is touted as representing Māori aspirations of self-determination in its entirety.\textsuperscript{362} Conversely, globalisation has opened up forums and created opportunities for the articulation of indigenous struggles and


\textsuperscript{358} Durie, Īnō Tai Matatū: Tides of Māori Endurance, 223-24.

\textsuperscript{359} Minister of Race Relations, Trevor Mallard, claimed that he was an indigenous New Zealander, promoting the notion that indigeneity is not the exclusive domain of Māori.

\textsuperscript{360} Walker, Ka Whawhai Tōna Matou: Struggle without End, 398.

\textsuperscript{361} Jackson, "Globalisation and the Colonising State of Mind," 171.

\textsuperscript{362} Ibid., 171-72.
injustices. Iwi took their criticisms of the Foreshore and Seabed Act to the United Nations (UN) Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, arguing that it breached the right to freedom from racial discrimination. The Committee found that Aotearoa had breached human rights and although the Government played down the findings and refused to review the legislation, the Committee’s determination legitimated Māori concerns and embarrassed the Government.363

Academic and proponent of indigenous rights, Claire Charters, writes that this is significant because international outcomes were achieved that would not have been possible in Aotearoa.364

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples initiated in the 1980s deserves mention as it is an example of local indigenous rights influencing international movements. Māori, including Jackson, were directly involved in drafting the document.365 The Declaration is not binding but it does comprehensively set out a number of Articles covering indigenous rights that can inform international and local law, set norms as well as monitor and advance indigenous rights. In 2005 concerns were expressed by individual Māori and indigenous peoples about proposed amendments to the self-determination articles in the Draft Declaration by New Zealand, Australia and the United States.366 Māori were not present but with the use of communications including the internet and email, indigenous peoples mobilised globally to criticise the amendment.367 In this sense a globalised world offers Māori and indigenous peoples opportunities to promote issues and resist domination by acting as an international indigenous collective. In 2006 the United Nations endorsed the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples but further objections delayed its final adoption until the following year with New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the United States refusing to sign. In 2007 Solomon observed that in recent years the New Zealand Labour Government had become increasingly hostile to recognising and protecting indigenous rights in forums such as the Declaration and the World Intellectual Property Organisation. He suggests that this negative backlash could

364 Ibid., 151-56.
365 Ibid., 153.
366 These countries significantly impeded the progress of the Declaration.
be the result of the “foreshore and seabed issue, and the increasing politicisation of racial and Treaty issues in New Zealand.”

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples, Rudolfo Stavenhagen’s 2005 visit to Aotearoa may have also fuelled the Labour Government’s resistance to sign the Declaration. The mandate of the Rapporteur was to provide an independent “overview of general human rights matters as they relate to race relations and the constitutional context within which the foreshore and seabed issue has been played out.” The report released in 2006 was not an outright attack on the treatment of Māori in Aotearoa but raised serious concerns. While recognising progress, Stavenhagen noted that disparities continued to exist and he was concerned at the return to the assimilationist model that was increasingly appearing in public discourse. A number of recommendations were made including a repeal of the Foreshore and Seabed Act to recognise Māori rights and entrenching Te Tiriti in constitutional law. The findings supported Māori aspirations and status as tāngata whenua but must have been embarrassing for current and previous governments. As a result both the Labour Government and National Party chose to publicly dismiss and discredit the report with claims that it was not an important report, did not adequately address a complex situation and was unbalanced. While promoting general respect for the United Nations and New Zealand’s supposed good human rights record, Labour and National’s dismissal of the report is hypocritical. It is however a document that can be used by Māori to challenge the Crown.

The United Nations is an international body that Māori have accessed to voice serious concerns about Crown transgressions. Iwi accessed the United Nations after a series of raids were launched by police, acting under the Terrorism Suppression Act (2002) on 15 October, 2007. Of concern was the intensiveness and focus of the raids in the Māori communities of Tūhoe on the East Coast of the

\[368\] Solomon, "A Long Wait for Justice," 82.
\[371\] Ibid., paragraph 9-10.
North Island. Police blockaded and locked down an entire community leaving people hurt and traumatised. Jackson explains that the “Māori people of Ruātoki were the only innocent bystanders stopped by police and made to get out of their cars at gunpoint.” Māori were arrested, including known campaigners for Māori sovereignty but subsequently acquitted of charges related to the Terrorism Suppression Act. Further charges related to firearms were laid and preliminary hearings began in 2008. The United Nations asked the Government to explain police actions and raised concerns about the abuse of human rights and breaches of privacy when homes were invaded.

The raids were frequently framed only as civil rights and human rights issues. This is problematic because while Pākehā were affected, it was overwhelmingly Māori and in particular the iwi of Tūhoe who were targeted by the police. Framing this as only a civil or human rights issue marginalises the direct action taken by the Crown against Māori and in particular Tūhoe who are vocal in their call for sovereignty. History reveals the Crown’s ongoing deliberate suppression of individuals and communities who promote tino rangatiratanga through legislation and force. Parallels cannot help but be drawn between the recent raids on Tūhoe and the earlier communities of Te Kooti, Te Whiti and Rua Kenana.

Reminiscent of the 1990s, the current National Government fulfilled an election promise to speed up Te Tiriti claims process and set a 1 September, 2008 deadline for the filing of historical claims with the Waitangi Tribunal. An unprecedented number of claims were lodged in the final four weeks leading up to the deadline. The National Government entered into a confidence and supply agreement with the Māori Party, promising to review the Foreshore and Seabed legislation and a discussion document setting out preferred government options was released and a Bill was drafted. Following Australia, New Zealand, under a National Government signed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in April 2010. Canada and the United States announced that they were also revisiting their decision. However, the National Party’s commitment to Māori was seriously questioned recently over its refusal to allocate Māori seats on the soon to be

374 It was Māori Party policy to have the Act repealed.
restructured Auckland City Council, where all eight of Auckland’s current regional and territorial authorities were amalgamating into a single entity.

Finally, it is important to raise early findings on te reo Māori from the Waitangi Tribunal related to the Wai 262 claim. Hana O’Regan writes that in 2005 the language experienced a “presence and status within New Zealand society not experienced since its decline into minority language status in the mid-1800s.”375 While numbers enrolled in kōhanga declined in the 21st century there was an increase in other Māori immersion pre-school education services and a wide range of primary school immersion and bilingual options. There was also a significant increase in te reo Māori education in the tertiary sector and Māori Television offers a variety of programmes in the language.376 However, the early release of the Waitangi Tribunal Report (Wai 262) on te reo Māori in 2010 was highly critical of the Crown’s performance on te reo Māori over the last 25 years. The report argues that although advances were made they were not maintained, resulting in the language approaching crisis. For example, there was a dramatic decline in young speakers, a concerning drop in Māori children attending Kōhanga Reo and a reduction in Māori able to speak te reo Māori conversationally.377 The Tribunal’s findings reinforce the need to constantly monitor the Crown’s performance in respect of Māori rights and aspirations.

**Summary**

The history of Aotearoa demonstrates the systematic attempt to eliminate or at best marginalise the Māori language, knowledge and culture through military force and government legislation. This is not unique to Aotearoa but has been a practice of colonisers globally, and indigenous peoples in Hawai‘i, Australia, Canada and the United States have also resisted similar colonising agendas. The relentless acquisition of land by the coloniser and the enforcement of English law, values and religion steadily eroded Māori social and economic systems and

376 Ibid., 164.
377 Waitangi Tribunal, "Te Reo Māori Report, Wai 262 [Pre-Publication]," (2010).
structures. In the early days of colonisation Māori could not have anticipated the imminent rapid decline in Māori population and the corresponding dramatic increase in Pākehā settlers that led them to outnumber Māori.

Māori never ceded sovereignty to the British and the assertion of tino rangatiratanga and mana motuhake has framed Māori responses against oppression since the 19th century. Inter-iwi forums and movements emerged to collectively resist and challenge colonial invasions and the associated ideologies of assimilation and integration. History shows that Māori rights and aspirations are viewed as a threat that challenges Pākehā hegemony, privilege and the associated ideology of one people. Recent struggles and events concerning the foreshore and seabed, the long delay over signing the UN Declaration of Indigenous Rights and the police raids on Tūhoe are reminders that colonialism is a persistent and unrelenting force.

However, in the face of unequal power relationships and inevitable compromise, Māori have courageously pursued justice. Throughout history the vision of a positive Māori future remained constant and is one based on Te Tiriti, tāngata whenua status, self-determination and equity. Māori found ways to resist, subvert or positively influence processes that would otherwise have resulted in increasing marginalisation. This also involved contributing to and accessing international forums to advance indigenous rights locally and globally. Furthermore, as agents of change, Māori developed their own unique visions and transformational solutions. Kaupapa Māori is one of these tools. It resists dominance and its transformative power resides in its ability to both challenge and create a distinctly Māori space. Māori experiences of disenfranchisement, resistance and self-determination raised in this chapter inform Kaupapa Māori theory and an analysis of Māori filmmaking.

378 Durie, Whaiora: Maori Health Development, 35.
379 Awatere, Maori Sovereignty, 11-12.
Chapter Three

A Historical Overview of Māori Filmmaking

Introduction

Chapter Three provides an overview of the history of filmmaking in Aotearoa as it relates to Māori dramatic feature filmmaking and builds on historical events outlined in Chapter Two. Critical developments in television are also covered as they closely align to developments in filmmaking. It must be remembered that Māori filmmaking is political because of the colonial context within which Māori must operate. Therefore, the following discussion includes an analysis of funding environments and the successes as well as the struggles facing Māori filmmakers. Developments in film and television will be illuminated by interviews with both funders and filmmakers. This will contribute to the discussion on Kaupapa Māori film theory in Chapter Four. In addition, it will contextualise events leading up to and following the three films examined in the case studies by examining the multiple sites that include the cultural, political and economic elements that Māori filmmakers must negotiate.

Early Photographic and Cinematic Representations of Māori

Early visual representations of Māori by Pākehā through art and photography were transposed to film with some modifications. Mita writes:

The first photographs in the nineteenth century introduced Māori people to the captured images of themselves…It was an event for which one
posed and was ‘dressed up’, usually in attire reflecting the culture of the photographer, or in his theatrical rendition of the noble savage.\textsuperscript{380}

Michael Sturma suggests that early 20\textsuperscript{th} century studio portraits commissioned by indigenous women of the South Pacific resulted in a form of control as opposed to being rendered passive ethnographic subjects. Wearing clothing of their own choice resulted in photographs that “could demonstrate a mastery of Western social codes and dress.”\textsuperscript{381} This attributed a sense of agency where indigenous women could use the medium to assert status and power. However, at the time of their circulation these images often reaffirmed prevailing colonial constructions and popular discourses such as noble savagery.\textsuperscript{382}

Despite the colonial nature of the photographic representations the images have special and unique attributes. Sam Edwards writes that early photographs are significant, not because of the location or pose, but because the viewer is connected with the mauri of the person in the print.\textsuperscript{383} Mauri is loosely translated as life force, a unique energy and essence. Marsden more deeply explains:

All existent being derives from a common centre. Everything depends for its existence, whether in this world or in that behind it, upon mauri (life-force)…Man is therefore an integral part both of the natural and spiritual order, for mauri animates all things. From this basic conviction derives the holistic approach of the Māori to all life.\textsuperscript{384}

The belief that photographs contain a person’s mauri was widely articulated in the past but is not necessarily a commonly held belief today.\textsuperscript{385} However, notions regarding the mauri of an image and its significance are related to the concept of images as taonga. Images are treasured in a variety of ways including use in whānau homes and for wider use in the wharenui (meeting house) and at

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\textsuperscript{381} Sturma, \textit{South Sea Maidens: Western Fantasy and Sexual Politics in the South Pacific}, 94.
\textsuperscript{382} Ibid., 95.
\textsuperscript{384} Royal, ed. \textit{The Woven Universe, Selected Writings of Rev. Māori Marsden}, 95.
\textsuperscript{385} A differing belief is that photographs of the living have a mauri but this essence leaves when the person dies. Naida Glavish, Personal Interview, May 2009.
\end{flushright}
tangihanga (Māori process of mourning). My whānau are fortunate to have photos of our tupuna taken in the 1800s, many of which reflect the attire, posture and setting of the coloniser. One in particular of our tupuna is memorable because on close inspection of the original, it appears that much of her very thick and wavy hair was painted out to portray a more ‘western’ and ‘tamed’ style of hair.

Another shows our kuia (an elder who is a woman) at a young age in middle class European dress, hair also pulled tightly back, with a moko kauae (chin tattoo). These family portraits reflect a sense of agency and ability to survive and conform in different settings; demonstrating a mastery of colonial social codes and dress.386 In contrast, a photograph of the same kuia taken decades later is reminiscent of Goldie’s portraits. She faces the camera, unlike the formal, profile family portraits, and rather than attire it is her moko kauae that is clearly captured. The stance, dress, and in particular the prominence of the moko kauae in this image is of ethnographic interest, suggesting it was taken for dominant consumption. The photograph is very similar to one the whānau discovered of another kuia on an English postcard. While acknowledging the dubious motives and power relations at play, these images are nevertheless taonga and were handed down through the generations; connecting us to our tupuna.

Mita writes that the “phenomenon of photographic images adopted from an alien culture has from the earliest times acquired a special place in Māoritanga.”387 The status of taonga has been accorded to early ethnographic films such as those made by James McDonald between 1919 and 1923. With the support of Apirana Ngata the documentaries were commissioned by the New Zealand Government for the Tourist Department and the Dominion Museum. Ethnologist, Elsdon Best, the Museum’s Director and Librarian Johannes Anderson assisted with the production of these films.388 Some of the documentaries were motivated by salvage ethnology; a practice fuelled by the expectation that indigenous races and cultures would die out necessitating the need to visually document their images and practices.389 The modernist impulse to ‘salvage’ was not restricted to Aotearoa but was a widespread colonial practice. Anthropologist Alfred Cort Haddon filmed

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386 Sturma, *South Sea Maidens: Western Fantasy and Sexual Politics in the South Pacific*, 94.
388 Blythe, *Naming the Other; Images of the Maori in New Zealand Film and Television*, 54-56.
footage of indigenous Mer Islanders (Murray Island, Australia) performing dances in 1898 and Franz Boas, a German-American anthropologist, consciously advanced a ‘salvage’ paradigm. Over time some of these films have taken on new meanings. Barclay proposes that while the McDonald films represent the “outsider peering into Māori rural life” many remain a moving documentation because they record ancestral figures. While acknowledging the colonial interest in indigenous peoples as scientific specimens to be observed and defined, when the McDonald films are screened, they are valued as beautiful and valuable depictions of our tūpuna. The Mer Islander dance footage that illustrates early traditional practices is valued today by indigenous peoples for similar reasons. Instead of serving as evidence of vanished or vanishing communities, Haddon’s footage was used by the Mer to substantiate their claims to have their land and resources restored.

Early documentaries and dramatic film presented Māori and Māori practices to entertain a non-Māori audience reinforcing the notion that Māori culture would naturally die out when faced with Pākehā progress. Documentaries of this type include The Maori As He Was (Part 4, 1928), mainly describing the making and using of poi (swinging ball). In his thesis, Naming the Other, Blythe suggests that early film can be categorised as “Maoriland”, a “sentimental and romantic cliché of the British imperial age.” “Maoriland” defines the exotic land inhabited by exotic natives and is an example of dominant and recurring racialised representations of Māori. This is supported by the fact that many films were located at the thermal areas of Whakarewarewa and Rotorua, with the mud pools, geysers and misty backdrops framing the Māori world and its subjects as exotic by its other worldly nature. Documentary films of this nature include Valley of Enchantments (1930) and Maori Village (1945).

390 Franz Boas shot footage of indigenous peoples from the Northwest Coast of North America.
391 Barclay, Our Own Image, 97; ———, Mana Tuturu: Māori Treasures & Intellectual Property Rights, 104-06.
392 I attended a screening of the McDonald films with a predominantly Māori audience. It was a moving experience with vocal participation from the audience as tūpuna and environments were recognised.
394 Durie, Whaiora: Māori Health Development, 32.
395 Blythe, Naming the Other; Images of the Maori in New Zealand Film and Television, 16.
396 New Zealand Film Archive, “He Pito Whakaatu a Nga Iwi Maori, Films of the Tangata Whenua,” (Auckland: Auckland City Art Gallery, 1987).
Blythe examines the historical context within which films and television that represent Māori are produced, ranging from the first filmic representations of Māori to the late 1980s. He theoretically engages with concepts of nation, culture and myth and argues that representations are directly related to evolving concepts of nationhood. As a history of filmmaking and television in Aotearoa, Blythe’s work is a valuable study and offers a broad overview that historically contextualises the texts he examines. His stance reinforces the need to take into account the evolving political, economic, social and cultural environments in the examination of film and television in Aotearoa. However, his argument against essentialism, although making reference to a strategic intent to claim difference, does not adequately engage with the complexities of Māori identities, tāngata whenua status and colonisation. While appreciating the limitations of essentialism, it plays an important role in liberatory struggles that resist assimilation and progress indigenous rights. In addition, Blythe’s argument does not acknowledge the importance and transformative potential of engaging with Māori paradigms, histories and worldviews. In her thesis examining Māori filmmaking, Gabriele Jokl examines Blythe’s anti-essentialist argument and defends the need to acknowledge and draw on the past saying:

Drawing upon one’s roots does not necessarily mean regressive nostalgia or reinforcement of notions of superiority or inferiority. It can offer a more complex understanding of identity that is based on tradition and acknowledges historical and social developments...a model for the future should, unlike Blythe’s suggestion, acknowledge the past.

Additionally, his characterisation of the landscape of cultural exchange between Māori and Pākehā as a “lively place...mostly it is an exercise in name-calling and bullying,” threatens to marginalise and make invisible unequal power relationships and the lived experiences of the colonised.

397 Blythe, *Naming the Other: Images of the Maori in New Zealand Film and Television*, 284-85.
399 Blythe, *Naming the Other: Images of the Maori in New Zealand Film and Television*, 8.
The range of representations in early dramatic films was designed to appeal to colonial conceptions of Māori, and privileged western understandings of narrative. They tended to reproduce romance that emphasised the popular trope of forbidden love established in western classics such as *Romeo and Juliet*. Filmmakers who made these types of films include Gaston Melies, *Hinemoa* (1913), *Loved by a Maori Chieftess* (1913) and Raymond Longford’s *A Maori Maid’s Love* (1916).400 The story of Hinemoa is an example of the exotic Other coupled with the familiar trope of forbidden love and was retold in *Hinemoa* (1914), produced by George Tarr and *The Romance of Hine-Moa* (1927), directed and produced by Gustav Pauli.401 Not only do the films present a sentimental representation of Māori as the exotic native Other but advance the noble savage construction that persists today.402

*Hei Tiki* (1935) directed and produced by Alexander Markey also follows the trope of forbidden love and includes inter-tribal conflict and resolution by marriage, told within an exotic landscape inhabited by the exotic Other.403 Renowned for his entrenched belief in western superiority Markey inflicted harm on iwi. During the filming of *Hei Tiki* he committed crimes of theft by stealing taonga, frequently caused offence to iwi and did not pay many of his Māori extras.404 The ramifications of this were expressed by Mita in 1996 who found that the bitterness and distrust was still being felt.405

At the outset film advanced the notion of the superiority of the coloniser and the inferiority of Māori through the employment of stereotypical constructions of Māori founded in the ideology of racial hierarchies. One notable exception is filmmaker Rudall Hayward. Although he maintained a colonial fascination with Māori stories, he attempted to give a rarely seen balanced portrayal of Māori who were attacked by British colonial troops in his silent film *Rewi’s Last Stand*

401 Ibid., 21-38.
402 Hokowhitu, "Tackling Māori Masculinity: A Colonial Genealogy of Savagery and Sport," 259-84; Blythe, *Naming the Other; Images of the Maori in New Zealand Film and Television*, 17.
403 Further examples include: *How Chief Te Ponga Won His Bride* (1913), *Under the Southern Cross* (1929) and remakes of Hinemoa.
405 Mita, “The Soul and the Image,” 42.
(1925). Subsequently the film was made into a sound feature in 1940.\textsuperscript{406} It was during the making of the latter film that Ramai Te Miha of Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāi Tahu and Irish descent was cast in the lead role. She later married Rudall Hayward and they went on to collaborate on a number of film projects. It is important to acknowledge the work of Ramai Hayward as a pioneering Māori woman filmmaker and creative artist in her own right, and not merely an adjunct to Rudall Hayward. She operated the camera, directed and produced a number of films including documentaries.\textsuperscript{407}

Blythe writes that early dramatic film featuring romance between a Pākehā man and Māori woman frequently resulted in an unhappy outcome signifying the “insuperable racial divide.” It was not until the 1950s that this union created a happy outcome in the film \textit{Broken Barrier} (1952). It was produced and directed by John O’Shea of Pacific Films.\textsuperscript{408} \textit{Broken Barrier} suggests bicultural possibilities and exposes the myth of a racially harmonious nation by unmasking racism. The narrative follows a Māori family and Pākehā journalist, Tom. A relationship develops between Tom and the daughter, Rawi, who works in the city as a nurse but Tom’s Pākehā friends and family oppose their romance. Unhelpfully the film builds on the construction of Māori as noble savage and employs a Pākehā voice-over that becomes both the authoritative voice and serves to distance the viewer from the narrative. Despite these limitations the film was a genuine attempt to present Māori/Pākehā relationships with respect and integrity. O’Shea is a dominant figure in filmmaking history and was a mentor to many emerging filmmakers including Barclay.

The collaboration between Rudall and Ramai Hayward led to the 1972 production of the feature film \textit{To Love A Maori} which they co-wrote with Diane Francis, co-directed and co-produced, establishing Ramai Hayward as the first Māori woman to co-direct a dramatic feature film.\textsuperscript{409} The film is a dramatic documentation of the Māori urban drift and follows the difficulties encountered in the relationship

\textsuperscript{406} Martin and Edwards, \textit{New Zealand Film 1912-1996}, 34.
\textsuperscript{408} Blythe, \textit{Naming the Other; Images of the Maori in New Zealand Film and Television}, 34.
\textsuperscript{409} Shepard, \textit{Reframing Women: A History of New Zealand Women in Film}, 42.
between Tama and his Pākehā girlfriend Penny. *To Love A Maori* attempts to provide a respectful account of Māori experiences of urbanisation and racism. It is also significant because during this time Māori were generally absent in cinematic representations and key protagonists were mainly Pākehā. 410 For example, *The God Boy* (1976), *Off The Edge* (1977), *Sleeping Dogs* (1977) and *Middle Age Spread* (1979) had predominantly Pākehā characters as key protagonists and if Māori did appear they occupied minor roles.411

The films of the Haywards and O’Shea mentioned here are rare examples of early film with substantial Māori content that was treated with respect, although from a predominantly Pākehā centred perspective and position of authority. Māori participation in early film was primarily as actors and to a lesser extent as crew. With some exceptions there appears to be little evidence to suggest that Māori were encouraged or supported to extend their participation in film until later in the 20th century.

**Māori Filmmaking in the 1970s and 1980s**

In the 1970s and 1980s Māori creativity and culture flourished with a surge of Māori writers, carvers, weavers, musicians, and artists.412 This aligns with the political activism of the time and the establishment of Ngā Tamatoa and Te Reo Māori Society where Māori openly challenged Pākehā hegemony. There was a revival in moko (tattoo), marae were renovated and the national kapa haka (Māori performing arts) competitions drew large crowds. Māori vocally rejected policies advocating assimilation and integration which was accompanied by increased Māori advocacy for self-determination that challenged established institutions and

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411 *The God Boy* is an adaption of a novel by Ian Cross and examines the turbulent lives of small town inhabitants during the 1950s. *Off The Edge* follows the skiing adventures of two men and was the first feature film in Aotearoa to achieve an Academy Award nomination. *Sleeping Dogs*, adapted from a novel by C.K. Stead explores an imagined totalitarian state in Aotearoa and follows friendships, relationships and defiance against the State. The film received international praise and is frequently referred to as the film that marked the beginning of contemporary New Zealand cinema. *Middle Age Spread*, based on a play by Roger Hall, reflects the suburban Pākehā middle-class in Aotearoa. In Martin and Edwards, *New Zealand Film 1912-1996*, 60-69.
practices that historically marginalised Māori. Broadcasting was one of the areas targeted and Te Reo Māori Society and Ngā Tamatoa advocated for Māori participation and te reo Māori in television broadcasting. A submission on the Broadcasting Bill by the New Zealand Māori Council in 1976 also called for Māori programming on television. Ngā Tamatoa had a particular interest in Māori representation in film and television that led them to review research about the effects of negative images of indigenous and minority groups globally. The outcome of this review provided the base upon which they advocated for Māori control over their stories and representation in film and television, resulting in the formation of the Māori media organisation, Te Manu Aute, in the 1980s.

Writing in an Australian setting Langton argues that it is unrealistic for indigenous peoples to have control over how the dominant group represents them in media and television and offers up the more practical intervention of increased self-representation. Langton believes that this is more likely to change dominant perceptions because self-representation can potentially be “radically different from the usual images of Aborigines.” Her argument is compelling and Māori filmmakers including Barclay and Mita strongly advocated for Māori to have access and equitable resources in order to represent Māori in film and broadcasting. However, self-representation does not necessarily guarantee the production of liberatory images, and one danger lies in creating positive images within an oppressive narrative. Although problematic, the demand by indigenous peoples to have control over their own representations and increased self-representation are important strategies that potentially challenge hegemonic constructions of indigenous peoples and progress aspirations for self-determination in film and television. Advocacy of this nature resulted in successful negotiations between the State-owned broadcaster TVNZ (Television New Zealand) and Te Reo Māori Society to allocate places for Māori on the TVNZ Producers and Directors Course in 1978.

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413 Robert Boyd-Bell, New Zealand Television: The First 25 Years (Auckland: Reed Methuen Press, 1985), 197.
416 Pihama, "Re-Presenting Maori: Broadcasting and Knowledge Selections [Paper]."

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Stuart Murray writes that during the 1970s there was a new wave of documentary filmmaking globally that told the stories of groups who were marginalised in dominant narratives, namely feminist, gay, lesbian, ethnic minorities and the indigenous. In Aotearoa during the 1970s and early 1980s there was a major development in films made by women with a dramatic increase in feminist documentaries. Alongside this was the emergence of documentaries and later dramatic feature films made by Māori with Māori content. Of significance is the groundbreaking television series, *Tangata Whenua* (1974) that Jennifer Gauthier describes as the “point of origin for Māori cinema.” The series introduced many viewers to te reo Māori and examined Māori issues including tikanga, tino rangatiratanga, leadership, land alienation and religion with depth and minimal interpretation. Produced by O’Shea of Pacific Films, the series was directed by Barclay. The initial idea was conceived by historian Michael King who was also the interviewer and narrator. The *Tangata Whenua* series was commissioned by the New Zealand Broadcasting Commission (NZBC) and Roger Horrocks reveals that it was screened on television due to an unnamed supportive person working in broadcasting at the time. Barclay's transformational filming methods were founded on Māori worldviews and concepts and will be elaborated on in the Chapter Five case study. The series marked the establishment of Māori creative control in a collaborative environment where the production and technical crew assisted with the development of procedures and practices to incorporate and uphold Māori worldviews and concepts. These practices broke new ground and established possible workable alternatives for future Māori filmmakers in the craft of filmmaking.

It was hoped that the series would open up television and film for Māori producers and directors, but Barclay writes that when he returned after working

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420 Barnes, "Kanohi Kite a Te Maori: Māori Documentaries, Negotiating the Complexities of Television in Aotearoa", 32.
421 Barclay, *Our Own Image*, 17.
overseas in 1983 he was “shocked to see how little progress had been made.”

His observation was shared by Mita at the time who writes that the success of *Tangata Whenua* did not result in an increased Māori presence on television. This was not because of a lack of Māori advocacy, ideas or talent but a lack of opportunities. For example, both Te Reo Māori Society and Ngā Tamatoa lobbied for increased Māori participation in broadcasting. However, a small number of films continued to be made by Māori that remained outside of mainstream structures such as television broadcasting. This is evident in Mita’s directorial debut on *Karanga Hokianga Ki O Tamariki* (1979), a commissioned documentary by Māori priest, Pa Tate.

Of interest is the television series *The Governor* (1977) consisting of six dramatic historical episodes as it covered the early colonisation of Aotearoa and life of Governor George Grey. *The Governor* was an important series at the time as it offered the public a version of history that did not represent colonisation in a positive light. It was created by Michael Noonan, directed and produced by Tony Isaac, scripted by Keith Aberdein with Don Selwyn in the roles of actor and advisor. Building on the practices employed in the *Tangata Whenua* series, local iwi and kaumātua were involved and contributed to the story lines and historical detail, ensuring Māori perspectives. It is not accidental that a historical account of this nature emerged in the late 1970s given the public articulation of Māori issues by Māori groups, including Ngā Tamatoa. In addition, increasing Pākehā awareness of racism, emerging in the 1960s, gained momentum in the 1970s with the formation of groups such as HART (Halt All Racist Tours) and ACORD (Auckland Committee on Racial Discrimination). The latter met with Ngā Tamatoa and Polynesian Panthers (a Pacific advocacy group) to address the education of Pākehā about racism. In the 1980s some Pākehā involved in these groups began to focus on the effects of colonisation and acknowledged Te Tiriti

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424 Barnes, “Kanohi Kite a Te Maori: Maori Documentaries, Negotiating the Complexities of Television in Aotearoa”, 29.
425 Don Selwyn, Personal Interview, December 2002.
as a founding document. Despite the small but growing support for Māori, The Governor received some openly negative responses including criticism of the large budget that exceeded $1 million. However, Selwyn felt that this deflected the real concern that the series uncovered Māori experiences of early colonisation that challenged hegemonic interpretations.

During the early phases of filmmaking in Aotearoa, production financing was predominantly obtained from private investment. Intensive lobbying from filmmakers, the successful establishment of the Australian Film Commission and the profile of locally made films such as Sleeping Dogs facilitated the founding of the Interim Film Commission in 1977; the first government funding agency for feature film. The following year the New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC) was established by an Act of Parliament with the statutory responsibility to “encourage and also participate and assist in the making, promotion, distribution and exhibition of films.” The Commission was charged with supporting films with “a significant New Zealand content,” including the locations, subject matter, crew and copyright ownership. Economic discourse of the 1970s that led to the implementation of neoliberal policies in the 1980s resulted in a Commission that was concerned with both commercial and cultural values from its inception. To mitigate the dominance of overseas films, a vision of nation building through locally produced films was articulated. According to Gregory Waller in his examination of the Commission, the most significant feature in the local film industry in Aotearoa during the 1980s was the tax shelter system that allowed for substantial write-offs of 150 percent and the ability to claim losses on NZFC investments. This was officially closed off in 1984 but the loophole assisted

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427 Selwyn; Boyd-Bell, New Zealand Television: The First 25 Years.
428 Selwyn.
430 Ibid.
individuals to get into filmmaking and increased local productions up until 1986.⁴³³

Given the commercial imperatives, the increase in New Zealand film production did not increase Māori cinematic representation or equate to the making of Māori controlled films. Bruce Jesson argues that the encouragement of overseas investment resulted in an increased emphasis on commercial objectives that involved a move away from director-driven projects to producer-driven projects, potentially impacting negatively on the film’s conception.⁴³⁴ Jesson’s analysis takes into account the prominence of financial drivers in the industry that reflect the ideology of the time and the associated dominant role of producer. This is supported by a recent review of the NZFC by Peter Jackson and David Court who argue that the Commission’s orientation towards producers rather than directors, writers or actors needs to change and become more talent-focused.⁴³⁵ However, in a broader sense, the role of producer is variable and recently the collaboration between producer Ainsley Gardiner and writer/director Taika Waititi reflect a partnership where creativity is nurtured and supported.⁴³⁶

During this time Larry Parr, merchant banker and member of Ngā Tamatoa, became increasingly involved in filmmaking. His previous experience seeking funding for Sleeping Dogs in the 1970s led him to change profession and become a film producer.⁴³⁷ He produced a number of mainstream feature films financed during the tax loophole including Came A Hot Friday (1984) and Shaker Run (1985).⁴³⁸ After legislative change that stopped tax write-offs he experienced extreme difficulties obtaining finance that included investment from the NZFC because he was unable to secure the required offshore finance.⁴³⁹ In her thesis examining local filmmaking Virginia Pitts explains that an already “bleak

⁴³³ Films with financial structures established under the tax loopholes were allowed to complete.
⁴³⁵ Peter Jackson and David Court, "Review of the New Zealand Film Commission: A Report to the Hon. Chris Finlayson, Minister for Arts, Culture & Heritage," (June 2010), 21-22.
⁴³⁶ Ainsley Gardiner, Personal Interview, September 2008.
⁴³⁷ Larry Parr, Personal Interview, April 2008.
⁴³⁸ Came A Hot Friday is a comedy set in a small New Zealand town in the 1940s and follows the anti-social and illegal activities of the protagonists. Well-known Māori comedian Billy T. James was cast in the role of the Tainui Kid. Shaker Run follows a car journey of great speeds where the protagonists attempt to prevent a lethal strain of virus getting into the wrong hands.
⁴³⁹ Parr.
investment climate for New Zealand films worsened during this time and there was a significant downturn in production.\textsuperscript{440}

In the late 1970s and early 1980s Māori filmmakers including Barclay, Mita, Selwyn and Parr cemented working relationships with Pākehā. In her earlier documentaries Mita worked with cinematographer Leon Narbey and sound operator Gerd Pohlmann. Barclay developed a close working relationship with producer John O’Shea and cameraman Rory O’Shea. In particular, the independently driven and powerful feature length documentaries \textit{Bastion Point – Day 507} (1980) co-directed by Mita, Narbey and Pohlmann, and \textit{Patu!} (1983) directed and produced by Mita, were the result of strong collaborations with Pākehā filmmakers.\textsuperscript{441} These two documentaries will be elaborated on in the case study in Chapter Six. Both films received support from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand (QE II Arts Council) and \textit{Patu!} eventually received a small loan from the NZFC when it was nearing completion.\textsuperscript{442}

An increasing emphasis on financial returns during the 1980s and the Commission’s associated aim to attract a mainstream audience, historical funding patterns resulting in a glaring omission of NZFC investment in Māori driven and creatively controlled projects evidenced in the reluctance to support Mita’s documentaries, and the absence of formal NZFC policies or objectives that specifically supported Māori cinematic aspirations, led to a lack of investment in Māori driven films by the Commission. Mita believed the QE II Arts Council and its later formation, Creative New Zealand (CNZ), fulfilled an important role for Māori filmmakers who “benefited greatly from the support and grants received over the years” that was “sometimes in the face of severe criticism (as was the

\textsuperscript{440} Virginia Therese Pitts, "Cross-Cultural Filmmaking in New Zealand National Cinema" (PhD Thesis, University of Auckland, 2008), 122.
\textsuperscript{441} \textit{Patu!} covers the resistance against the Springbok Tour and \textit{Bastion Point-Day 507} records the Crown’s eviction of Ngāti Whātu from their land at Takaparawha (Bastion Point).
\textsuperscript{442} The QE II Arts Council of New Zealand was established as a government arts funding agency in 1963 and with subsequent overhauls was renamed Creative New Zealand in 1994. In 1978 the Māori and South Pacific Arts Council (MASPAC) was formed to support and promote Māori and South Pacific art. This was altered to establish it as a Māori fund only in 1986. The NZFC and QE II Arts Council jointly funded a creative film fund that supported experimental filmmaking, art films and political documentaries. Barclay was on the panel in the 1980s and there was a policy of affirmative action for Māori, women and marginalised groups. In Bruce Jesson, "Commission with a New (Bank) Role," \textit{Onfilm}, August 1985, 13-15.
Mita was also involved as an actor and advisor in the NZFC supported epic feature length film, *Utu* (1983). The film is an historical drama, directed and co-written by Geoff Murphy who was involved in the making of *Patu!*. *Utu* is set in Aotearoa in 1870 and explores issues of British rule, betrayal and utu (a complex Māori notion of revenge and restoring balance and social order). *Utu* presents the viewer with the intricacies of relationships within Māori and Pākehā groups and those that traverse ethnic boundaries against a backdrop of colonialism. *Utu* is important to mention, not only because of Māori involvement and Māori content, but also because it attempts to present a form of biculturalism and hope for the future. There are constructions of Māori in *Utu* that maintain dominant regimes of truth pertaining to the savage Other in need of civilisation. This was discussed in Chapter One in relation to representations of Māori men in *Utu* that Hokowhitu describes as a dominant construction of a Māori hypermasculinity that is inherently violent. Māori women do not feature as prominently in *Utu*. Mita who had a dual role as advisor and actor challenged her role as Matu because she was originally only represented as a sexual object for Te Wheke’s pleasure. Mita argued that Māori women played a much greater role in Māori society than the script depicted. This led to an expansion of the role that Mita felt was a compromise. Matu takes on a role beyond that of sexual object, but she remains caught within the dominant construction of a Māori female hypersexuality as the exotic and erotic Other.

The establishment of Te Manu Aute, a national Māori media organisation for Māori working in film, television and video, was a significant development and emerged from wider expressions of Māori self-determination. The first national

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446 Lyn Crossley, ”Patu!,” *Broadsheet* July/August 1983, 23.
447 Growing out of Te Manu Aute is the current Māori media group, Ngā Aho Whakaari formed in 1996. The core aims are the advancement and protection of Māori moving images, culture and language, and the professional development and growth of independent Māori film and television production. In Ngā Aho Whakaari, ”National Conference Papers,” (Rotorua 6-8 May 2005).
hui was held in Wairoa, October 1986.\textsuperscript{448} Barclay writes that Te Manu Aute held similar aspirations to Ngā Tamatoa but was focused on the control of Māori images and words.\textsuperscript{449} Te Manu Aute advocated for the telling of Māori stories by Māori on film and television. Given the few Māori working in film and television in the mid-1980s, training Māori in media production was also a priority for Te Manu Aute. The goal was to have Māori managing and working on Māori projects in all areas of film production.\textsuperscript{450} Similarly, during the 1970s and 1980s marginalised and indigenous groups globally, including Aboriginal groups in Australia and Native Americans, were demanding control over their representations with the associated funding and support mechanisms to achieve this.\textsuperscript{451}

In 1987 there was a breakthrough with the release of the first Māori directed and written dramatic feature film, \textit{Ngati}. The film is frequently referred to as the first feature film made by indigenous people.\textsuperscript{452} \textit{Ngati} was directed by Barclay, scripted by Tama Poata and produced by John O’Shea with investment from the NZFC. Following this, Mita’s groundbreaking film \textit{Mauri} (1988) was released. Backed by the NZFC it is, to date, the only dramatic feature film directed, written and co-produced by a Māori woman. Both \textit{Ngati} and \textit{Mauri} are set on the east coast of the North Island in small rural communities, with predominantly Māori casts and significant numbers of Māori as crew members.

Why did the NZFC invest in two films that could be categorised as ‘specialised’ projects given that the economic, social and political environment was being driven by neoliberal policies? In the mid-1980s there was increasing discourse concerning culture versus commerce that Waller argues was not as prominent in the 1970s.\textsuperscript{453} The Film Commission’s Annual Report in 1985 supports this argument with an introductory statement reinforcing the relationship between the film industry, culture and commerce saying:

\textsuperscript{448} Barclay, \textit{Our Own Image}, 41.
\textsuperscript{449} ———, “Amongst Landscapes,” 127.
\textsuperscript{451} Langton, \textit{Well, I Heard It on the Radio and I Saw It on the Television…’}, 9.
A film industry is about culture and money. It involves an endless tug of war between finance, investment and economic returns on the one hand and art, culture and national identity on the other.\textsuperscript{454}

There are a number of factors that may have supported the decision to invest in \textit{Ngati} and \textit{Mauri}. The escalating advocacy by Māori for self-determination and the means to achieve this, challenges to institutional racism and a refocus on law to address violations of Te Tiriti may have contributed to a sense of urgency within the NZFC to address Māori access to filmmaking.\textsuperscript{455} An increase in awareness of some Pākehā about the effects of colonisation and the importance of Te Tiriti emerging from this environment and the surge in Māori creatives such as artists and writers who were publically recognised, could also have engendered support.\textsuperscript{456} Without giving supporting evidence Waller argues that there was a “formally acknowledged ‘cultural’ commitment to Māori filmmakers, a commitment in keeping with the tenor of the times.”\textsuperscript{457} These factors would support Barclay’s belief that \textit{Ngati} and \textit{Mauri} were funded because of an unspoken quota that was a tacit agreement that Māori films should represent the percentage of the Māori population.\textsuperscript{458} In addition, David Gascoigne who was Chair of the NZFC at the time, argued for a new category called the “New Zealand language film” that backed films considered worthy of funding for local cultural reasons, rather than their potential commercial success or critical acclaim.\textsuperscript{459}

The tug of war between economic and cultural drivers would have led to careful decision-making by the NZFC, and Horrocks suggests that a possible factor contributing to the funding of \textit{Ngati} and \textit{Mauri} was the likelihood of theatrical...

\textsuperscript{454} New Zealand Film Commission, "Report of the New Zealand Film Commission," (1985), 3.
\textsuperscript{455} For example, the claim submitted to the Waitangi Tribunal in 1985 by Huirangi Waikerepuru and Ngā Kaiwhakapūmā i te reo and the legal challenge to the 1986 State-Owned Enterprises Act.
\textsuperscript{456} Huygens, "Processes of Pakeha Change in Response to the Treaty of Waitangi", 32-34; Nairn; Walker, \textit{Ka Whawhai Tōmua Matou: Struggle without End}, 322.
\textsuperscript{457} Waller, "The New Zealand Film Commission: Promoting an Industry, Forging a National Identity,” 254.
\textsuperscript{458} Pitts, "Cross-Cultural Filmmaking in New Zealand National Cinema", 170.
release. The production teams also consisted of highly respected, experienced and talented filmmakers with track records of delivering on projects and there was obvious collaboration with experienced Pākehā filmmakers. Christina Thompson suggests that the NZFC “might have been reluctant to commit itself to an all-Māori project without the support of a veteran like O’Shea.” It is probable that numerous reasons contributed to the Commission’s decision to invest in these two films; however it did not signal the beginning of a sustained approach by the NZFC. This highlights the need for formalised government and agency policies that allocate funding for Māori filmmakers so accessing resources is not dependent on individual good will and the convergence of favourable environmental and political circumstances.

Ngati and Mauri can be situated within the context of the Māori ‘renaissance’ of the 1980s and vocal demands for self-determination as well as an international environment of indigenous politics. Within a broader national cinematic context there was increased local film production, but Ngati and Mauri emerged from an environment and struggle that was unique to Māori and familiar to indigenous peoples globally. At this time, important work in indigenous film and television production was also occurring, including work by Inuit, Native North Americans and Aboriginal Australians.

In addition to advances in film, Māori made headway in a determined struggle to improve Māori participation in television. Koha (1980), a weekly half-hour programme predominantly in English with a Māori kaupapa (topic, underlying principles), was the first regular Māori programme shown in prime time. It was primarily the result of Māori lobbying and is the first significant example of regular television programming with Māori content, Māori presenters and production crew. Te Karere (1983) was another significant achievement and continues to be produced by TV One. It began as a short two minute news segment entirely in te reo Māori that Derek Fox describes as Māori news, not news in Māori. The decision not to subtitle was deliberate because the programme

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460 Roger Horrocks, Personal Email Correspondence, 29 March 2010.
463 Prime time is defined as the hours between 6pm and 10.30pm.
was aimed at speakers of te reo Māori. It can be argued that *Koha* and *Te Karere* emerged because of agitation by Māori, the threat of court actions and the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal rather than a sense of altruism on the part of TVNZ. Journalist Wena Harawira who worked on *Te Karere* in 1983 believed that it was the “whim” of a Pākehā manager at TVNZ that finally opened the door, only to find a great deal of hostility from Pākehā colleagues. These programmes paved the way for *Waka Huia* (1987) and *Marae* (1992). *Waka Huia* is a one-hour programme in te reo Māori and records iwi histories, knowledge and key events. *Marae* is a current affairs programme in te reo Māori and English, and like *Waka Huia* continues to be produced for TVNZ with reruns on Māori Television.

Very few Māori worked in broadcasting in its early formation but programmes such as *Koha* and *Te Karere* provided important training opportunities. Māori women in particular were poorly represented. An early exception is Jan Wharekawa who joined television in 1966 as the first Māori woman vision mixer and was an inspiration for Māori men and women. She worked on programmes including the music entertainment programmes *Happen Inn* and *Come On*. Debra Reweti who worked in TVNZ in the late 1980s recalls that Māori staff were reluctant to identify themselves as Māori given the “cultural myopia” in the organisation. Media institutions tended to be self-contained and exclusive Pākehā dominated environments that ignored the emerging Māori energies. For example, TVNZ initially refused to screen *Bastion Point: Day 507* although it was eventually screened a few years later and *Patu!* was screened belatedly in 1991. During the making of *Patu!* TVNZ declined to invest in the film claiming that it would not be topical when it was completed. They also denied Mita access to their footage of the Springbok Tour on the grounds that it was not in the “public

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466 Barnes, "Kanohi Kite a Te Maori: Maori Documentaries, Negotiating the Complexities of Television in Aotearoa", 79.
interest. Although denying Mita access to footage, TVNZ subsequently requested footage of the Tour from her without offering payment or acknowledging their earlier stance. In her PhD thesis that examines ‘radical left’ documentary making in Aotearoa, Geraldine Peters suggests that the ten year lapse between the making and television screening of _Patu!_ probably made it ‘safe’ to screen. She argues that TVNZ “maintained a remarkably consistent record of not commissioning or screening projects that politicians would regard as outside the mainstream.” This raises TVNZ’s historical aversion to commissioning and screening documentaries that lie outside of their notion of balance and the associated entrenched conservatisim and monoculturalism.

Training Māori to work in television and film became a priority in the 1980s and Barclay, Mita and Selwyn were instrumental in training, employing and mentoring emerging Māori filmmakers. During the 1980s Barclay and Mita deliberately employed Māori to crew on their feature films and Barclay and Selwyn ran training courses. Kimihia, a one-off training programme for Māori, was a joint venture between TVNZ and the Department of Māori Affairs, and ran for a year in 1988. Fifty Māori were trained in the different areas of programme making including production, filming and directing. It was a successful programme and Ripeka Evans estimated that over 50 percent of the trainees on Kimihia went on to work in television, radio, print or became independent programme makers. The training course was set up during the time Evans was appointed Cultural and Planning Assistant to the head of TVNZ, Julian Mounter. The establishment of the position was a strategic move on the part of TVNZ and predicated on the need to improve Māori programming and workforce participation. Pressure to make changes came from Māori Court actions challenging the Crown’s commitment to Te Tiriti, increased public awareness of TVNZ’s poor track record of Māori programming highlighted during their bid for the third channel and lobbying by Māori from within and outside of TVNZ,

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468 Anon, “Evidence for Alternative Cinema’s Submission to the Royal Commission on Broadcasting and Telecommunications,” _Alternative Cinema_ Spring/Summer 15 October 1985/86, 5; Myers, _Head and Shoulders_, 61.
469 Myers, _Head and Shoulders_, 61.
471 Anon, "A Discussion with Ripeka Evans, Maori Television," _Race, Gender, Class_, no. 9/10 (December 1989): 17-19.
including advocacy from Te Reo Māori Society.  Kimihia did not signal a long term strategic vision for TVNZ to address inequities in their programming, training or staffing. Unfortunately, it was a one-off initiative that occurred because of a political environment that applied pressure on management at TVNZ to improve their performance and intense Māori lobbying.

The groundbreaking E Tipu e Rea (1989) television drama series was the first anthology of Māori drama made with a predominantly Māori crew. The series consists of five, half-hour programmes and was jointly funded by the NZFC and TVNZ. The idea for the series was initiated by Te Manu Aute and led by Mita, Barclay, Wi Kuki Kaa and Tama Poata who lobbied TVNZ. An agreement to screen the drama series was reached and after negotiations with TVNZ and the NZFC, Te Manuka Film Trust was established in 1987 to manage the production of the series. This ensured that Māori were placed in key decision-making roles, including assessing ideas and scripts. The unique funding and management arrangements that maintained Māori control set a historic precedent in Aotearoa for filmmakers and upheld the aspiration of Māori control over Māori images. The dramas offer a diverse representation of Māori rural and urban experiences. Like the fate of many Māori programmes, the series was screened outside of prime time viewing and scheduled in a late night slot on TV One. This is an experience shared by indigenous and marginalised peoples globally. Kevin Glynn argues that a factor influencing this type of scheduling is the broadcasters’ perception that indigenous content will alienate majority audiences. Herman Gray’s analysis of television programming in the United States expands on the marginalisation of audiences that includes Black, Latino and Asian viewers; observing that it is the white subject who must be satisfied. This represents a desire for a white audience and an aspirational desire for whiteness. Institutional racism, where the white subject is the desired audience, is ‘rationalised’ by a set of economic and commercial arguments where the economic and cultural capital

472 Ibid.: 17; Barnes, "Kanohi Kite a Te Maori: Maori Documentaries, Negotiating the Complexities of Television in Aotearoa", 42.
473 Trisha Dunleavy, Ourselves in Primetime (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2005), 63-64.
474 Barclay, Our Own Image, 64.
475 Dunleavy, Ourselves in Primetime, 209.
of the white audience is “assumed to be paramount.” Both Glynn’s and Gray’s analyses can be transferred to Aotearoa where it is the Pākehā audience mass television caters to. In addition, the entrenchment of institutional racism where the cultural capital of the white audience is paramount is evidenced in Aotearoa through mass media’s refusal to respond to statistics that show Māori Television has a strong Pākehā following. This reveals the persistent and enduring nature of colonialism and the associated notions of racial and ethnic hierarchies.

Parr was appointed by Te Manuka Film Trust to produce E Tipu e Rea and attempted to place people in positions that were their first choice. Looking back he felt this contributed to the success of the series. E Tipu e Rea provided important hands-on experience and training ground for Māori. The series provided Lee Tamahori with his first experience as a director on a television drama before directing feature films including Once Were Warriors. Trainees from the Kimihia scheme and Selwyn’s Waiatarau/Freemans Bay training course worked on the series, including Sharon Hawke who continued to work in film and television production. It also enabled Māori women to work in non-traditional production roles such as Riwia Brown and Joanna Paul who had the opportunity to direct. Rena Owen, who secured acting roles in two of the dramas, found that she and other Māori working on the productions forged strong relationships that led to future collaborations. She met Tamahori and later played a lead role in Once Were Warriors. Owen continues to work with writer Riwia Brown. Parr went on to establish Kahukura Productions in the 1990s, providing a training ground for emerging Māori filmmakers including producer Ainsley Gardiner. Most of her learning occurred during the seven years she worked with Parr until Kahukura went into liquidation in 2002.

478 Māori Television ratings during August 2010 recorded that one in five New Zealanders aged 5+ (one in four aged 40+) and almost one in two Māori aged 5+ tuned into the channel. In Māori Television, “Māori Television Rocks the Ratings - Again,” http://media.maoritelevision.com/default.aspx?tabid=198&pid=381.
479 Parr.
480 Hawke was clapper loader and trainee on the Kimihia scheme.
481 Owen.
482 Gardiner.
E Tipu e Rea was a groundbreaking drama series because it told Māori stories centred in Māori worldviews, maintained Māori control and provided capacity building opportunities for Māori working in this medium. In addition, the series exposed an unfamiliar audience to the potential of Māori drama. Parr recalls the additional burden, carried by everyone on the project, to make the series a success to ensure the likelihood of similar Māori productions in the future. The series paved the way for future anthologies Nga Puna (1995 and 1997) and Aroha (2001).

Filmmaking in the 1990s

Māori filmmaking experienced some significant achievements in the 1990s, but the feeling of optimism established in the 1980s with Ngati and Mauri and the hope that this signalled the beginning of sustainable Māori cinema were eroded. In 1990 Barclay published his book, Our Own Image, which is an important record of his experiences as a Māori filmmaker providing valuable insights and analysis of filmmaking from a distinctly Māori base. Following the success of Ngati, Barclay wrote and directed Te Rua (1991), a dramatic feature film that examines the experiences of Māori who seek the return of taonga from a German museum. The film raises the wider issues of ownership and kaitiakitanga (guardianship); issues that concerned Barclay throughout his career as a filmmaker. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five. Unlike Ngati and Mauri, which took place in rural Aotearoa, Te Rua traverses rural, urban and international settings. Mita points out that Te Rua is relevant as a tool for speaking back to the stealing of taonga and in particular to the crimes and offences committed during the filming of Hei Tiki.

Te Rua was the third dramatic feature film supported by the NZFC that told a Māori story, with creative control in the hands of Māori. The NZFC invested in Te

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484 Nga Puna is an anthology of six one-hour dramas funded by NZOA with support from the NZFC and Te Māngai Pāho. Nga Puna differed from E Tipu e Rea by including non-Māori directors. Aroha is an anthology of six one-hour dramas in te reo Māori, centred on the theme of love with a broadcast commitment from TV One.
Rua in a joint venture with German investors during Judith McCann’s appointment as Executive Director (1989-1993). Barclay believed a decisive factor in the NZFC decision to invest in Te Rua was the supportive approach to Māori projects by the management of the board and chair during McCann’s time with the Commission.\footnote{Barclay, "Amongst Landscapes," 127; Pitts, "Cross-Cultural Filmmaking in New Zealand National Cinema", 170.} McCann was recruited from Canada and expressed awareness about the similarities between Māori and indigenous struggles in Canada. For these reasons she saw the potential for Te Rua to resonate globally.\footnote{Graeme Tuckett, "Camera on the Shore," (Feature Film Documentary 2009).} Despite a cut in funding by the recently elected National Government in 1991, support for diversity was articulated in the NZFC Annual Report of the same year. In the following year the \textit{Statement of Purpose} included the first explicit commitment to supporting the aspirations of Māori filmmakers saying:

\begin{quote}
New Zealand films, and the New Zealand film industry, are reflective of the cultural richness of the nation and in this spirit the Film Commission supports the aspirations of Māori filmmakers.\footnote{New Zealand Film Commission, "Report of the New Zealand Film Commission," (1991).}
\end{quote}

It is useful to briefly discuss the film funding agencies because the environment changed with the establishment of the Māori funding agency Te Māngai Pāho (TMP) in 1993 and effective from January 1995. This was an important development that supported the funding of Māori programmes. The agency was established as one of the protective measures offered by the Crown as the result of a High Court claim in 1991, taken by Māori regarding the transferring of broadcasting assets under the State-Owned Enterprises Act and the Crown’s ongoing failure to safeguard Māori interests in broadcasting. The High Court ruled that the transfer of assets could not be stopped but temporarily halted until protective measures were put in place. As a result, TMP was established. Their statutory obligations are primarily met by funding te reo Māori and tikanga Māori programmes as well as music for television and radio broadcast.\footnote{Te Māngai Paho, "Te Māngai Pāho, Statement of Intent 2007-12."} During the 1990s TMP did not invest in film but focused on programmes and music for television and radio broadcast with high te reo Māori content.
The NZFC remains the major funding agency for feature film in Aotearoa which makes them an extremely powerful body in the film sector. The NZFC has a board of eight members appointed by the government who decide on policy matters and major production investments. NZOA, formerly the New Zealand Broadcasting Commission (NZBC) and renamed in 1990, is a funder of film to a lesser extent. Historically the NZBC made small investments in film including *Sleeping Dogs* but John Barnett points out that with the establishment of the NZFC in the late 1970s they stopped financing films arguing that this was now the responsibility of the NZFC. This changed in the 1990s and although NZOA is a major funder of television programmes they also provide some funding for a small number of feature films that have broadcaster commitment. For example, NZOA invested in *Once Were Warriors*. In a personal interview, NZOA Television Manager, Glenn Usmar explains that feature film is not a priority because its prime means of exhibition is theatrical rather than television broadcast but NZOA does contribute to feature film funding in a minor sense.

Investment in *Ngati*, *Mauri*, *Te Rua* and the *E Tipu e Rea* television series by government funding agencies engendered an optimistic feeling that this marked the beginning of a sustainable Māori cinema and workforce. Although sustainability is problematic for the industry as a whole, turning success into sustained success is more difficult for Māori because of inequitable distribution of resources and support. After *Te Rua*, it took three years before the NZFC supported film *Once Were Warriors* (1994) was released; a dramatic feature film with a Māori director and writer that tells a Māori story. It is the first feature film Tamahori directed and he worked with Pākehā producer Robin Scholes from the production company Communicado. The screenplay was adapted from Alan Duff’s bleak novel of the same name and scripted by Riwia Brown. The focus of *Once Were Warriors* on a dysfunctional working class urban Māori whānau is in sharp contrast to the rural communities represented in *Ngati* and *Mauri*. The story covers issues of domestic violence, rape and alcohol abuse. Beth Heke (Rena Owen), eventually leaves her violent husband Jake (Temuera Morrison) taking her children and returning home to her iwi. Although the film can be read as a

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491 Glenn Usmar, NZOA Television Manager, Personal Interview, February 2008.
women’s story that is empowering, the extremes of violence graphically displayed on the screen overshadow hope and offer little opportunity for the redemption of Māori men, represented by Jake.

Once Were Warriors was initially turned down by the NZFC. Lindsay Shelton, Marketing Director for NZFC, describes the rejection as the result of the board’s nervousness about its depiction of domestic violence and the belief that a story of this nature would not appeal to a theatrical audience. In a radio interview Robin Scholes saw this as an assumption that Māori stories were not synonymous with box office success, saying that this experience taught her how difficult it was to get Māori stories told. The film was eventually funded by the NZFC and NZOA with pre-production investment from Avalon, a subsidiary of TVNZ when Parr was head of production. As the result of support by NZOA, broadcaster commitment to screen the film was required. Scholes repeatedly went to TV One who consistently turned it down because of concerns about audience reactions, the amount of swearing, and the belief that it had no place in prime time or on the channel. In a more adventurous move TV3 eventually negotiated broadcast rights and the film was screened on television after its theatrical release. Once Were Warriors was the first film to gross over $6 million at the box office at its theatrical release in Aotearoa. Owen was overwhelmed at the response to the film on the international circuit. It won a number of international awards, was praised locally and internationally and sold to approximately one hundred countries.

Once Were Warriors received a range of responses from Māori. Academic, Rawiri Taonui writes that his academic colleagues disliked the film because it promoted negative stereotypes but his “cuzzies” loved it because it portrayed their

492 Lindsay Shelton, The Selling of New Zealand Movies (Wellington: Awa Press, 2005), 140.
494 Parr.
495 Robert Boyd-Bell, Personal Interview, August 2008; Shelton, The Selling of New Zealand Movies, 142.
496 Boyd-Bell; Shelton, The Selling of New Zealand Movies, 142.
497 Martin and Edwards, New Zealand Film 1912-1996, 175.
498 Owen.
499 Shelton, The Selling of New Zealand Movies, 144.
lives and experiences.\textsuperscript{500} The film’s reinforcement of negative and violent stereotypes of Māori resulted in some Māori, including my mother, and I have heard stories of other women of her generation, refusing to see the film. Not only did the violence make them uneasy but they were concerned with the widespread dissemination of negative Māori images. This reflects the ‘burden of representation’ that sits firmly with the oppressed where hurtful and stereotypical representations exercise immense power as they are perceived to be representative of the collective and their inherent depravity.\textsuperscript{501} Pihama cogently argues that the film’s depictions of Māori violence are problematic because there is no context establishing the impacts of colonisation on Māori and these forms of representation therefore reinforce racist belief systems.\textsuperscript{502} The lack of historical background or contextualisation that renders experiences of oppression invisible is not uncommon in colonised societies, serving to maintain and normalises the status quo.\textsuperscript{503} The gangs in \textit{Once Were Warriors} are highly stylised to the point of almost being glamorised, illustrated by Māori male characters’ toned and muscular bodies. Hokowhitu contends that the construction of a Māori male hypermasculinity is epitomised by Jake in \textit{Once Were Warriors} and contradicts the lived realities of many Māori men.\textsuperscript{504} The danger with constructions of Māori as a ‘warrior’ race with the attendant characteristics of violence and physicality is that they reproduce Pākehā hegemony.

Despite the problematic nature of Māori constructions in \textit{Once Were Warriors}, the film was employed as an educational tool around the world. Locally a study guide was developed for teachers in Aotearoa to be used alongside the film. In Detroit the film was used as a teaching aid in the Black community, and educators based in the Hawai‘i State Prison used it in classes about anger management and domestic violence.\textsuperscript{505}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Shohat and Stam, \textit{Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media}, 182-84. 
\item Pihama, "Repositioning Maori Representation: Contextualising Once Were Warriors," 191-93. 
\item Hokowhitu, "Tackling Māori Masculinity: A Colonial Genealogy of Savagery and Sport," 259-64. 
\item Boyd-Bell. 
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
There were benefits for Māori who worked on *Once Were Warriors*. Actors Owen, Morrison and Cliff Curtis went on to secure roles in local and overseas films. Owen is currently working on a dramatic feature film script adapted from the novel *Behind the Tattooed Face*, a story set in pre-colonial Aotearoa, written by Heretaunga Pat Baker and published in 1975. Owen who is driving the project received development funding from the NZFC. After directing *Once Were Warriors*, Tamahori left for Hollywood and directed large budget films including *Mulholland Falls* (1996) and *Die Another Day* (2002). He recently returned to Aotearoa.

The sequel, *What Becomes of the Broken Hearted?* (1999) was directed by Pākehā Ian Mune and picks up Jake Heke’s story five years later as he makes positive changes in his life with the support of two Māori men. Unlike *Once Were Warriors* there is a form of redemption for Jake, offering alternative and positive constructions of Māori men. However, as Hokowhitu points out, this is framed in the colonial construction of Māori hypermasculinity but in an acceptable setting of pig hunting and returning to nature. *What Becomes of the Broken Hearted?* was not as commercially successful as *Once Were Warriors*. This could be due to a less well conceived script and insufficient character development as well as its grittier less stylised representation of gangs.

*The Piano* released a year before *Once Were Warriors* is of interest because of its controversial representation of Māori and in particular Māori women. The film is set in 19th century Aotearoa and tells the story of an elective mute woman, Ada (Holly Hunter). She travels from Scotland with her daughter Flora (Anna Paquin) to Aotearoa as the result of an arranged marriage to settler Stewart (Sam Neill). Despite critical acclaim at Cannes Film Festival there was considerable controversy, particularly within Aotearoa regarding the representation of Māori who provide an exotic and erotic backdrop for the ‘real’ story. These forms of Māori misrepresentation reverberate throughout cinematic history in Aotearoa in dramatic film, documentary and tourist promotions.

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506 Owen.
507 Ian Mune turned down an offer to direct *Once Were Warriors* because he felt the job should go to a Māori director. In Matt Philp, “For the Love of Jake,” *Listener*, 22 May 1999, 37.
Waitangi Tribunal Claim and the NZFC (1998)

The difficulties facing Māori filmmakers and the lack of Māori driven and controlled feature films resulted in Māori leader and member of the NZFC Board, Matiu Mareikura, convening a hui in 1996 to develop Māori specific film policy.\textsuperscript{509} A policy was proposed that supported Māori control over scripting and production, advocating that a specific fund be established for this purpose. The proposal was taken to the Board but progress was slow. Angry at what was seen as the Film Commission’s failure regarding the active protection and promotion of Māori culture and te reo Māori, a group of Māori involved in the film industry led by Barclay lodged a claim, WAI 748, with the Waitangi Tribunal in 1998. The claim was aimed at repealing the New Zealand Film Commission Act (1978) on the grounds that it had no specific reference to Māori unlike the Broadcasting Act (1989) that established NZOA.

Clause 10 of the claim challenges the failure of the NZFC to protect and promote Māori filmmaking, maintaining that this failure is contrary to the principles of Te Tiriti. The claim states that the Commission operates “in a manner likely to prejudicially affect the claimants, Māori filmmakers, and present and future generations of Māori people in the full enjoyment of their culture and language.” The claimants point out that during the period 1987-1994 only four dramatic features were produced (Ngati, Mauri, Te Rua and Once Were Warriors) that were written and directed by Māori with Film Commission assistance. They argue that this reveals: a lack of investment; a low level of Māori participation and influence in the management of the Film Commission and its funding streams and; an ad hoc approach to Māori initiatives. The claimants argue that the interpretation of Māori culture and language rests “almost wholly in the hands of others” [non-Māori] and is dangerous given the ideological power of film. They recommended a repeal of the New Zealand Film Commission Act so that it provides for “substantive Māori involvement in policy formulation and implementation of the Commission” and that resources are targeted at the

\textsuperscript{509} Pitts, “Cross-Cultural Filmmaking in New Zealand National Cinema”, 171.
protection and advancement of te reo Māori and culture in consultation with Māori filmmakers.510

This was a brave and principled action, with many of the claimants working in film and television, given that the NZFC is the largest and most influential film funding body in Aotearoa. At the time of writing, the claim remained filed with the Tribunal. The WAI 748 claim is an important challenge and record of institutional failure to meet Te Tiriti obligations and Māori aspirations in film. It is also a valuable document as it articulates a clear Māori position in regard to the importance of Māori filmmaking and the historical struggles of Māori to access resources through the Crown and the funding institutions it establishes.

**Television in the 1990s**

Māori were experiencing similar difficulties accessing television broadcasting and opportunities for Māori television drama were scarce following *E Tipu e Rea*. In response to the marginalisation of Māori programmes and stereotyped representations, Māori rights activists held a protest at TVNZ in 1995 delaying the six o’clock news broadcast.511 The action represented increasing Māori advocacy for self-determination and access to media formats. A major breakthrough in television occurred in 1996 when the Māori channel, Aotearoa TV Network, was established as the result of the Māori language claim submitted to the Waitangi Tribunal in 1985 including subsequent actions taken by Māori against the Crown. The Tribunal recommended that “broadcasting policy should recognise that the Treaty obliges the Crown to recognise and protect the Māori language.”512 The new channel offered renewed hope to Māori filmmakers and audiences as it aimed to reflect Māori life in Aotearoa. Aotearoa TV Network quickly attracted a large audience of Māori and non-Māori, but within a year the channel was struggling financially because of under-funding and under-resourcing. TMP was unable to increase the channel’s funding and questions were raised about its long-term

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viability. The Government allocated additional funding but concerns were raised about the management of the company and assets were frozen pending investigation. The Government then withdrew funding and the channel ceased operating in 1997.\textsuperscript{513} This raised concerns about the Government’s lack of commitment to te reo Māori, Māori broadcasting generally and the low level of Māori programming on television.\textsuperscript{514} The experience was not isolated to Aotearoa. With the increasing role of indigenous media in the 1990s a lack of government commitment was a concern raised by indigenous peoples globally. Ginsburg explains that indigenous media shared the following features: their products were generally made locally; they survived on small budgets and; had limited exhibition making their existence politically and economically fragile.\textsuperscript{515}

In the same year as the launch of Aotearoa TV, a significant development regarding the funding of Māori television programmes occurred as the result of actions led by Barclay and filmmaker Eruera Nia. They raised concerns about the absence of Māori driven and controlled programmes generally and more specifically programmes that dealt with Māori topics in television arts series. Describing the latter as “series racism” Barclay was further incensed when he heard that a recently commissioned TVNZ drama series, \textit{Montana Sunday Theatre}, funded by NZOA did not include a Māori drama.\textsuperscript{516} In order to challenge this he organised a protest outside the NZOA offices in 1996. His actions are described in a personal interview:

They [NZOA] had the directors and producers and writers named and every one of them were Pākehā. By definition the programmes were Pākehā and I got hell of an angry. So I got on the bus and got down to Wellington….me and a few friends basically lay on the grass with a sign, “NZ On Air Racism”.\textsuperscript{517}

Barclay’s actions were more strategic than this description suggests and he timed the protest to coincide with a Board meeting where he argued that current funding

\textsuperscript{513} Ibid., 72.  
\textsuperscript{514} Ibid., 73.  
\textsuperscript{516} Barclay.  
\textsuperscript{517} Ibid.
criteria were racist. Barclay felt that the Board agreed with him in principle and it was announced that an extra drama would be included in the series. As with the Waitangi Tribunal Claim, these actions were courageous and grounded in a sense of justice, collectivity and responsibly to Māori as a group. Although Barclay was pleased that dialogue had begun with NZOA he was not convinced that the outcome addressed the need to have formalised policy. Two months after the meeting NZOA convened a hui where they announced the introduction of a formal quota system.\footnote{Ibid.} The quota system was implemented in television documentary series and spilled over into drama. In 1997 NZOA required a minimum of 15 percent of the hours funded within an ‘umbrella’ series to involve “substantial Māori creative participation on a topic of relevance to Māori language and culture” for a general audience.\footnote{New Zealand On Air, “New Zealand on Air (2001 -02) Annual Report.” An umbrella series refers to a regular documentary or drama series. Programmes within this category included documentaries screened within the Documentary New Zealand and Inside New Zealand strands.} This development became known as the ‘Māori quota’ and continues to play an important role today.

The quota necessitated a definition of a Māori programme for funding purposes that highlights the competing expectations between Māori aspirations, funder requirements and broadcaster imperatives. This is an artificially forced situation, yet a familiar reality for Māori, given the inequities that exist in society and one that is not often asked or required of Pākehā. Pākehā are certainly not examined against criteria that asks if their stories are Pākehā enough and neither are they required to prove or define a Pākehā authenticity. This tension is relevant to film. When asked if Ngati was a Māori film, Barry identified Māori control as essential.\footnote{Barclay, Our Own Image, 20.} In addition, he experienced the uncomfortable need for Māori to prove that their films are “genuinely Māori” in order to obtain support and funding.\footnote{Ibid.} Strategic essentialism and related notions of authenticity that originate from a pre-colonial past plays a critical yet problematic role in Māori struggles against marginalisation and assimilation. However, Barclay’s comment refers to a Māori authenticity that must be proved and then judged by the dominant group. In
this sense it is not a liberatory or empowering tool but a reminder of who wields the power to define and legitimate what is truly authentic.\textsuperscript{522}

Despite the inadequacies and difficulties associated with a Māori quota system it has ensured the inclusion of Māori broadcast programmes in documentary and drama strands. The concern is that the potential for governments and government agencies to undermine or reject Māori specific policies remains a constant threat. This is reinforced by the dominant discourse that Māori receive ‘special treatment’ advancing the familiar ideology of one people, one law for all. The strength of having policies and strategies to ensure a Māori presence on the screen conversely reminds Māori of our marginalised position in Aotearoa. Isaac Julien and Kobena Mercer argue in their introduction to the Special ‘Race’ issue, \textit{Screen}, that race in film studies is typically contained in ‘special issues’ that presents difference as extraordinary rather than ordinary. These practices undermine the stated objectives of examining race in cinema by paradoxically reinforcing, rather than ameliorating “the perceived otherness and marginality of the subject itself.”\textsuperscript{523} Their argument resonates with Barclay’s ambivalent position on the NZOA Māori strategic document, \textit{Rautaki Māori}, explaining that while supporting a Māori specific policy he also finds it distressing:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Rautaki Māori} hurts because it serves to remind you as a Māori communicator just what a second-class citizen you are…you are working within a white authoritarian system that tolerates your being there only because it has been forced to do so by regulation.\textsuperscript{524}
\end{quote}

During the 1990s Māori filmmakers including Mita, Pouwhare, Peter Turei, Nia and Pihama continued to produce documentaries that strongly articulated Māori positions and experiences and were not commissioned by a broadcaster or funded through NZFC. \textit{Moko Productions} is an example of a video and film production company run by Māori women who used the medium to critically examine issues


\textsuperscript{524} Barry Barclay, "A Pistol on the Table," (Wellington: Privately Published, 2006), 18.
affecting Māori. Their short films were seen as political tools to inform and bring about change. The documentaries, *The Fiscal Envelope: the Generation Cap* (1994) and *Not Negotiable* (1998) examine the effects of colonisation and are not intended for television screening. *Not Negotiable* directed by Pihama and Eliza Bidois reveal symbols and acts of colonisation through powerful visual images. *The Fiscal Envelope* is an interview with Annette Sykes who critiques the Sealord deal and related Crown proposals to directly negotiate with iwi under a predetermined fiscal cap of $1 billion in order to speed up and settle Te Tiriti claims. The documentary was made on a small budget, for a Māori community audience and while copies were sold the production team encouraged them to be dubbed so they would reach a wide Māori audience.

**Filmmaking in the 21st Century**

The newly elected Labour Government in late 1999 viewed arts and culture as a means to assert a national identity that resisted the threat of global cultural homogenisation as well as an area for potential employment opportunities. Peter Skilling cogently argues that it is possible to see the “pursuit of national identity as an economic strategy in its contribution to a broader ‘branding’ exercise for New Zealand.” This resulted in the privileging of art that fulfilled economic and nationalistic functions. Although Māori have historically struggled for access to cinema it is worth raising Skilling’s concerns about the overt political rhetoric at the time that required government sponsored art and culture to promote a sense of national unity or contribute to a dynamic economy. He asks:

> Does the requirement that art promote a sense of national unity proscribe expression that accentuates difference and division? Does the

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525 Established in 1989 the team included Sharon Hawke, Leonie Pihama and Glynnis Paraha.
527 The Sealord deal was the result of direct negotiations between Māori and the Crown regarding fishery assets.
529 Skilling, “Trajectories of Arts and Culture Policy in New Zealand,” 27.
530 Ibid.: 20.
requirement that it make a contribution to the economy rule out disruptive, ‘difficult’ art?531

Seeking funding for stories that engage in Māori histories and experiences of colonisation is potentially unsettling for the coloniser and problematic given the hegemonic and fiscal regimes that advance the telling of certain types of stories. Political rhetoric during this time may have doubly marginalised Māori in their attempt to tell stories that do not conform to the Pākehā ideology of one nation/one people that promotes a sense of national unity. This can only be speculative because it is not possible to know what ideas were proposed to the NZFC, but no dramatic feature films with significant Māori content, driven by Māori and commissioned by the NZFC were produced until 2010 with BOY, written and directed by Taika Waititi.

In 2000 the Government committed additional funds of over $146 million to the arts and culture sector of which $55 million was allocated to local screen production industries.532 One NZFC initiative arising from this funding was the establishment of the one-off New Zealand Film Production Fund. Pitts writes that the “funding environment of the 2000s is one in which international market endorsement of New Zealand films via off-shore investment and pre-sales is increasingly expected by the government-funded agencies.”533 Ruth Harley, previously Chief Executive of NZOA, was appointed Chief Executive of the NZFC from 1997 to 2008. She precipitated the shift and early on in her tenure argued that while acknowledging the low budgets available to New Zealand films they still needed to compete for an international audience.534 This position would prevail throughout her term and in a personal interview she reiterated the need for feature films to compete in the global environment saying: “our films have to compete at that level because there is no other competition to play in. It’s the world league right from the start.”535

531 ibid.: 29-30.
532 Anon, "We Get the Full Monty," Onfilm, June 2000, 1.
533 Pitts, "Cross-Cultural Filmmaking in New Zealand National Cinema", 141.
535 Harley.
Working in this environment Selwyn attempted to secure funding for *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti, The Māori Merchant of Venice* (2002), an adaptation of Shakespeare’s play *The Merchant of Venice*, entirely in te reo Māori. The NZFC repeatedly turned down the application and in an unusual move the film was fully funded by TMP whose statutory obligations are primarily met by funding te reo Māori and tikanga Māori programmes and music for television and radio broadcast. *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* was the first feature film in approximately eight years to be driven and directed by Māori. This positive outcome for the Māori language and culture was able to happen because of Māori claims against Crown breaches of Te Tiriti that resulted in the setting up of the Māori specific funding agency, TMP. The film’s rejection by the NZFC and support by TMP reinforces the need for Tiriti based and sustained Māori specific funding arrangements, agencies and strategies. It highlights Crown responsibilities and Māori rights as tāngata whenua, establishing obligations to address Māori cinematic aspirations that are greater than market driven realities and changing policies. Te Tiriti, indigenous rights and Māori self-determination are recurring themes in the history of Māori filmmaking in Aotearoa and are raised as important elements of Kaupapa Māori film theory discussed in Chapter Four.

Another series worth mentioning is the Māori television anthology *Mataku* broadcast in 2001, 2002 and 2005 which marked a joint venture agreement between the three main funding agencies. With a strategic shift from funding programmes only in te reo Māori, to funding a te reo percentage of programmes, TMP entered into a joint venture with NZOA where NZFC and TV3 were the minor sponsors. TMP Chief Executive Trevor Moeke saw it as setting a “new benchmark for co-funding ventures and bilingual programmes.” This raises the tension between the roles of NZOA and TMP to fund te reo Māori programmes. The existence of TMP does not diminish the role of NZOA to commit to bilingual programming.

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536 Usmar.
537 TV3 commissioned the first two series and TV One commissioned the third series.
Mataku consists of a series of supernatural, half-hour dramas told from Māori worldviews and experiences. Creators Bradford Haami and Carey Carter were driven to tell Māori stories and persistent in their quest for funding as they were repeatedly turned down by funders and broadcasters.539 Māori were deliberately employed as crew to grow a Māori film industry, resulting in a cast and crew that were predominantly Māori.540 The series was screened in prime time and received local and international success. In the conceptualisation of the series Haami and Carter aligned Mataku with paranormal and supernatural genres.541 This is supported by Glynn and Tyson who argue that the success of Mataku, which they likened to genres such as X-Files, was due to the combining of a familiar genre with an indigenous distinctiveness.542

During the second series of Mataku, the feature film Whale Rider (2002) was released, receiving local and international acclaim. The New Zealand Film Production Fund, mentioned above, aimed to assist filmmakers who had completed at least one film to make further films with larger budgets. This allowed for higher production values with the intention that the film would be commercially competitive. Whale Rider was the first film financed by the fund. It was adapted from a novel by writer and Associate Producer Witi Ihimaera and draws on an ancient Ngāti Porou story. Whale Rider is creatively led by Pākehā with Niki Caro as scriptwriter and director. It has predominantly Māori characters, is set in a coastal Māori community and revolves around a young girl (Pai) who struggles against patriarchal assumptions embodied by her grandfather (Koro) that she is not fit to be a leader because of her gender. The film won a number of awards including the People’s Choice Award at the Toronto Film Festival. It is currently the highest grossing New Zealand film, including domestic and international box office receipts, making over $60 million internationally.543 Films with significant Māori content have ‘succeeded’ locally and, adjusting for

541 Schmidt, "Bradford Haami and Carey Carter."
542 Glynn and Tyson, "Indigeneity, Media and Cultural Globalisation: The Case of Mataku, or the Maori X-Files," 205-15.
543 New Zealand Film Commission, "Whale Rider," NZ Film, September 2003, 14; Tim Thorpe Consulting Limited, Personal Email, 8 December 2010.
Films directed by Pākehā with significant Māori content have created a great deal of debate and it is useful to examine specific examples to shed light on Māori filmmaking and representation. Whale Rider was criticised for a lack of authenticity and promoting a notion of western feminism that was incompatible with Māori realities. For example, it is argued that speaking rights for woman on the East Coast are recognised and whakapapa determines status not gender. Eruera Stirling, a kaumātua from Te Whānau a Apanui on the East Coast describes the role of whakapapa:

> When you look at the whakapapa of the kings of England it sometimes comes down to a woman, and the same thing happens on the East Coast. Quite a few of the meeting-houses and sub-tribes are named after senior women and sometimes the main line of descent lands on a woman.  

Hokowhitu criticised the film for presenting Māori as unenlightened given the representations of outdated and restrictive patriarchal structures that reinforce western notions of superiority. He writes that, Whale Rider suggests an “authentic indigenous site, complete with a rigid culture and, in particular, a suppressive patriarchy” which is problematic because audiences may assume it is an accurate reflection of Māori communities in general. Hokowhitu proposes that Whale Rider identifies a Māori community where oppression is a Māori problem, concealing colonial power. In doing so the film does not challenge a western audience to consider their own privilege or complicity in colonising agendas. In response to criticisms of authenticity, advisor to the film and local kaumātua, Hone Taumaunu of Ngāti Konohi a hapū of Ngāti Porou, argues that he and other kaumātua wrote karakia (incantations) for important moments in the film, did not compromise on matters of tikanga, trained the actors in te reo Māori, and reflected

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547 Ibid.: 53-70.
everyday life within that community.\textsuperscript{548} He was primarily concerned with representing his iwi with dignity and ensuring that their culture “would be conveyed appropriately and without too much enhancement.”\textsuperscript{549} Despite issues of Pākehā creative control, including authorship, this suggests that the hapū was actively involved and consulted during the day to day filming and kaumātua were confident that tikanga was respected and enacted. However, this stance does not address the problematic depictions of Māori as a patriarchal society and a community isolated from colonial oppression. \textit{Whale Rider} presents patriarchy as the handing down of a tradition and does not contextualise it within processes of colonisation. Neither does the film forcefully challenge oppressive structures; instead it focuses on the lonely struggle of a young girl rather than the struggle of an entire community against injustices of dispossession and marginalisation. There are so few representations of Māori that these types of films become highly charged as representative of who Māori ‘truly’ are. Gretchen Minton’s interpretation of \textit{Whale Rider} reflects this position when she says that the film “furthers an understanding not only of Maori culture, but also of the place of Maori art [dances, ceremonies, chants].”\textsuperscript{550} This analysis raises questions of responsibility and the accountability of the makers of \textit{Whale Rider}, especially when compared to filmmakers Barclay and Mita who were so cognisant of attending to these issues when representing Māori.

Although the local hapū was engaged in consultation and Ihimaera was associate producer, \textit{Whale Rider} was written for a non-indigenous international audience.\textsuperscript{551} Tuhiwai Smith suggests that this is reflected in the interpretation of the narrative and how it was critiqued by audiences:

\begin{quote}
To me the issues about \textit{Whale Rider} may point to some of the problems of translating a good indigenous story into film for a non-indigenous audience. I think Māori people who critique the film critique it on quite
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{548} Pitts, “Cross-Cultural Filmmaking in New Zealand National Cinema”, 248-57.
\textsuperscript{549} Ibid., 252.
different grounds…So to me a lot of that is how the story gets told for a non-indigenous audience.\textsuperscript{552}

For example, issues of leadership and the roles of children and women in Māori communities may have been challenged and interpreted or emphasised differently.

Hokowhitu also suggests that the popularity of \textit{Whale Rider} can be attributed to its representation of an ‘exotic’ culture for global mass consumption.\textsuperscript{553} Such films can be viewed not only as a modern return to the previous century’s ethnographic gaze but as ethnotopic in impulse, that is at worst, driven by the spectacle of seeing the Other for the purposes of popular entertainment.\textsuperscript{554} This results in films that privilege the western or colonial gaze and problematically simplifies the representation of indigenous cultures so they become understandable and consumable to a western audience.\textsuperscript{555} Kirsty Bennett supports this position arguing that \textit{Whale Rider} is created for a majority culture and is understandable by them because it is no longer a Māori story, although it masquerades as one.\textsuperscript{556} These types of Māori representation have engendered debate as to whether or not \textit{Whale Rider} is a Māori story. When asked this question Taumaunu responded by saying that, “Of course it isn’t (a Māori story)!...It is a flight of fancy…”\textsuperscript{557} In contrast, Ihimaera believes it is a Māori film because the story originates from a regional and specific myth with a specific people, in a specific location, “in such a way that it can only be a Whangarā film.”\textsuperscript{558} Mita supports this view and although she defends the right and need for Māori to make films about Māori she identifies \textit{Whale Rider} as a Māori story because it belongs to the people of the area. She questions the usefulness of the “interminable” debate about whether or not it is a Māori film as it is the positive outcomes for Māori that are important.\textsuperscript{559}

\textsuperscript{552} Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Personal Interview, April 2007.
\textsuperscript{553} Hokowhitu, "Understanding Whangara: Whale Rider as Simulacrum," 53-70.
\textsuperscript{554} Bill Nichols, "The Ethnographer’s Tale," \textit{Visual Anthropology Review} 7, no. 2 (Fall 1991): 31-47.
\textsuperscript{555} Hokowhitu, "Understanding Whangara: Whale Rider as Simulacrum," 54-55.
\textsuperscript{557} Pitts, "Cross-Cultural Filmmaking in New Zealand National Cinema", 245-61.
\textsuperscript{558} Philip Matthews, "Myth Making," \textit{Listener}, 1 February 2003, 23.
Broader questions must be asked of films that adapt Māori stories and are publically funded, including an examination of who benefits. *Whale Rider* adopted distinct ways of working that emerged during the late 1970s and 1980s through the work of Māori filmmakers and in particular, Barclay. This marked a shift in practice that is antithetical to dominant and at times harsh filmmaking practices. *Whale Rider* purposefully involved the community where consultation with kaumātua was an important element during the filmmaking process. Clearly, direct benefits for Māori were gained through acting roles, consultation processes and also developments within the community in which *Whale Rider* was filmed. However, it was disappointing in terms of where creative control resided. Māori positions were minimal in the production structure and creative decision-making roles rested with Pākehā. Smith argues that the “benevolent bicultural practices” (e.g. state funding and consultation) conceal the “unequal power relations of Māori and Pākehā”, reinforcing the status quo.560 This illustrates the problems that arise even when particular conditions are negotiated and it does not follow that structural issues that maintain inequities, such as control, are adequately addressed.

However, with these criticisms in mind, *Whale Rider* is a film that, in many ways, positively represents Māori. My young niece loved the film, managing to stay awake for its entirety (a previously unknown achievement) and at the end stood up in the aisle and did a haka. I have spoken to Māori, and in particular those of my mother’s generation, who enjoyed *Whale Rider* because of the positive representations of Māori that would be transmitted to the world. As with *Once Were Warriors* we frequently feel conflicted as Māori in our emotional responses to these types of films; they must always be negotiated within the wider political, cultural and social contexts. Questions are raised as to what extent these films progress particular types of representations of Māori that within a local and global context, people may interpret as the way Māori are, as opposed to one story among many; a marker of diversity rather than uniformity. The latter reflects the privileged position of the dominant culture.

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560 Smith, "At the Limits of the Seeable and Sayable: Identity Politics and New Zealand Film Studies [Paper]."
Another film that tells a Māori story from a Pākehā worldview is Vincent Ward’s *Rain of the Children* (2008), a feature length docu-drama inspired by his earlier documentary *In Spring One Plants Alone* (1980). Shot in the Urewera, *In Spring One Plants Alone* follows the life of Tūhoe kuia, Puhi Tatu and her son Nicki. Investment for *Rain of the Children* also came from the NZFC, NZOA and TMP. The film retraces Puhi’s early life and in particular when she is chosen by Rua Kenana to marry his son. She later witnesses the raid on the Kenana community in 1916 by armed police. Ward did not collaborate with Māori until much later in development. Responses from Māori were mixed but the preciousness of the images of Puhi Tatu and son Nicki are widely acknowledged. Academic Taiarahia Black of Tūhoe descent argues that the film offers life histories of Tūhoe from the authoritative ‘outsider’ who represents Māori as the exotic Other, marginalising and omitting historical colonising agendas.\(^{561}\) Ward firmly situates himself in the film visually, and as narrator, making his position all the more powerful and authoritative. For example, he is filmed narrating the story of Puhi and interviewing Puhi’s relatives. At times there is a sense of unease and resistance that comes across from the interviewees when Ward relentlessly probes them for deeper meanings to satisfy his particular worldview. Yet it remains a powerful and visually haunting film. As Shohat and Stam remind us these apparent contradictions must be taken into account without lapsing into a good film, bad film binary.\(^ {562}\)

A number of issues raised by these films are expressed in the anger and considerable conflict Māori feel when stories are interpreted by the dominant culture. A critical analysis of power operating through structures, policies and institutional practices in the filmmaking environments is central to Kaupapa Māori film theory, including who has access to funding and what types of films are supported. This exposes the concern that historically Pākehā have greater access than Māori to represent Māori in film. However, the focus must not only be directed at films made by Pākehā with significant Māori content but also at the overwhelming predominance of NZFC supported films that are controlled by Pākehā and express Pākehā experiences and realities. These wider concerns raise


serious questions regarding the equity of funding and resourcing and ultimately, who benefits from these arrangements in the film sector.

**Short Film**

One of the funding streams Māori have increasingly and successfully accessed is the NZFC Short Film Fund established in 1985. It aimed to bridge the gap between the existing Arts Council’s fund that had a strong arts emphasis and the Commission’s emphasis on feature films and commercial considerations. In the 2001-2002 funding round, the Commission saw a marked decline in Māori involvement and announced its decision to select a team of Māori filmmakers to manage one of the three short film tender groups for 2002-2003. In part this may have been to mitigate potential accusations of “series racism” and in response to the Waitangi Tribunal claim lodged in 1998. The Commission did not receive any Māori submissions for the round (2002-2003) and suggested that this was partly due to intensive Māori involvement in productions for the soon to air Māori Television. In response the NZFC announced an objective to encourage successful short film tenders in the future to “include in their allocations a film or films with at least one of the key creative positions held by a Māori filmmaker.” NZFC strategy also identified the “development of Māori talent and projects as a key area of concern.” There was an increase in Māori production teams successfully tendering for the stream but the NZFC never explicitly stated that one of the tenders must be overseen by Māori.

Of interest to this study is the progression of directors of short film to dramatic feature film. In a personal interview Harley regarded the short film fund as a place for directors to exhibit their talent to justify the Commission spending the millions

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564 New Zealand Film Commission, "New Zealand Film Commission: Māori Responsiveness Strategy 2002-2003."
565 Ibid.
566 Ibid.
567 Creative New Zealand was also an avenue of funding for new and innovative filmmakers. The fund is still in place but parameters have changed. The NZFC regarded the fund as a starting point for filmmakers who could then apply to the Short Film Fund. In Hone Kouka, NZFC Development Executive, Personal Interview, February 2008.
of dollars required for producing a feature film.\textsuperscript{568} Of significance is the successful partnership between director/writer Taika Waititi and producer Ainsley Gardiner. They obtained finance from the Short Film Fund to produce \textit{Two Cars, One Night} (2003), which went on to be acclaimed locally and internationally. The short film is set in a hotel car-park in Te Kaha, a rural community on the East coast of Aotearoa. It tells the intriguing story of an interaction between three Māori children waiting for the adults to return from the pub.\textsuperscript{569} It can be argued that this supports negative representations of Māori neglect and alcohol dependency yet the focus on the children with their humorous and low key exchange resists this as an overriding interpretation. The film was distributed widely, winning a number of awards including a nomination for an Oscar.

Waititi’s next short film \textit{Tama Tū} (2005) was co-produced by Gardiner and Cliff Curtis under Aio Films, an all-Māori production team. \textit{Tama Tū} has no dialogue and tells the story of soldiers in the Māori Battalion during World War II as they shelter in a bombed out house in Italy. Both of these short films have only Māori characters, a sense of collective identity and are located in Māori experiences and histories. The collaboration led to the production of their first feature film, \textit{Eagle vs Shark} (2007).

With the success of his two short films Waititi was able to get financing for \textit{Eagle vs Shark} with producers Gardiner and Curtis.\textsuperscript{570} The feature film grew out of an idea pitched to Waititi by his partner Loren Horsley who shares a “story created by” credit with him.\textsuperscript{571} It is a quirky romantic comedy that tells the story of two unusual characters Lily (Loren Horsley) who longs for romance and Jarrod (Jemaine Clement) who dreams of revenge. \textit{Eagle vs Shark} was developed with assistance from the Sundance Institute (a non profit organisation founded by Robert Redford in 1981 with the goal to develop artists with an independent vision) and investment from the NZFC. Bird Runningwater (Associate Director with the Native American and Indigenous Programme) of the Sundance Institute was questioned about his support for the film because it could not be easily

\textsuperscript{568} Harley.
\textsuperscript{569} This is Taika’s second short film. He debuted with \textit{John & Pogo} (2002) under the name of Taika Cohen although \textit{Two Cars, One Night} is described as his first professional filmmaking effort. In Press Kit, ”Two Cars, One Night,” (Wellington).
\textsuperscript{570} Gardiner.
\textsuperscript{571} Gemma Gracewood, ”Geek Love,” \textit{Listener}, 14 July 2007, 38.
categorised as an indigenous film. His justification for including the film in an indigenous category was because it was made by indigenous filmmakers. In a personal interview he explains:

I showed it at our festival as an indigenous film because the maker was indigenous and the producers were indigenous even though the content and the storyline might not be overtly cultural in any particular way but I have respect for the artistry of the craft of that film.572

Again this raises the difficulties associated with attempting to define an authentic indigenous category and in particular for the purposes of funding and support. Barclay’s suggestion is that a ‘Māori’ film is one controlled by Māori and he later added that it must be set within the Māori world.573 Barclay’s Fourth Cinema implies a similar definition of control and content for categorising indigenous film.574 Definitions are fraught with difficulties and have the potential to limit creativity by falling into essentialist arguments that are bound by definitions of difference and traditional markers that are confined to a pre-colonial past. One Māori filmmaker I interviewed, who wishes to remain anonymous, spoke of a reluctance to apply for Māori specific funding due to feelings of uncertainty that their stories and experiences may not be “Māori enough”.575 My position acknowledges these tensions and the danger of falling into essentialist arguments as to what is authentically Māori, but my conception of Māori and indigenous film requires control over direction and content as well as the centring of Māori or indigenous peoples and their diverse stories respectively. While it is creatively controlled by Māori, the director, scriptwriter and producer are Māori, Eagle vs Shark does not centre Māori or their stories. It is for this reason that Eagle vs Shark does not fit into my conception of Māori film. For the purposes of accessing public funding and support, definition becomes an uneasy but necessary

572 Bird Runningwater, Sundance Institute Associate Director-Native American and Indigenous Programme, Personal Interview, May 2008.
575 Filmmaker, Personal Interview, 2008.
tool and a painful reminder of the power of colonisation and the marginalized status of indigenous peoples globally.576

The strategic support and nurturing of Waititi’s talent as an indigenous artist, regardless of narrative, advanced his development as a filmmaker. This led to further feature film opportunities. At the time of writing, Waititi’s second dramatic feature film BOY (2010) that received investment from the NZFC Film Production Fund was released and screening at the Sundance Film Festival. The film is loosely based on his short film Two Cars, One Night and set in a rural Māori community on the East coast in Waihau Bay that is within his iwi boundaries of Te Whānau a Apanui.577 Set in the 1980s it is a coming of age story about a boy’s relationship with his father who is released from prison after serving seven years. The film is directed by Waititi and produced by Gardiner and Curtis with Mita as co-producer.578

Two other Māori directors who were successfully funded through the Short Film Fund and are working on dramatic features are Michael Bennett and Tearepa Kahi. Bennett as director and writer is currently working on his debut feature film, Matariki. The film received financial support from the NZFC and at the time of writing was in post-production.579 Kahi, who works with producer Quinton Hita, developed a feature film script, A Gift to Zion. The film is also supported by the NZFC and is currently in development.

A significant number of short films written, directed and produced by Māori are supported by the Short Film Fund. A strong emerging Māori voice conveys the diversity of Māori identity and experience. In addition, short films do not have the same commercial pressures placed on feature films because there is no commercial market.580 In some respects they fit with Barclay’s notion of how film should operate as they are not expected to recoup their costs although there are expectations that they will garner critical acclaim. Short film provides Māori

578 Gardiner.
579 New Zealand Film Commission, ”New Zealand Film Commission: Annual Report 2007/08.”
580 Gardiner.
filmmakers with an opportunity to tell stories that might not be supported in a feature film format with the associated expectations of commercial success.

Many of the short films made by Māori were supported by or selected to screen at Sundance, ImagineNATIVE or National Geographic’s All Roads Scheme. The relationships built with the global indigenous film community owe much to our earlier Māori filmmakers and in particular Barclay and Mita who paved the way for future generations. This is not confined to filmmaking practices and narrative but to theoretical and political discussions that challenge, affirm and advocate for indigenous aspirations. In a personal interview Kahi acknowledged the work of the pioneers, Barclay, Mita and Selwyn and their philosophy towards Māori filmmaking saying:

…having watched avidly the works of Barry Barclay, Merata Mita and being involved with Don Selwyn on certain projects it’s really important to carry on how they see things and progress them as well.581

It is also worth briefly mentioning the use of digital technology as an example of Māori filmmakers utilising cheaper visual mediums. Christmas (2004) is written and produced by filmmaker Gregory King who is descended from Ngāpuhi iwi. His dramatic digital feature film explores family relationships in a Pākehā/Māori marriage and was made for only $39,000.582 The film was supported by the Screen Innovation Production Fund and the NZFC. This resonates with indigenous filmmakers globally and Atanarjuat, The Fast Runner (2001), the first Canadian dramatic feature film written, directed, produced and acted by the Inuit people, uses digital technology.583

**Māori Television**

The establishment of Māori Television in March 2004 is a major broadcasting development and positively impacted on Māori filmmaking. Parr who was Head

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583 Atanarjuat, The Fast Runner (2001) is directed by Zacharias Kunuk. It is set in the 16th century and based on a traditional Inuit story.
of Programming for Māori Television from 2005-2008 observed that the Māori production community grew exponentially with the channel’s establishment and the influence was enormous on the production environment for Māori. For example, Kahi made a number of documentaries for the channel before moving into short filmmaking.

The channel provides a site for the screening of Māori and indigenous programmes, producing hundreds of hours of television in both te reo and English. However, Māori Television has been criticised including its adoption of mass television news and documentary formats. In her examination of the channel, while not negating it powerful contribution, Smith identifies potential risks. She proposes that “by privileging the normalisation of te reo Māori risks promoting a hierarchy of value within the category of “Māori” (where fluent speakers accrue more social value than non-fluent speakers).” Also, modelling ways of being Māori, including cultural practices, creates a standard that Māori audiences must measure themselves against and potentially fall short of. Despite criticism, Māori Television indigenises the screen in the sense that it offers Māori worldviews, privileges te reo Māori and centres Māori and related issues in ways that potentially disrupt hegemonic discourses. A review undertaken in 2007 received submissions stating that TVNZ represented Māori poorly and did not deliver on their te reo Māori obligations. In contrast, it was felt that Māori Television performed well in these areas. The establishment of Māori Television does not however absolve the responsibility of mass media television.

**Recent Developments in Film**

Decades of advocacy by Māori filmmakers for a NZFC fund that supports Māori feature filmmaking grounded in Māori kaupapa was finally realised in 2007 with the establishment of Te Paepae Ataata. The funding stream invests in feature film

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584 Parr.
586 Ibid.
script development and applications are assessed by a Māori only panel. This is a major achievement and the first time the NZFC explicitly earmarked funding for Māori filmmaking.

Barclay argued for years that Māori stories are assessed by the dominant group from their worldviews, experiences and values. With reservations he suggested that the solution was to have a Māori panel with allocated funding and the power to make decisions. At the time the idea was rejected because of unsuccessful models that were under-funded, susceptible to cutbacks and fears that it would ghettoise Māori by closing off access to main funding streams. However, this aspiration was never abandoned and is clearly articulated in the 1998 WAI 748 claim. Barclay, Mita and later producer, Tainui Stephens, strongly advocated for a NZFC fund where full control and decision-making rested with Māori. The aim was to fund Māori films that “reflect the indigenous cinema aspirations of this country” and give voice to Māori experiences as tāngata whenua and as citizens of the world.

Te Paepae Ataata took many years of discussion and determination by Māori advocates before final agreement was reached. It was possibly slowed down by the ramifications of the Ōrewa Speech by Brash in 2004 and the ensuing intense scrutiny aimed at Māori specific policy. The plan for the establishment of Te Paepae Ataata was approved by the NZFC Board in June 2004 but it would take over three years before final sign-off occurred. Initially a fund of $5-6 million was proposed, but later the amount of the fund was reduced and its scope narrowed to focus on story and script development. Production was to be addressed later. The final agreement dedicated $600,000 over a three year period for feature film story and script development. The production format is not prescribed, so digital is an option and it is intended to develop one script every year to production readiness. The production team will be mentored by the Paepae

588 Barclay, Our Own Image, 23-24.
589 Ibid., 24.
591 Brash, "Nationhood: Address by Don Brash to the Orewa Rotary Club."
592 New Zealand Film Commission, "New Zealand Film Commission Initiatives for Māori Filmmakers 2005-2006."
593 Kouka.
594 Ibid.
Ainsley Gardiner, a member of the Paepae, believes that the ongoing commitment to support a project is one of the most dynamic aspects of the initiative. Eligibility to apply is stated in the guidelines requiring the applicant to be: of Māori descent; a Māori writer/director; or a team comprising a Māori writer, director and producer.

A definition of a Māori story is not evident in the application guidelines but Māori identity and Māori descent are named criteria for eligibility. By creating criteria based on identity the Board of Te Paepae Ataata have not placed themselves in the problematic situation of having to define or judge what constitutes a ‘Māori’ story. Their role is to debate and decide which stories or scripts they will support. Once the script is developed the writer/production team can then apply to the generic pool of NZFC feature film funding.

At the time of writing this initiative was in the very early stage of implementation and it will be important to follow the progress of filmmakers supported by the Paepae and their success in accessing main funding streams. Te Paepae Ataata is a major milestone that owes much of its legacy to the pioneering filmmakers Mita, Barclay and Selwyn who struggled and strongly advocated for Māori control and access to filmmaking in Aotearoa. That is not to diminish the contribution of the other filmmakers including Stephens who worked hard to achieve this goal. At the launch of Te Paepae Ataata in November 2007, Barclay with some optimism and good faith announced that, “the house is now restored” and he would not pursue Te Tiriti claim, WAI 748, lodged nine years earlier.

A recent achievement relevant to this discussion is the dramatic feature film, *The Strength of Water* (2009). Set in a remote coastal Māori community, *The Strength of Water* is an intense and moving story that follows the journey of a young Māori boy who is forced to deal with the tragic death of his twin sister. The film is scripted by Briar Grace-Smith and inspired by her earlier script *Fish Skin Suit*,

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595 Members during 2009: Ainsley Gardiner, Rawiri Paratene, Tainui Stephens, Merata Mita and Kathryn Akuhata-Brown
596 Gardiner.
commissioned as part of the NZOA ‘Māori quota’ in TV3’s *One-Off Drama* series that screened over 2000 and 2001.\(^{599}\) She was supported locally by the Aotearoa/New Zealand Screenwriters Laboratory (former NZ Writers Foundation) where advisors including Mita gave her the confidence to further develop the script.\(^{600}\) Grace-Smith had the opportunity to take the script to both the Sundance Directors and Screenwriters Labs in Utah as well as the Binger Institute in Amsterdam. On the advice of the NZFC she worked with first time feature film director Armagan Ballantyne and Pākehā producer Fiona Copland. Grace-Smith found she developed a strong working relationship with Ballantyne and was able to maintain an important presence during the filming in the Hokianga. Although this was a productive and supportive working partnership, the advice of the NZFC to approach a Pākehā production team needs to be raised. The concern is that a rare opportunity to support a Māori creative team to imagine a powerful Māori story was lost.

**Summary**

The history of Māori filmmaking in Aotearoa highlights the struggles and determination of Māori to represent themselves in film and television. Although there were major achievements during the 1980s and early 1990s, in the wider context of cinematic production in Aotearoa they were too few and considerable gaps existed where the potential of Māori filmmakers was not realised. There was a concerning gap of thirteen years between *Once Were Warriors* and the next NZFC supported Māori directed and authored dramatic feature film, *Eagle vs Shark*. The result was that a generation of Māori filmmakers missed out. Pitts shows that 109 fiction feature films were either fully or partially funded by the NZFC since its establishment in 1977 to the year ending 2007.\(^{601}\) Of these, only four were directed by Māori and expressed significant Māori realities: *Ngati, Mauri, Te Rua and Once Were Warriors*. More recently, *BOY* directed by Waititi increases that number to five. This reveals inequities of access and the predominance of Māori cinematic representations constructed by others. The

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\(^{600}\) Ibid., 19.

\(^{601}\) Pitts, "Cross-Cultural Filmmaking in New Zealand National Cinema", 169.
historical pattern of underfunding Māori films makes the five films mentioned above significant achievements.

There is increasing global interest in indigenous narratives with western film festivals expressing a desire to screen films with indigenous content. It is relevant that the highest grossing ‘New Zealand’ film at the local box office, *Once Were Warriors*, and *Whale Rider*, the highest grossing film including domestic and international box office receipts, have predominantly Māori characters and emerge from Māori stories and experiences.602 At the time of completing this study figures revealed that *BOY* is the highest grossing film at the local box office in dollars of the day, but adjusting for inflation, *Once Were Warriors* remains the highest.603 In an interview the NZFC believed that the growing market for Māori artists, including film, could warrant larger investments in Māori filmmaking given the potential for international audiences.604 There was also the awareness that that this may be a passing interest and could not be relied on long term.605 In part, the current interest in indigenous art may be explained by the desire to consume the ‘exotic’ or ‘different’ in increasingly homogenised global societies. It can also be positively attributed to the small but increasing number of indigenous films that offer interested audiences the rare opportunity to experience stories told from indigenous worldviews and experiences. It needs to be acknowledged that our pioneering Māori filmmakers including Barclay, Mita and Selwyn were at the forefront of this development and cleared the path for future filmmakers.

The NZFC imperative that feature films attract a multiplex audience, assumptions about the types of stories that have broad appeal, the large amounts of money involved and the pressure to find overseas distributors and investors combine to make a Māori agenda challenging. Films that speak to an indigenous audience and threaten a unified sense of national identity are additionally harder to realise in feature film. There is a drive by indigenous filmmakers to tell stories about their experiences of colonisation. Runningwater asks how marketable these types of

603 Tim Thorpe Consulting Limited.
604 Kouka.
605 Ibid.
films would be within the territories of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. This is because of the coloniser’s desire to “maintain a national amnesia about indigenous people and about tribal people.”606 Although there is an audience for these films, including communities with shared experiences of disempowerment or ongoing oppression, it is a predominantly indigenous audience that is currently underserved.

Recent developments in Aotearoa offer hope for the future of Māori cinema such as Te Paepae Ataata and the promise of more Māori led and controlled dramatic feature films with the release of BOY and others in the pipeline. The Crown and state funders in film carry a responsibility to Māori beyond commercial, national and global market imperatives. This thesis argues that support for Māori film is premised on political and cultural factors rather than economic imperatives. However, the future must be viewed with caution and vigilance, given the historical lack of specific and sustained policies and initiatives that address Te Tiriti obligations, Māori rights and aspirations.

606 Runningwater.
Chapter Four

Kaupapa Māori Film Theory

Introduction

The following chapter provides an overview of Kaupapa Māori, its origins and development as a theory and its connections with other disciplines, including education. The diverse articulations of Kaupapa Māori provided an opportunity for me to develop a theoretical framework to interrogate film texts, and to shed light on the processes of film production and the environments within which filmmakers operate. On this foundation, the conceptualisation of Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework will be described.

Kaupapa Māori can incorporate multiple expressions and applications from a distinctly Māori base. Examining key features of Kaupapa Māori I arrived at the following six key thematic categories for Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework: (1) Māori voices; (2) Māori worldviews and concepts; (3) collectivity and relationships; (4) responsibility and accountability; (5) challenge and resistance and; (6) transformation. The framework is not intended to provide a prescriptive or exhaustive list of categories and elements but is distilled from broader parameters to provide a framework to inform this study.

Kaupapa Māori: Origins

Marsden explains that kau means “to appear for the first time, to come into view, to disclose” and that papa is “ground or foundation.” Therefore kaupapa can be interpreted as ground rules, first principles, general principles and platform. In

607 Royal, ed. The Woven Universe, Selected Writings of Rev. Māori Marsden, 66.
608 Herbert Williams, "A Dictionary of the Maori Language " (Wellington: Government Printer, 1985), 107; Royal, ed. The Woven Universe, Selected Writings of Rev. Māori Marsden, 66.
his discussion on the meanings of kaupapa Cleve Barlow includes policy, protocols and rules of operation. The strong thread running through these definitions is one of foundation, principles and philosophy. In this sense kaupapa can be conceptualised as principle driven and holding firmly to fundamental foundations. This description is useful, especially given that tikanga (method, issues of principle, reason, custom, the right way of doing things as determined by Māori) and kaupapa are “juxtaposed and interconnected in Māori thinking.”

The basis of Kaupapa Māori involves Māori control and is grounded in Māori worldviews. It contains knowledge and practices that date back to the beginning of time. Tuakana Nepe describes Kaupapa Māori knowledge as ancient, originating in Rangihātea, the first known whare wānanga located in Te Toi-o-NGā-Rangi, the twelfth heaven. Kaupapa Māori is unique as it is founded on Māori epistemological and metaphysical traditions. Tuhiwai Smith draws distinctions between Kaupapa Māori and notions of Māori knowledge and epistemology, proposing that kaupapa “implies a way of framing and structuring how we think about those ideas and practices.” She agrees with Nepe who describes Kaupapa Māori as the “conceptualisation of Māori knowledge.”

**Kaupapa Māori Research and Theory**

Kaupapa Māori research and theory emerged as specific articulations of Kaupapa Māori and drew significantly on the early writings of Tuhiwai Smith and Hingangaroa Smith. Early expressions of Kaupapa Māori as theory emerged during intensifying political engagement and consciousness and were driven by Māori community developments most evident in the education initiatives of

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613 Ibid., 16.
615 Ibid., 188.
Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa of the 1980s. Hingangaroa Smith writes that he deliberately linked theory to Kaupapa Māori as a political enterprise to reclaim tino rangatiratanga and this was applied to the development of Māori education initiatives. Pihama explains that the development of these initiatives required Māori to “reflect on and draw upon our own cultural knowledge” and as a result had a profound effect on the growth of Kaupapa Māori theory. As well as developing alongside Māori political movements, Kaupapa Māori research and theory emerged within global indigenous, feminist and African American theoretical movements.

Kaupapa Māori research incorporates the principles of Kaupapa Māori in the science of research methods and practices. This can broadly be described as Māori led research, where being Māori is an essential component. It is based on Māori worldviews and principles and intended to make a positive difference. Inextricably linked is Kaupapa Māori theory which provides a “foundation for theoretical engagement and development from a distinctively Māori worldview.” To theorise in this way is to make explicit Māori theoretical views, worldviews and aspirations and uncover unequal power relations. Kaupapa Māori theory is not purported to be neutral or objective. It may incorporate other theories but it does so from a Māori base. As Rangimarie Mahuika explains in her examination of Kaupapa Māori theory, there are “diverse ways of both interpreting and applying kaupapa Māori” and this “multi faceted use can make definitions and discussion” complicated.

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618 Smith, "The Development of Kaupapa Māori Theory and Praxis", 455.
621 Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 186-87; Moewaka Barnes, "Explaining Kaupapa Māori: Explaining the Ordinary," 14; Bishop, Collaborative Research Stories, Whakawhanaungatanga, 17-19.
Kaupapa Māori is linked to notions of critique, resistance, struggle and a utopian vision of emancipation. Articulations of Kaupapa Māori theory include positive transformative action, as Pihama illustrates:

Kaupapa Māori is a transformative power. To think and act in terms of Kaupapa Māori whilst experiencing colonisation is to resist dominance. This is not something that Māori alone are engaging. It is the experience of vast numbers of Indigenous Peoples across the world.

This is supported by Moewaka Barnes who explains that its transformative power resides in the ability to both challenge and create a space “within and outside the academy, in the face of unequal power relationships.” She suggests that used in this way “Kaupapa Māori can provide a space for us to work within and fend off colonising theoretical invasions.”

Early articulations of Kaupapa Māori faced opposition from academia in regard to its legitimacy, with Kaupapa Māori theorists determinedly arguing its relevance and validity. Pihama, Tuhiwai Smith and Kathie Irwin, among others, provide important personal recollections about their experiences as Māori academics struggling to achieve legitimacy. Pihama recalls that Māori theorising was viewed as a threat in academia. Students were told that it was insufficient to reference Kaupapa Māori theory as their theoretical framework or to only use the writings of Māori academics in discussions about Māori education. This is an ongoing struggle, but over time, Kaupapa Māori has gained national and

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625 Pihama, "Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring Our Voices: Mana Wahine as a Kaupapa Māori Theoretical Framework", 81-82.
627 Ibid.
international significance. Mahuika explains the considerable global contribution of Kaupapa Māori as:

> Perhaps one of Aotearoa’s most significant contributions to the paradigm proliferation occurring internationally, as indigenous and minority scholars seek ways and means of articulating their own truths and realities within the western dominant structures of the academy.\(^6\)

However, while Kaupapa Māori theory has gained traction, it is a contested area where critique is both constructive and dismissive. Ongoing defence and delineation are required and will remain so as long as unequal power relationships prevail.

One criticism of Kaupapa Māori is its failure to account for the heterogeneity of Māori. Mahuika suggests that there is the illusion of Māori as homogenous and unambiguous.\(^1\) She argues that, while this makes claims more authoritative, it fails to problematise Māori/Pākehā and insider/outsider binaries.\(^2\) Binaries of this type can lead to constructions based solely on difference rather than exploring and expressing ourselves from within Māori paradigms and worldviews. Moewaka Barnes explains that this can lead to a rejection of “what we do not see as belonging to our past, what we feel does not distinguish us from non-Māori.”\(^3\)

Such expressions can deny ambiguities and complexities and bind us to static and rigid notions of acceptability.\(^4\) Reflecting on these points it is important to recognise the complexities of being Māori, and ideally, Kaupapa Māori theory will acknowledge and confirm this and not attempt to homogenise or simplify our diverse realities. It is important to signal here that my conceptualisation of Kaupapa Māori film theory is not premised on defining difference but is centred in Māori paradigms and worldviews.

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\(^6\) Mahuika, "Kaupapa Māori Theory Is Critical and Anti-Colonial."
\(^1\) Ibid.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^4\) Ibid., 52.
Anaru Eketone asks whether locating Kaupapa Māori within the constraints of the western academy could “negate a thousand years of Māori knowledge.” Platforms in the academy echo this concern asking whether this is “regressive or progressive to the advancement of Māori people.” Moewaka Barnes astutely responds to these concerns saying:

For me, as an academy insider Kaupapa Māori is about naming our approaches in a way that may enable us to practice our knowledge with some safety within the western academy.

Kaupapa Māori frames how Māori knowledge is conceptualised requiring an examination of the concept of mātauranga. Mātauranga can be loosely translated as knowledge in general, although it is frequently associated with the concept of traditional knowledge and conceived of as a body of knowledge. Charles Royal writes extensively in this area and defines mātauranga Māori as “a body of knowledge brought to Aotearoa by our ancestors that has changed and grown over time.” He explains that the term is modern and “used as a way of framing or coming to relationship with the distinctive knowledge and worldview created by forebears of contemporary Māori.” This suggests that mātauranga encompasses traditional knowledge and the extension of this particular form of knowledge within the context of modern times; however, there are debates as to whether mātauranga Māori should only refer to expressions of traditional knowledge. The key point to make is that understanding the concept of mātauranga is limiting if the definition only includes notions of traditional knowledge (generally defined by its difference to dominant knowledge) rather

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than all knowledge received and acquired, that we, as Māori, claim.641 Understandably, in our struggle against colonisation there is mistrust of knowledge not viewed as traditional or different and essentialism plays a critical role in the struggles of marginalised people. Moewaka Barnes explores these issues in her paper examining the positioning of knowledge, science and research in Aotearoa. While not undermining the value of traditional knowledge she proposes that many forms and iterations of Māori knowledge have value and that:

> Care must be taken not to validate or authenticate one over another or we run the risk of claiming ownership only of that which is distinct. The danger is that we will replicate hierarchies of knowledge and exclude what is seen as less “authentic.” 642

Consistent with Said’s examination of Orientalism, Moewaka Barnes explains that dominant systems determine and legitimate knowledge, presenting it as ‘universal’ and superior.643 Kaupapa Māori must be cognisant of hierarchies of knowledge, imposed externally and internally, and avoid falling into binaries and rigid ways of conceptualising Māori knowledge.644

Before discussing Kaupapa Māori film theory it is useful to identify some of the recurring principles identified in Kaupapa Māori theory as they provide direction. Hingangaroa Smith initially identified six key principles directly related to Kura Kaupapa Māori education: tino rangatiratanga (self-determination principle); taonga tuku iho (cultural aspirations principle); ako Māori (culturally preferred pedagogy principle); kia piki ake i ngā raruraru i te kainga (socio-economic mediation principle); whānau (extended family structure principle) and; kaupapa (collective philosophy principle).645 The following offers a brief explanation of these principles. Tino rangatiratanga relates to Māori self-determination and Māori control with reference to the sharing of power and greater autonomy over key decision-making in schooling. Taonga tuku iho refers to the treasures handed

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642 Ibid., 19.
643 Ibid., 18-42.
644 Ibid., 54.
down by our tūpuna and asserts the validity and centrality of te reo Māori and tikanga. Hingangaroa Smith argues that this should be evidenced and supported in school curriculums. Ako Māori is founded on the need for learning and teaching practices as defined by Māori. Kia piki ake i ngā raruraru i te kainga addresses the negative socio-economic pressures that undermine schooling and education necessitating change. Whānau recognises complex Māori social structures and relationships and the importance of transposing these to the education environment. Kaupapa refers to a collective vision and commitment rather than an individual focus in education.\textsuperscript{646}

These principles provide direction for the development of Kaupapa Māori film theory. For example, Hingangaroa Smith’s “cultural aspirations principle” asserts that “being Māori is taken for granted” and valued, including Māori identity, culture, and aspirations.\textsuperscript{647} The principles and related elements described above are expanded on by Māori theorists as they form a foundation for further thinking. Pihama identifies Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a key element in Kaupapa Māori theory and this is applied to Kaupapa Māori film theory.\textsuperscript{648}

Moewaka Barnes’ earlier comment that Kaupapa Māori may enable safe spaces within the academy resonates with the following elaboration of Kaupapa Māori film theory in the hope that it progresses current thinking and provides a platform and validation for further discussion and iterations of film theory, grounded in Māori worldviews.

\section*{Kaupapa Māori Film Theory}

In the development of \textit{Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework} I drew on a number of Kaupapa Māori theorists including those discussed above. Very little is written in this area, the majority being found in theses, for example, Sam Cruickshank’s Master’s Thesis exploring Kaupapa Māori and its application to film. Primarily drawing on the work of Hingangaroa

\textsuperscript{646} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{647} Ibid., 467-68.
Smith, Tuhiwai Smith and Pihama, Cruickshank identifies a number of principles and elements. His articulation of Kaupapa Māori film theory principles includes: mātauranga (knowledge and wisdom); te reo me ona tikanga (Māori language and tikanga); Te Tiriti o Waitangi; tino rangatiratanga (self-determination and aspirations); taonga tuku iho (treasured and highly valued things); whānau and related concepts of collectivity and; connections. Cruickshank includes these principles in his analytical examination of cinematic representations of Māori men. Although Cruickshank provides a number of areas for examination his focus is on the representation of Māori men rather than elements of Kaupapa Māori more broadly. My articulation of Kaupapa Māori film theory drew on Cruickshank’s application, but includes Māori women, and the development of a specific theoretical framework that identifies key principles and related elements for analytical application.

During an informal discussion, Barclay saw a direct resonance between Fourth Cinema and Kaupapa Māori film theory, as there is a shared language and understanding. Fourth Cinema, like Kaupapa Māori film theory is derived from a Māori context that is conceptually and practically informed by Māori worldviews, tikanga and epistemologies. However, Fourth Cinema is an emerging category and there is very little written material, with Barclay as the primary author. As with Fourth Cinema and Cruickshank’s investigations, the Kaupapa Māori Film theory I develop here seeks to validate and affirm indigenous experiences and identity in a cinematic context, involving both a textual analysis and a processual approach. These elements and the wider discussions related to Kaupapa Māori referred to earlier provide rich understandings which my Kaupapa Māori film theoretical framework, Kia Manawanui drew on.

Problematic to any theory is the danger that the more you define the more you exclude. In saying this I agree with Pihama who writes that she does not wish to “close or define the parameters of Kaupapa Māori theory in such a way that would prevent those who draw upon Kaupapa Māori theory the ability to be flexible and

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649 Cruickshank, "From a Scary Black Bastard", 50-110.
adaptable.” I am also reminded of the words of Moewaka Barnes who reveals that the act of defining Kaupapa Māori is an uncomfortable exercise that reminds us of the power of colonisation. Acknowledging the limits that might be involved in such a framework, Kaupapa Māori film theory has however the potential to open out discussion and examine film and filmmaking through a Māori lens.

Kaupapa Māori film theory and Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework are developed here, not as a way to describe or define our differences or similarities but to identify, from a Māori foundation, important features. I analysed and structured key themes emerging from the literature and film texts and started to make sense of how this informed the development of my theoretical framework. This was an iterative process. The following discussion broadly explores the emerging key themes of: Māori voices; Māori worldviews and concepts; collectivity and relationships; responsibility and accountability; challenge and resistance and; transformation. The themes discussed here are not positioned in a hierarchical framework.

**Māori Voices**

The theme of Māori voices encompasses multiple expressions, including telling, legitimating and centring our stories and language, and the diversity of Māori identity.

Creative cinematic expression through storytelling in film is identified by Tuhiwai Smith as possibly the greatest potential of Kaupapa Māori theory. This is because film offers a unique site that Māori voices can inhabit and give expression to our diverse realities and experiences. Here stories of length can be told and shared communally. Kaupapa Māori theory asserts our right to be Māori and, as Pihama explains, “draw[s] from our own base to provide understandings

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653 Smith.
and explanations of the world.” The contestation of indigenous realities, identities and worldviews attests to the importance of telling our stories. This is expressed by Tuhiwai Smith as a very “powerful need to give testimony to and restore a spirit, to bring back into existence a world fragmented and dying.”

Paula Gunn Allen and Singer identify the healing and spiritual aspects of storytelling. Referring to Gunn Allen, Singer writes:

That the oral tradition is a continually evolving process is apparent in Aboriginal and Native American films and videos, which are extensions of the past in our current lives. Additionally, stories and their telling may also connect us to the universe of medicine – of paranormal or sacred power.

Storytelling has ancient origins for Māori and is an essential element of oral traditions that is one way of imparting whakapapa and histories through the generations. This acts as a powerful conduit for the communication of knowledge and identity. Mita views film as an extension of a Māori oral tradition that encompasses storytelling because both convey information and create images.

Indigenous peoples are aware of the power stories have to shape our world. The drive exists for many indigenous filmmakers to tell stories about the effects of colonisation; this is potentially unsettling for the coloniser. The difficulties experienced by Māori filmmakers seeking funding to make films that engage in counter narratives in the context of hegemonic and fiscal regimes that support the

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656 Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 28.
657 Paula Gunn Allen, Grandmothers of the Light (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 3; Singer, Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens, 3.
658 Singer, Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens, 3.
661 Runningwater.
telling of certain types of stories was raised earlier. This is illustrated in the production of *Greenstone* (1999), a historical drama series set in Aotearoa from 1839 to the 1960s. Selwyn, an advisor, was angry that both the overseas production company and TVNZ did not want *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* mentioned.\(^{662}\) Reasons for this are not covered in the *Listener* article. My Master’s thesis raised similar concerns with Māori directors needing to strategically and covertly insert issues related to Māori experiences of colonisation. This was attributed to the expectation, based on past experiences, that the mainstream broadcaster would either ask for removal or give a clear direction that certain material or references (e.g. the word colonisation) were controversial.\(^{663}\) Gray’s analysis of television programming in the United States is relevant here revealing that the white subject is desired and must be appeased.\(^{664}\)

Shohat and Stam argue that the Eurocentrism of audiences influences cinematic production. They write:

> Here the dominant audience, whose ideological assumptions must be respected if a film is to be successful, or even made at all, exerts a kind of indirect hegemony. “Universal” becomes a codeword for palatable to the western spectator as the “spoiled child” of the apparatus.\(^{665}\)

Dominant systems frequently determine Māori stories to be ‘less’ universal or simply *not* universal. Findings from my Master’s Thesis highlighted the practical ramifications for Māori documentary makers who were pressured by television commissioners to find and explain the universal themes in their work. Similar criteria do not appear to be applied to Pākehā stories. This resonates with Balibar’s description of racism as assuming the existence of two main groups in society, the universal (progressive) associated with the dominant group and the particularistic (primitive).\(^{666}\) For these reasons Barclay’s ‘talking in’ is vital as it demands the centring of the indigenous voice in film that speaks directly to a

\(^{663}\) Barnes, “Kanohi Kite a Te Maori: Maori Documentaries, Negotiating the Complexities of Television in Aotearoa”.
\(^{665}\) Shohat and Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, 186.
Māori audience from Māori worldviews and experiences.\footnote{Barclay, \textit{Our Own Image}, 74-80.} Kaupapa Māori film theory raises questions of address and asks who is the film primarily speaking to, who is the imagined audience?

\textit{Identity}

For many indigenous communities giving voice through storytelling and oral histories remains an important aspect of identity formation.\footnote{Singer, \textit{Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens}, 3.} Dominant stereotypes and intertextuality also play a key role in shaping identity, making film an important site of contest and struggle. Identity construction is necessary politically and personally for survival and resistance. It can reflect shared understandings, knowledge and histories, creating a sense of community and solidarity. Kaupapa Māori film theory must challenge the notion of a ‘norm’ in Māori identity and embrace diversity and complexity. In a personal interview Tuhiwai Smith proposed that Kaupapa Māori should not impose essentialised and rigid markers of identity:

\begin{quote}
Kaupapa Māori is not about saying this is what a Māori person is and you either fit or you don’t…it is about saying being Māori whatever its diversity is an important identity in this country and it is important to honour that identity and to understand how that identity has been formed by our experiences. But certainly to understand that there is no great Māori norm.\footnote{Smith.}
\end{quote}

Prescribing traditional characteristics of identity that originate from a pre-colonial past in order to establish an authentic Māori identity or ‘norm’ is also problematic as it can create a static and rigid category that is exclusive rather than inclusive. For example, Māori identity may or may not involve strong connections with iwi and hapū. Borell’s study of Māori youth found that traditional markers of Māori identity such as te reo Māori, marae connections, tikanga and tribal engagement were important but not necessarily relevant in their day to day lives. For those Māori who were not “deeply or actively steeped in such recognised dimensions of Māori culture” there were risks of invisibility and the potential to be doubly
marginalised. The traditional markers are important and as a result of colonisation need to be protected, but Māori who do not closely align with conventional markers can be perceived to be somehow lacking, not authentically Māori. The establishment of hierarchies of identity (these can be imposed from outside or inside the group) becomes problematic as the markers fix and legitimate an essentialised Māori identity that does not take into account the diverse experiences and complexities of identity formation or embrace a contemporary Māori identity. As Moewaka Barnes reminds us “ambiguity may not be comfortable, but it is not necessarily a liability.”

The representation of Māori identity in film must include an analysis of regimes of power. An example of the power to define who is Māori and who is not is demonstrated in the following personal account. My tupuna, supposedly living a Pākehā ‘lifestyle’ that was perceived to be a civilising force, was counted as European under a classification of ‘living arrangements’ in a local census even though her identity as Māori was taken for granted by her hapū. Power relations, dominant ideologies, social, political and economic factors influence identity formation and these are important in Kaupapa Māori analysis.

Gender also is an integral part of identity formation requiring an examination of representations of Māori men and women. As Irwin explains, the experiences of Māori men and women, while sharing similarities, are not the same. Mana tāne and mana wahine are important concepts to raise here. In this context mana tāne affirms the strength and dignity of Māori men in their diversity and complexity. It challenges dominant and negative constructions of Māori men that were raised.

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670 Borell, "Living in the City Ain’t So Bad: Cultural Identity for Young Maori in South Auckland," 195.
672 Ibid.
673 Ibid., 54.
674 Pihama, "Re-Presenting Maori: Broadcasting and Knowledge Selections [Paper]."
earlier and in particular the ‘warrior’ image that relates to Hokowhitu’s analysis of dominant constructions of Māori hypermasculinity.\textsuperscript{677}

Ani Mikaere examines the role of Māori women and explains that it has been consistently undermined by colonisation. She proposes that “Māori women must develop theories which not only identify the sources of our oppression but which also enable us to both recognise and nurture our collective female strength.”\textsuperscript{678}

Mana wahine in this context is founded on the need to affirm and uplift Māori women in a “context where our roles and status have been systematically diminished.”\textsuperscript{679} Māori women’s voices are powerful and mana wahine affirms the strength and prestige of Māori women. Te Awekotuku describes mana wahine Māori in the following extract.

\begin{quote}
[Mana Wahine Māori] reclaiming and celebrating what we have been, and what we will become…a determining of ourselves as Māori women…a rediscovery and renaming of that essential strength and harmony.\textsuperscript{680}
\end{quote}

Mana wahine theory is skilfully articulated by theorists including Tuhiwai Smith, Mikaere, Irwin, Te Awekotuku and Glynnis Paraha. Pihama writes extensively in this area and reveals ongoing colonial discourses and ideologies that situate Māori women as inferior and subordinate to men; a practice that must be challenged by both men and women.\textsuperscript{681} For example, the concept of whānau affirms Māori women and does not reflect a colonial patriarchal structure of family where women are subordinate.\textsuperscript{682} These writings offer ways to examine representations of Māori women in film, how they are positioned and the nature of their roles. In regards to the filmmaking environment, mana wahine requires analysis of the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{677} Hokowhitu, "Tackling Māori Masculinity: A Colonial Genealogy of Savagery and Sport," 259-84.
\item \textsuperscript{679} Pihama, "Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring Our Voices: Mana Wahine as a Kaupapa Māori Theoretical Framework", 255.
\item \textsuperscript{680} Ngahuia Awekotuku, Mana Wahine Maori (Auckland: New Women’s Press, 1991), 10.
\item \textsuperscript{681} Pihama, "Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring Our Voices: Mana Wahine as a Kaupapa Māori Theoretical Framework", 258.
\item \textsuperscript{682} Ibid., 271-72.
\end{itemize}
inclusion or exclusion of Māori women’s realities in film texts and how
customes, policy and processes may support or hinder the participation of Māori
women in filmmaking.

Language

A key element that sits within the theme of Māori voices is the expression of the
Māori voice through te reo Māori, the Māori language. Unlike some articulations
of Kaupapa Māori theory, te reo Māori and tikanga are separated in this
theoretical framework. Tikanga is included in the second theme of Māori
worldviews and concepts. This separation is not intended to diminish the
interconnectedness of language and culture but allows focused analyses of these
two elements in film texts.

Kaupapa Māori theory takes for granted the validity of te reo Māori and the
position of importance it holds. Te reo Māori is perceived to be sacred as it is a
gift from the gods to our tūpuna and has a mauri and wairua.683 Makere Stewart-
Harawira explains that te reo Māori reaches beyond being a vehicle of simple
human communication, connecting humanity to the environment, the cosmos and
spiritual realms.684 The Māori language provides sustenance, a way to
conceptualise and affirm our place and experiences in the world regardless of
individual fluency. It is important to add that fluency in te reo Māori is not a
prerequisite to taking a position that validates te reo Māori.

Colonial suppression of te reo Māori has echoes in other indigenous sites. For
instance, indigenous Hawai’ian (Kanaka Ma’oli), Aboriginal Australians, Inuit,
First Nations and Native Americans also endured attempts by the coloniser to
systematically eradicate their language and culture. The saturation of the English
language via institutions such as education and, more recently, mass media has
resulted in a variety of indigenous responses. Māori identified media and, in
particular, radio and television as important sites to promote te reo Māori and
Māori culture. This was part of a wider strategy to nurture and protect the

683 Barlow, Tikanga Whakaaro: Key Concepts in Māori Culture, 114.
684 Makere Stewart-Harawira, The New Imperial Order: Indigenous Responses to Globalization
language that gained momentum in the 1970s and 1980s. It eventuated in the establishment of Aotearoa TV Network in 1996 and, more recently Māori Television. Māori television plays a vital role in the revitalisation and legitimisation of te reo Māori.

Shohat and Stam reveal Eurocentric hierarchies of power in language, most evident in the Hollywood cinematic context, where English is the prevailing language. Through the telling of ‘American’ stories and those of other cultures in the English language, Hollywood “ventriloquizes” the world. Shohat and Stam explain that the promotion and validation of the English language directly benefits Hollywood and is more generally an expression of Anglo-American power. They argue that this indirectly invalidates the languages of indigenous cultures and diminishes these types of linguistic possibilities in cinematic contexts.685 Hollywood language is then associated with ‘real’ cinema just as European languages are perceived to be more cinematic.686 They explain:

The neo-colonial situation, in which the Hollywood language becomes the model of “real” cinema, has as its linguistic corollary the view of European languages as inherently more “cinematic” than others.687

Hierarchies of language and the concomitant power relations are relevant to a cinematic context in Aotearoa where the use of te reo Māori in feature films continues to be severely limited. To date Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti remains the only dramatic feature length film entirely in the Māori language. The film not only honours and legitimises te reo Māori but establishes it as a cinematic language of depth and beauty.688 This is examined in more depth in the case study on Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti in Chapter Seven.

Comparisons with indigenous films such as Smoke Signals (1998), referred to as the first Native American feature film, directed by Chris Eyre and written by Sherman Alexie followed by The Business of Fancydancing (2002), directed and

686 Ibid.
687 Ibid., 193.
688 It is interesting that the secondary language used in the recently released Hollywood film Avatar is partially based on the sounds of te reo Māori.
written by Alexie reveal few indigenous linguistic references. In contrast, *Atanarjuat* is an Inuit production spoken entirely in the indigenous language, Inukitut, and like *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* is subtitled allowing non-speakers to follow the narrative. However, comparisons with countries including Australia, America and Canada may be misleading because of the variety of languages spoken by the indigenous peoples from those lands. In a personal interview Runningwater referred to the existence of over six hundred tribes in the United States; the diversity of language can be so distinct that intertribal understandings are not always possible. In contrast, te reo Māori, while recognising iwi and hapū dialectical differences, is understandable by speakers of Māori across iwi boundaries.

**Māori Worldviews and Concepts**

Māori worldviews and concepts are critical in Kaupapa Māori theory and incorporate a number of elements including tikanga and wairua. A previous definition of tikanga described its meaning as issues of principle that incorporate values, beliefs, concepts and practice. Tikanga is a comment on processes and practices as much as it is on fixed beliefs or knowledge. Rangimarie Pere describes tikanga as “customs that are seen to be right for a particular occasion.” Tikanga can embrace both traditional and more contemporary forms of knowledge and practice. Although there are iwi variations of tikanga this study explores broad concepts that can cross tribal boundaries.

Kaupapa Māori theory approaches to film take for granted the validity of tikanga and Māori worldviews and embraces its potential to inform film studies practically, conceptually and textually. Tikanga not only informs Barclay’s conceptualisation of Fourth Cinema but also the practice of filmmaking and exhibition. Raised earlier in this context was film exhibition that follow Māori

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690 Runningwater.

Barclay also discussed his application of tikanga in the day to day filming of *Ngati* in-depth and this will be covered in the following case study. An examination of filmmaking practices that are grounded in tikanga and Māori worldviews does not suggest that there is a set of rules to follow nor is it conducted in order to establish a hierarchy of Māori film practices. It is used here to cast light on how Māori filmmakers may choose to work. *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework* also makes explicit the unspoken ways of working, the accepted norms of dominant practices and inevitably involves struggle and compromise. It is my hope that an examination of these types of practices will also assist with their legitimation and validation.

As well as driving practice, Māori worldviews and concepts are incorporated into film texts. For example, Barclay refers to hui as a model that supports the idea of debate as circular rather than linear. The hui scene set in the local marae in *Ngati* represents this concept with long camera takes and pauses – where a multitude of diverse voices are given space regardless of the perceived status of the speakers. Textual readings informed by Māori worldviews offer energising insights. For example, Ocean Mercier provides key principles that draw on Kaupapa Māori to interrogate Māori film and in particular Taika Waititi’s two short films, *Two Cars, One Night* and *Tama Tu*, and feature film, *BOY*. In her analysis of the short films she employs aspects of Māori processes of encounter or pōwhiri that occur on the marae ātea (open space or courtyard in front of the meeting house) and inside the wharenui. The concomitant conventions of engagement encompass a number of elements including space, time, collective identity and whanaungatanga. She builds on this framework to explore *BOY* by employing five elements of pōwhiri: karanga (call of welcome), whaikōrero (speech, oratory), koha (gift, donation), harirū (greeting that includes the pressing
of noses), and kai (food). Mercier’s analysis offers insightful interpretations of the films specifically grounded in practices associated with pōwhiri.

**Wairua**

Wairua is frequently described as a critical component of Kaupapa Māori; Matiu Ratima argues that it is “lies at the heart of Kaupapa Māori.” Wairua is an important element in *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework* and sits within the theme of Māori worldviews and concepts. In this context wairua is defined as the spiritual dimension that extends beyond the tangible. Its inclusion is a reminder to heed Cherryl Waerea-i-te-rangi Smith’s challenge to Māori working in the academy to claim and centre Māori epistemologies and not leave them at the door in order to participate. Wairua is attributed to people, animals, fish, reptiles and birds; mauri being the elemental essence imparted by wairua. It is not uncommon for understandings of wairua to be connected solely to institutionalised religion. Wairua can encompass religious elements but is broader reaching in understandings and practices. For instance, karakia is frequently translated as prayer but has wider meanings that are transcendent in nature and are inadequately translated as incantations or chants. The application of karakia to describe public worship is seen by Williams as a modern interpretation. He writes that karakia is “particularly the ancient rites proper to every important matter in the life of the Māori.” Karakia has a number of functions and may have a specific ceremonial function, used for “protection, purification, ordination, and cleansing.” Karakia also provides a connection to the spiritual world. Smith discusses the colonisation of wairua by missionaries and ethnographers who frequently perceived it as primitive, superstitious and unscientific. She explains that this

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696 Ratima, “Peer Commentary, Making Space for Kaupapa Māori within the Academy.”
699 Williams, "A Dictionary of the Maori Language", 98.
700 Ibid.
701 Barlow, *Tikanga Whakaaro: Key Concepts in Māori Culture*, 37.
702 Ibid.
703 Smith, "Straying Beyond the Boundaries of Belief: Maori Epistemologies inside the Curriculum," 46.
resulted in Māori caution when translating aspects of our worldviews that are not easily transferable to Pākehā ways of knowing.704

Understanding and communicating wairua in a cinematic context is complex. Pitts describes the role spirituality played in filming Whale Rider and how it was publically articulated by some members of the production team. She argues that certain commentators including Claire Murdoch and Meaghan Morris were condescending in their responses.705 Māori express similar concerns, evident in the experiences of Tama Poata, scriptwriter of Ngati. He encountered Pākehā television staff who could not understand the spiritual significance expressed in his scripts.706 Referencing academic Rangihiroa Panoho, Barclay reflected on the ‘interiority’ or essence and the ‘exteriority’ of film in an attempt to conceptualise the intangible elements of wairua. Exteriority refers to the surface features in film including ceremonial processes, language, use of elders, attitudes to the land and presence of children. Interiority is more complex and relates to the unseen elements or spiritual essence residing in film. Barclay stresses the need to analyse Fourth Cinema in terms of interiority as there is a deeper level that needs our attention.707 He admits that this is difficult to communicate but requires legitimation.708 These sentiments are echoed by indigenous scholars and researchers including Moewaka Barnes and Aluli-Meyer. Moewaka Barnes speaks of the difficulties associated with “expressing spirituality as a part of indigenous worldviews, including its place in science and research.”709 She refers to Aluli Meyer’s description of the spiritual category as visible in expression but seldom written about and proposes that “these things are a part of our knowing, but they are not a part of the mainstream, legitimated ways of knowing.”710

704 Ibid.
705 Pitts, "Cross-Cultural Filmmaking in New Zealand National Cinema", 259-60.
706 Cairns and Martin, Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films, 126.
708 Ibid.
Documentary filmmaker Kahurangi Waititi applies the concepts of interiority and exteriority to describe the notion of a filmic space that allows for an inner essence or wairua (interiority). She explains that, through the physical application of kaupapa Māori and tikanga during the filmmaking processes, described as the exteriority, an interior space, or wairua is created.\(^{711}\) Although this teeters towards establishing a regime of film practice that could potentially exclude others from generating an inner space or essence it acknowledges the existence of wairua and conceptualises how it might be understood in film.

Cultural hegemony frames indigenous spirituality as exotic or superstitious. Wairua is not exoticised in *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework* but is legitimated as a complex and natural aspect of Māori realities that can also be conveyed through narrative.\(^{712}\) Recognising concepts of wairua in *Mauri* for example offers rich analyses and ways of understanding, some of which are felt rather than observed. Wairua is an important dimension in all things Māori. It is connected and contained in all the elements discussed in this chapter and I assert that its inclusion is a valid and important theoretical approach.

**Collectivity and Relationships**

Collectivity and relationships emphasises the importance of the collective without diminishing the role of the individual. Notions of collectivity and relationships are related to whānau, hapū and iwi. These concepts and social structures persist today despite efforts to undermine them through colonisation. For example, through numerous Acts of Parliament and Crown confiscations, raised in Chapter Two, Māori were alienated from communal land and resources, adversely affecting identity, health and social structures.

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\(^{712}\) Smith.
Whānau, Hapū and Iwi

Whānau is identified by some Kaupapa Māori theorists as a key element in Kaupapa Māori theory. Although the exact definition of whānau is debated amongst Māori communities the notion of whānau challenges the Eurocentric construction of the nuclear family. Here, the meaning of whānau is not premised on heteronormative behaviour. Whānau extends across generations encompassing many diverse forms ranging from whānau as kin (related by a common tupuna) and whānau as a group with a common purpose. Durie offers a more contemporary definition of whānau as encompassing a:

Variety of ‘non-traditional’ situations where Māori with similar interests, but not direct blood relationships, form a cohesive group. Adopting the metaphor and model of a whānau they refer to themselves as a whānau.

The diversity of whānau in contemporary society requires emphasis, as does the diversity of Māori identity. Genealogy may or may not be central to the groupings although as Pihama reminds us, Māori are all connected. A whānau model implies support, sustenance, mutual respect, loyalty, obligations and responsibilities. Although these complex structures and relationships were undermined by colonisation they offer a collective and collaborative model that is potentially empowering.

Within the whānau structure there are a number of individual rankings and associated obligations including that of kaumātua, tuakana (older sibling or cousin of the same gender) and teina (younger sibling or cousin of the same gender). Cruickshank identifies the tuakana/teina roles as relevant terms to Kaupapa Māori film theory as they provide a useful model for the mentoring and support roles

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715 Pihama, "Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring Our Voices: Mana Wahine as a Kaupapa Māori Theoretical Framework".
716 Tuakana and teina also refers to relationships between cousins.
taken on by more experienced and older filmmakers in support of younger Māori. The tuakana/teina model can also be applied to those with greater experience, regardless of age, who support emerging filmmakers. The model is used in a variety of circumstances; the Māori Language Commission has promoted a tuakana/teina (fluent speaker and learner) relationship to advance te reo Māori. I have extended the concept to include kaumātua, referring to respected elders of either gender. Don Selwyn is a noteworthy example. Throughout his career he championed emerging filmmakers and provided training and practical opportunities for Māori in theatre, television and film.

Filmmaker Kahurangi Waititi explains how whānau were central to her filming of kaumātua. Rather than employing a specialist film crew, Waititi’s whānau were enlisted and they also participated in the interviews. Waititi found that the crew possessed a depth of understanding about the kaupapa that enabled them to skilfully and respectfully negotiate the filming process. Whānau members of kaumātua were encouraged to be present at the interviews and ask and answer questions. An acute awareness of power relationships inherent in the interviewer/interviewee roles was one of the reasons why this approach was employed. It also recognises whānau structures and the related connections, roles and responsibilities. The involvement of relatives of the kaumātua in the storytelling attributed value to all whānau members and they supported the kaumātua by their presence. The practices employed by Waititi challenge orthodox filmmaking practices that promote an individual focus, as opposed to a collective worldview, and establish clearly delineated roles where only the interviewer is expected to ask questions.

Waititi’s experiences and practices as a Māori filmmaker are described in detail in her Master’s thesis Applying Kaupapa Māori Processes to Documentary Film, with particular reference to filming kaumātua who had served in the Māori

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717 Cruickshank, “From a Scary Black Bastard”, 75.
718 Ibid.
719 Examples of work include documenting the stories and experiences of her father and other kaumātua in the family.
720 Waititi, "Māori Documentary Film: Interiority and Exteriority."
Battalion at a reunion in Ōmapere in the Hokianga, in 2006.\textsuperscript{721} Waititi describes her dismay during the filming of the Ōmapere reunion. She witnessed the behaviour of film crews who were disrespectful to each other and to kaumātua by “forcing cameras and microphones into kaumatua (elders) faces and invading their space while in the process of a formal and emotional ceremony.”\textsuperscript{722} As a result of embarrassment through association, and the desire to act respectfully in accordance with Māori values, she left with her small film crew and filmed from a distant location.\textsuperscript{723} An earlier example is recounted by Barclay who was astonished when a BBC producer refused a request by Ngoi Pewhairangi (a well-known composer), to include friends and family during an interview. Again this highlights the differences between individual and collective worldviews where the former reinforces unequal power relations between the production team and interviewee. The decision by the BBC producer to exclude others may also have been based on an assumption that dominant filmmaking practice would achieve the best results. Barclay notes that the BBC got “token, shallow words.”\textsuperscript{724}

**Whakapapa and Whanaungatanga**

Whakapapa is the thread that identifies and connects whānau, hapū and iwi through a set of complex connections and interrelationships. Translating the concept of whakapapa into English as simply genealogy denies its complex meaning. Barlow writes that whakapapa is the “basis for the organisation of knowledge in respect of the creation and development of all things.”\textsuperscript{725} Pihama explains that whakapapa is more than a means of identification.

It is a spiritual connection that brings together all aspects of te ao Māori. Through whakapapa our links are identified. It is a means through which we are able to place ourselves not only in the world but in relationship to

\textsuperscript{721} Kahurangi Waititi, “Applying Kaupapa Māori Processes to Documentary Film” (M.A. Thesis, University of Waikato, 2007).
\textsuperscript{722} Ibid., 1.
\textsuperscript{723} Ibid., 1-2.
\textsuperscript{724} Barclay, *Our Own Image*, 12.
\textsuperscript{725} Barlow, *Tikanga Whakaaro: Key Concepts in Māori Culture*, 173.
each other...Whakapapa is an essential element of who we are and what it means to be Māori.\textsuperscript{726}

Joseph Te Rito describes whakapapa as a framework and methodology that provides understandings of identity including connections to family, land, stories and histories.\textsuperscript{727} Knowledge of whakapapa is passed on through the telling of stories, from generation to generation and is important in the transmission of histories. Whakapapa therefore acts as a mechanism of identity and communicates knowledge.\textsuperscript{728} Pihama writes that “whakapapa exists irrespective of our specific knowledge of its complexities, and for many Māori the search toward knowing those specificities can be fraught with complications.”\textsuperscript{729} I would emphasise that, for those who identify as Māori, these connections and relationships exist regardless of whether or not whakapapa is known.

Whakapapa embraces the concept of the collective where the individual is a member of a larger group. The associated obligations are not only to the living but to tūpuna and those yet to be born. However, the collective focus of whānau, hapū and iwi does not diminish the role of the individual who is acknowledged as an important part of the collective, each person possessing a mauri.

Whanaungatanga reinforces notions of support, obligations, accountability and responsibilities not only within whānau, hapū and iwi but also across Māori as a group. Loosely translated as relationships, Pere describes whanaungatanga as “kinship ties – extended family across the universe…based on ancestral, historical, traditional and spiritual ties.”\textsuperscript{730} Whanaungatanga reinforces expressions of Māori relationships generally.

The filmmakers included in the case studies recognise these relationships and their ability to strengthen and bond people and groups. For example, Mita’s

\textsuperscript{726} Pihama, “Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring Our Voices: Mana Wahine as a Kaupapa Māori Theoretical Framework”, 130.
\textsuperscript{728} Pihama, “Tihei Mauri Ora Honouring Our Voices: Mana Wahine as a Kaupapa Māori Theoretical Framework”, 129.
\textsuperscript{729} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{730} Pere, Te Wheke: A Celebration of Infinite Wisdom, 26.
philosophy to filmmaking is derived from understandings of whakapapa. When making the documentary *Karanga Hokianga* (1979) she acknowledged and was always aware of tūpuna from that area and their continuing presence as a part of the land and history.731 *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework* examines how whānau, hapū and iwi with the attendant relationships and connections are represented in film and the practices of filmmaking. Textually an interrogation of these concepts in *Mauri* offers deeper understandings of the relationships and complex negotiations that take place between the key Māori protagonists.

**Kotahitanga**

A related concept to whakapapa and whanaungatanga, with the attendant notions of collectivity that is useful to raise here is kotahitanga. Barlow explains that kotahitanga was the notion of tribal unity and was seen as “fundamental to our ancestors… [where] everybody contributed to the well-being of the tribe.”732 Kotahitanga was mentioned earlier in the context of its historical relevance as a movement to unify iwi against the effects of colonisation. In a more contemporary sense this unity of purpose can drive a collective Māori vision and is a powerful unification strategy to effect change. In reference to *Kōhanga Reo*, Hingangaroa Smith reinforces the power of the collective vision saying:

> Its [shared, collective vision/philosophy] power is in its ability to articulate and connect with Māori aspirations, politically, socially, economically and culturally. A powerful vision is able to provide impetus and direction to struggle.733

Without a concerted and united Māori effort it is doubtful that the television series *E Tipu e Rea* or the recent Te Paepae Ataata initiative would have eventuated.

731 Horrocks, “New Zealand Film Makers at the Auckland City Art Gallery: Merata Mita.” *Karanga Hokianga* is a documentary directed and produced by Mita covering the visit of a papal delegation to a Northland community.

732 Barlow, *Tikanga Whakaaro: Key Concepts in Māori Culture*, 57.

Responsibility and Accountability

Whānau, whanaungatanga and whakapapa provide understandings of collectivity, support and relationships that convey understandings of wider obligations and accountabilities. These accountabilities and responsibilities are expressed by many Māori filmmakers; Barclay, Mita, Pihama and Kahi, to name a few. They speak of the need to honourably present alternative images of Māori, te reo Māori and tikanga on the screen. This is echoed by many indigenous filmmakers globally. Native American, Hopi filmmaker, Victor Masayesva Jr. explains that, as an indigenous filmmaker he has a strong sense of accountability. This accountability extends beyond the individual to include not only immediate family and tribal groupings but also local and global indigenous communities.

A sense of responsibility and accountability in part emerges from the ‘burden of representation’ that Shohat and Stam demonstrate unjustly sits with the oppressed. Barclay frequently challenged dominant constructions of Māori in film and spoke of the responsibility he felt to present alternative images centred in Māori perspectives. As a Māori filmmaker Mita referred to the burden she carried that required her to satisfy the demands and expectations of funders and also Māori as a collective group. Beyond these immediate requirements was her belief that Māori filmmakers must seek to correct the past and destroy stereotypes. Parr believes there is a responsibility when representing Māori arguing that “if you don’t get it right, you are going to distort our history.” Similar sentiments were expressed by Māori documentary makers who thought it was their responsibility to not only present alternative images of Māori but also use the opportunity to educate non-Māori viewers and challenge Pākehā hegemony.

734 Jacquelyn Kilpatrick, Celluloid Indians: Native Americans and Film (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 209.
735 Shohat and Stam, Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media, 182.
736 Barclay, Our Own Image.
737 Mita, “The Soul and the Image,” 49.
739 Barnes, “Kanohi Kite a Te Maori: Maori Documentaries, Negotiating the Complexities of Television in Aotearoa”.

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A concern raised by indigenous filmmakers including Aboriginal Australian filmmaker Ivan Sen and director Lee Tamahori is the expectation that they speak for an entire ethnic group – in this case all Aboriginal or Māori communities.\textsuperscript{740} In an education setting Shelley Hoani reflects on similar expectations and recalls her discomfort when bombarded with questions that were not asked of her as an individual, but as an assumed representative of all Māori.\textsuperscript{741} This is reminiscent of Memmi’s “mark of the plural,” the colonial hegemonic construction of the colonised as a collective undifferentiated entity.\textsuperscript{742} For indigenous filmmakers the additional expectation that they automatically represent an entire community brings responsibility, reflecting the burden of representation that sits firmly with the oppressed. This raises an earlier point discussed in Chapter One as to what limits we place on ourselves in order to guard against hegemonic constructions; what is seeable and sayable?

Addressing another incarnation of hegemony at work is the expectation (by both the coloniser and the colonised) that indigenous filmmakers must only represent those things that are perceived to be ‘authentically’ indigenous. This is illustrated by the concern Barclay expressed regarding a tendency for some Māori to judge whether the “thinking is Māori enough” in his programmes.\textsuperscript{743} In addition, the expectation that indigenous work will conform to dominant notions of an indigenous authenticity was recently evidenced in a review of \textit{BOY}. Reviewer for \textit{Variety}, Peter Debruge writes that:

Apart from the local vistas and mostly Māori cast, Waititi has scrubbed away all culturally specific traits from his growing-up-Kiwi comedy, concentrating instead on the same things that might infatuate any other 1984-era moppet; a schoolyard crush, a missing dad and, above all, Michael Jackson. Without that arthouse-ready anthropological edge, however, “Boy’s” prospects look more cult than commercial.\textsuperscript{744}

\textsuperscript{741} Hoani, "Mātauranga Māori: Illusive to the Point of Distraction," 98.
\textsuperscript{742} Albert Memmi, \textit{The Coloniser and the Colonised} (New York: Orion Press, 1990), 151.
\textsuperscript{743} Barclay.
Debruge does not elaborate on what those cultural markers might look like but tropes of the noble savage exotic Other remain powerfully embedded in colonial thinking; with the haka and poi globally perceived to be distinct and traditional markers of an authentic Māori identity. Taika’s response to the *Variety* review was to raise the problematic expectation that Māori “just walk around doing hakas all day.” By situating *BOY* in a landscape that is not perceived to be ‘Māori enough’ or ‘traditional’ as well as drawing on global influences, such as Michael Jackson, confronts and confounds dominant hegemonic constructions of the Other, an Other who must always be entirely knowable and bound within regimes of truth.

Hall identifies the need for diverse ethnicities that speak from distinct histories, place, culture and experiences but warns against confining this position to notions of ‘ethnic’ artist or filmmaker. Filmmakers such as Tamahori and Taika Waititi - well before the release of *BOY*, have expressed concerns at the limiting nature of expectations. Sen feared that his work was expected to always contain a message. Waititi spoke of not wanting to be “boxed as the indigenous filmmaker guy” and this was one of the reasons why he made *Eagle vs Shark*. During the release of *Eagle vs Shark* Barclay raised an important point. He acknowledged Waititi’s talent but lamented the potential loss to Māori cinema (although Waititi returned to make *BOY*) saying “we’ll snatch you back to do something in our world which is your world too.” Barclay’s comment needs to be understood within the historical context of Māori filmmaking and the associated struggles and lack of opportunities. There is pressure on talented Māori filmmakers who may have some potential to access funding to make films that express Māori experiences and worldviews.

Unlike Sen, who openly identifies as Aboriginal, Taika Waititi publicly avoids claiming a Māori identity. In her examination of *Two Cars, One Night*, Smith

746 Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 71.
750 Barry Barclay, "Interview with Barry Barclay," (Te Ahi Kaa, Radio New Zealand National, 16 December 2007).
proposes that by eluding statements of identity and emphasising the notion of ‘universal’ themes in his films Waititi “seeks to carve out a space within prevailing norms that define Māori artists in relation to the implicitly Pākehā category of art in general.”\textsuperscript{751} In doing so, the category of ‘Māori artist’ is rendered diverse and subtly alters “prevailing norms of cultural and artistic identity.”\textsuperscript{752} This strategy prevaricates against imposed boundaries and as Smith suggests “maintains the spirit of creativity.”\textsuperscript{753}

Reluctance on the part of filmmakers to limit their creative potential due to an imposed category of ‘indigenous artist’ is apparent throughout the generations of Māori filmmakers. However, recent articulations may be evidence of an increasing resistance to fit within an ‘indigenous film’ category, broader opportunities globally as well as a direct response to dominant notions of authenticity; the review by Debruge is one example. This promotes a notion of creative fluidity and the necessity to challenge imposed boundaries and expectations. At the same time it can be a risky enterprise given our marginalised status and could give the filmmakers and those who follow nowhere to sit.

**Kaitiakitanga**

Responsibility extends to the protection of Māori images captured on film and is compPELLingly articulated by Māori filmmakers. In particular, Barclay advances the concept of kaitiakitanga or guardianship that refers to these types of film as taonga. Barclay proposes that:

It is Māori and Māori alone who bring ‘Māori spiritual guardianship’ to the task, a spiritual guardianship that brings not only privileges and honour but duties and dangers as well.\textsuperscript{754}

Barclay was visionary in recognising the need for a film archiving arrangement founded on tikanga and kaupapa Māori principles. Early in his filmmaking career,

\textsuperscript{751} Jo Smith, "Bicultural Temporalities," in *Place: Local Knowledge and New Media Practice*, ed. Danny Butt, Jon Bywater, and Nova Paul (2008), 49.
\textsuperscript{752} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{753} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{754} Barclay, *Mana Tuturu: Maori Treasures & Intellectual Property Rights*, 123.
while working on *Tangata Whenua*, he became deeply aware of the gift people gave when filmed. Barclay explains that “overnight we become custodians of other people’s spirits.”\(^{755}\) The safe housing of Māori images became critical and Barclay was instrumental in drafting the Taonga Māori Deposit Agreement used by the New Zealand Film Archive: Ngā Kaitiaki o ngā Taonga Whitiahua (NZFA) established in 1981.\(^{756}\) It provides a mechanism that offers inter-generational protection and guardianship of archival material exercised by a named kaitiaki (guardian) on “behalf of the original participants in the film.”\(^{757}\) The agreement extends beyond the fifty year copyright period and is a significant development in archival and protection arrangements. Pihama also challenges the inadequacies of conventional legal formats where copyright only extends to fifty years. She explains that this further alienates Māori from their knowledge and taonga because once out of copyright or outside the legally defined time frame of fifty years these things can be exploited.\(^{758}\)

These issues are covered in-depth in Barclay’s book *Mana Tuturu*, which examines the related responsibilities surrounding the protection and honouring of indigenous intellectual and spiritual treasures, including film images of Māori and indigenous peoples globally. He asserts that the solution is to look to indigenous law, tikanga Māori and related concepts and responsibilities and not attempt to accommodate Māori law within existing western legal frameworks.\(^{759}\)

**Challenge and Resistance**

The development of Kaupapa Māori film theory calls for critical analyses of racism, colonisation and hegemonic representations of Māori. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a key element contained in this theme as it guarantees rights and protection. For the purposes of this study tino rangatiratanga is not separated out from Te Tiriti because this highlights the wider issues of self-determination and sovereignty that sit alongside the Crown’s responsibilities and obligations to Māori as tāngata

\(^{755}\) ———, *Our Own Image*, 84.

\(^{756}\) The archive holds film and video related materials dated from 1895 to the present.


\(^{759}\) Barclay, *Mana Tuturu: Maori Treasures & Intellectual Property Rights*. 

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whenua. Pihama describes tino rangatiratanga as the “right to define and control what it means to be Māori in Aotearoa.” In education, for example, tino rangatiratanga underpinned the development of Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa.

Not only does Te Tiriti establish a relationship and agreement between Māori and the Crown, it is viewed by many Māori as a binding document that did not cede sovereignty, although it needs to be acknowledged that relationships with Te Tiriti vary between iwi. Jackson explains that:

The Treaty is not an illusion of political authority, it is a reaffirmation of the rights of Māori to determine their own lives.

Māori advocacy for the Crown to meet its Te Tiriti obligations is particularly evidenced in broadcasting but is equally relevant to film. This demands that attention is given to the fundamental right of Māori to represent ourselves in a society that promotes a homogenous national identity and receive equitable access to film production. In film this is evidenced in the Waitangi Tribunal claim WAI 748 that identifies a number of breaches of Te Tiriti and argues that Māori have a “fundamental right to tell their own stories in ways which Māori deem consistent with their own culture” (Clause 15). The claimants point out that the wording of the New Zealand Film Commission Act relates broadly to New Zealand film and content and does not mention Te Tiriti or Māori. They cogently argue that this does not guarantee or recognise Māori rights to access NZFC resources in a “manner and at a level which accords with their status as Māori and Treaty of Waitangi partner” (Clause 16).

The desire to have a strong Māori voice and the opportunity to exercise this is a recurring theme throughout the history of film in Aotearoa. In the 1980s Te Manu

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761 Ibid., 126.
763 Not all iwi signed Te Tiriti e.g. Tūhoe.
765 Barclay, “Statement of Claim, Wai 748 (New Zealand Film Commission).”
Aute, a national Māori organisation in Aotearoa was established, comprised of Māori working in media production. They challenged colonial constructions of Māori and argued that:

Every culture has a right and a responsibility to present its own culture to its own people. That responsibility is so fundamental it cannot be left in the hands of outsiders, nor be usurped by them.766

In the broader context this relates to tino rangatiratanga in Article Two of Te Tiriti and Article Three that guarantees equity for all citizens of Aotearoa. Barclay argues that for a truly indigenous voice to develop Māori must not only control the funding on discreet projects but control the wider decision-making as to how that funding is distributed to Māori.767 An early proposal to the NZFC to establish a Māori film fund articulated the need for a strong Māori voice and the opportunity to speak for ourselves, “lest others speak for us.”768 One strategy to achieve some level of Māori involvement and access to film funding that reflects these contexts, along with Te Tiriti and Māori rights as tāngata whenua resulted in Te Paepae Ataata. Māori aspirations that reflect Te Tiriti and tino rangatiratanga are directly relevant to an interrogation of film texts. For example, Ngati expresses tino rangatiratanga at an iwi level. The community’s fight to keep the freezing works open for instance, can be read as an allegory representing Māori aspirations for self-determination. Russell Bishop argues that the pursuit of social justice is a task that everyone must engage in and he challenges an interpretation of tino rangatiratanga as leaving Māori alone to solve their own problems. Power relationships must be addressed and it is the sharing of strength and wealth that result in empowerment and change.769 In cinematic environments a critical analysis of power operating through structures, policies and institutional practices is required in the hope of revealing and seeking Māori focused solutions. I refer to an earlier discussion on institutional racism and Foucault’s notion of governmentality. Social, political and economic structures and processes may not only produce inequities but also reproduce inequities by neglect or absence of

766 ________, Our Own Image, 7.
767 ________, "Interview with Barry Barclay."
769 Bishop, Collaborative Research Stories, Whakawhanaungatanga, 18.
conditions. Questions must be asked including, who has the power to decide what stories are selected and where do Māori sit in decision-making processes e.g. advisory or management? What types of stories are selected to be funded?

Tuhiwai Smith makes an important observation on this point. She identifies that the NZFC supported films *Whale Rider* and *Once Were Warriors* as stories that progress a particular and powerful stereotype, where one romanticises and the other demonises.\(^{770}\)

Further critique of power in Kaupapa Māori film theory would examine who benefits from films that tell Māori stories. For example, where Māori sit in a film’s production structure, whether Māori are in decision-making roles and did Māori involvement lead to further opportunities to progress both individual aspirations and more broadly, Māori filmmaking aspirations? Shohat and Stam examine filmmaking environments in Hollywood by asking similar questions. They coin the term “Blaxploitaion” that describes American films made in the early 1970s with African American content and actors, but predominantly benefiting “Whites.”\(^{771}\) They also suggest that films such as *Dances with Wolves* indirectly opened doors for Native American filmmakers but did not result in major institutional changes in the industry.\(^{772}\)

A further issue that needs to be examined is the casting of Māori in lead and supporting roles in relation to opportunities for Māori actors to develop their talent. American cinematic practices described by Shohat and Stam reveal that major Native American roles and those of the Other were frequently played by white American actors but seldom the other way around.\(^{773}\) This represents power and the assumption that the dominant white American group is ‘beyond ethnicity’ – the norm.\(^{774}\) Although the practice of casting non-Māori actors in specified Māori roles is not as widespread in Aotearoa cinema, it has occurred; in *Ngati* one of the main Māori characters (Greg) is played by a non-Māori. Given the limited opportunities Māori actors have to play key cinematic roles in Aotearoa, an

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\(^{770}\) Smith.


\(^{772}\) Ibid., 195.

\(^{773}\) Ibid., 189.

\(^{774}\) Ibid., 190.
examination of decision-making is required that may illuminate investment pressures on indigenous filmmakers to have a ‘universal star’ or non-Māori cast in a leading role to cater to the dominant Pākehā audience.

**Acts of cinematic resistance and challenge**

The theme of struggle resonates throughout this study and Sheilagh Walker describes resistance as a part of our struggle and survival as Māori.\(^{775}\) Resistance in the form of ‘writing back’ and ‘talking back’ to theories that serve the interests of the dominant group is applicable to Kaupapa Māori film theory. Ginsburg identifies similar possibilities in film, video and television arguing that these formats offer unique ways for ‘talking back’ to the infinite amount of programmes that assert the beliefs, values and language of the dominant culture.\(^{776}\) Indigenous media can provide a global site where indigenous peoples imagine and share their aspirations of self-determination, experiences and histories. The craft of storytelling in film is also utilised by indigenous peoples as a site of resistance in the struggle for justice; this is consistent with Fourth Cinema’s suggestion that film can be employed for wider purposes by acting as a court of appeal where issues of justice are aired.\(^{777}\) Tuhiwai Smith cites the work of Stuart Rintoul and explains that stories can incorporate memories of injustices that teach and explain issues of racism and colonisation.\(^{778}\) Counter stories are therefore a powerful form of resistance with the potential to capture the complexities of an indigenous culture, experiences and worldviews, offering solutions.\(^{779}\)

Māori can construct, subvert, invent and imagine from a Māori place where the telling of stories centred in Māori worldviews and realities can be a creative, sustaining and political act. Mita’s hope is that the telling of these types of stories will create a dent in prevailing misrepresentations.\(^{780}\) This raises issues of equity.

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\(^{775}\) Sheilagh Walker, "Kia Tau Te Rangimarie: Kaupapa Maori Theory as a Resistance against the Construction of Maori as the Other" (M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 1996), 123.


\(^{778}\) Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 144.

\(^{779}\) Ibid., 150-51.

to address Māori cinematic aspirations and reinforces the need for the existence of a substantial body of Māori films.

Other visual media technologies, including broadcasting, digital formats and the internet, are employed by indigenous peoples for similar purposes to those described above. Earlier, examples were given of the Inuit digital feature film, *Atanarjuat, The Fast Runner* and the proliferation of indigenous television in Aotearoa, Canada and Australia.\(^{781}\) Barclay refers to the potential of the digital revolution in film because of its lower costs but suggests that it is difficult to achieve the expectations of audiences used to bigger budgets and production values.\(^{782}\) Although recent technologies have not supplanted the promise of film they offer important sites of resistance and transformation. Local strategies include web-based technologies to create and disseminate Māori centred stories and experiences. Recently the short film, *Te Mana Motuhake o Tūhoe* was posted on YouTube with over eleven thousand hits, engendering heated debate.\(^{783}\) This reinforces Hingangaroa Smith’s assertion that resistance against oppression and exploitation requires multiple and complex responses in the Aotearoa context. He explains:

> That is, multiply formed oppressions need to be responded to [with] multiply formed resistance strategies. In this sense the shape of the ‘struggle’ with which Māori are engaged, is neither singular, nor lineal, nor instrumental.\(^{784}\)

Adding to the complexity of indigenous representation are the implications of globalisation and the commodification of the indigenous for marketing purposes. Here nothing is sacred. Steven Jackson and Hokowhitu argue that this requires new spaces to emerge where the indigenous can be affirmed and “recognised for

\(^{782}\) Barclay, "Address to Ngā Aho Whakaari Conference."
\(^{783}\) The short film incorporates strong visual images of Tūhoe and raises issues of Crown oppression and Tūhoe sovereignty.
\(^{784}\) Smith, "Indigenous Struggle for the Transformation of Education and Schooling [Keynote Address]."

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what they are or wish to be.” The misappropriation of the haka is only one example of the types of challenges indigenous communities face as the ability to have control over images, taonga and knowledge becomes increasingly difficult in light of new technologies, global capitalism and transnational advertising campaigns.

In developing *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework* I also drew on feminist theory to inform a discussion of power relations and in particular notions of the ‘gaze.’ Laura Mulvey’s essay, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* brought the gaze into film theory when she examined aspects of the gendered gaze from the point-of-view of the camera, the spectator, and the characters within the film. She argues that these gazes are controlled by and cater to males with females becoming the objects of male desires. As a result, the only option for female viewers is to mimic the male gaze or not enjoy the film. Mulvey’s theory was critiqued by some feminist writers who argued that notions of active female spectatorship meant that women could enjoy these types of mainstream films without becoming disempowered. In her discussion on feminist film theory Corrin Columpar critiques notions of the male gaze. She argues that it informed feminist theory but failed to account for “key determinants of social power and position.” For example, the male gaze in feminist interpretations does not consistently examine or account for issues of white privilege, race and ethnicity.

Related variations of the gaze emerging from other studies, including the ethnographic gaze and the imperial gaze, also reveal relationships between power and visuality that are distinct with their own ideological and institutional origins. In her examination of the imperial gaze, Kaplan argues that it “reflects the assumption that the white western subject is central, much as the male gaze

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786 Ibid. They explain that the Adidas branding of the All Blacks doing the haka became a global marketing campaign that included television advertisements and billboards.
assumes the centrality of the male subject.” Kaplan, Looking for the Other: Feminist Film and the Imperial Gaze, 78-79. It is the recognition of power within a context of colonialism and associated issues of racism that are the most pertinent in a discussion of the gaze in Kaupapa Māori film theory. I refer to the gaze in this study as the colonial gaze.

The colonial gaze has powerful parallels with Foucault’s governmentality and his concept of the Panopticon, a structure that allows for continual surveillance by the authorities of prison inmates where control is reinforced by self-regulation. Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 195-228. Notions of surveillance are not new to Māori; Mita likened the history of Māori representation by Pākehā to that of being examined through a microscope. Martin, “Through a Maori Lens,” 30-31. In the context of colonisation, power resides with the dominant group observing and examining the indigenous Other who is frequently judged deficient. Gaze in the context of this study emerges from a distinctly indigenous perspective where Māori have experienced persistent and multiple forms of the colonial or Pākehā gaze. It represents power and privilege and is also an objectifying gaze.

The colonial gaze, evidenced in cinematic representations, perpetuates hegemonic constructions of Māori. For example, the exotic Other in the early 20th century films Hinemoa, and The Romance of Hine-Moa and more recently The Piano, which presents Māori as the erotic native Other and a backdrop to the ‘real’ action. This is reinforced by Pihama who refers to The Piano as an example of the colonial gaze that is “uncritical and unchallenging of stereotypes that have been paraded continuously as ‘the way we were’.” Pihama, “Are Films Dangerous? A Maori Woman’s Perspective on the Piano,” 240.

Resisting the colonial gaze in Kaupapa Māori film theory can be applied to multiple aspects of film analysis; in particular the intentions of Māori filmmakers to challenge and disrupt power relationships. It is directly relevant to the film texts through an examination of the camera’s point-of-view, character interactions and stances, for example. Of interest is a study by Karina Elieraas who examines the colonial gaze through an analysis of photographic images of subaltern women. She reveals gestures of resistance through aggressive and hostile looks, referring

791 Kaplan, Looking for the Other: Feminist Film and the Imperial Gaze, 78-79.
792 Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 195-228.
to Bhabha’s “threatened return of the look.” Challenging or returning the colonial gaze in Aotearoa is a strategy that is not only illustrated in counter hegemonic constructions of Māori but may manifest in less obvious cinematic representations elaborated on in the case studies. This resonates with Bhabha’s ‘mimicry’ or ‘sly civility’ that can threaten, subvert and potentially rupture and reveal colonial discourses.

Transformation

Kaupapa Māori film theory connects resistance to the possibilities of transformation, founded on emancipatory principles. Freire’s emphasis on social transformation and liberation resonates with indigenous peoples. He proposes that change requires critical analysis of injustices and then transformative action to address the situation in a way that does not simply replace or reverse oppressive regimes. Through this process, the oppressed also enable the humanisation of the oppressor. Transformation can take multiple forms; the following are only indications of its potential in film.

The notion of transformation is not new for Māori; our tupuna enacted this in a number of ways. Tuhiwai Smith reminds us of stories told about our tūpuna who overcame major obstacles. Kaupapa Māori when applied to film is concerned with transforming the Māori image by creating healthy, counter hegemonic and inspirational cinematic sites where Māori become fully human. Tuhiwai Smith explains that film of this type can offer solutions and alternative interpretations.

Probably the first thing is that stories can offer hope. And then through the hope you find solutions and people are probably way more creative in doing that than governments and agencies.

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796 Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 86.
798 Ibid., 29.
799 Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 145.
800 ———.
Early on indigenous peoples recognised the potential of media technologies to create new opportunities for imagining, capturing how we see ourselves in the world, and acting as a catalyst for change that heals rather than harms. Tuhiai Smith writes that “coming to know the past” through creating indigenous and alternative memories can transform our “colonized views of our own history (as written by the West).”

The visual media plays a unique and dynamic role in addressing indigenous aspirations, illustrated by Ginsburg’s explanation of how visual technologies played a vital role in sustaining and revitalising Inuit and First Nations.

Hingangaroa Smith suggests that transformation must be won in two major areas; “a confrontation with the coloniser and a confrontation with ‘ourselves’.” He proposes that an indigenous counter hegemonic strategy is to critically ‘conscientise’ ourselves, to ‘free up’ thinking to imagine a utopian vision free from oppression. He argues that a:

Critical element in the ‘revolution’ has to be the struggle for our minds – the freeing of the indigenous mind from the grip of dominant hegemony.

Hingangaroa Smith regards this as a different process to decolonisation although the two have similar outcomes. A number of definitions exist for the notion of decolonisation. They include: the divesting of colonial power; the process of how Māori have and continue to engage with and critique colonialism at all levels and; the reclaiming of our histories. Moewaka Barnes offers further interpretations:

One notion is that our minds are freed of the clutter that another culture has introduced; another is that we challenge our assumptions particularly of ourselves and our position.

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801 Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 34-35.
803 Smith, "Indigenous Struggle for the Transformation of Education and Schooling [Keynote Address]."
804 Ibid.
Given the power dynamics at play, Māori theorists acknowledge that a confrontation with ourselves or decolonisation alone will not free us from oppression, reinforcing the need for multiple formations of responses.\(^{806}\) In a cinematic context Mita argues that the screen must be demystified and decolonised.\(^{807}\) This requires the filmmaker to clear the “colonial refuse out of oneself to make a new start,” offer positive imaging and destroy prevailing stereotypes.\(^{808}\) In this context decolonising means ridding the mind of another culture’s clutter (this is problematic because it supposes we can ascertain what is authentically ours) and repopulating the screen with counter hegemonic and positive images. Cree filmmaker Loretta Todd puts forward her interpretation of Mita’s strategy to decolonise the screen. She argues that, like the land, water and air, the cinematic screen has been colonised in image and story, detrimentally affecting indigenous dreams and visions. In order to decolonise the screen a critique of western notions of space and time is required and indigenous filmmakers must draw on indigenous concepts and the traditions of storytelling.\(^{809}\)

The notion of ‘indigenising’ is expressed by indigenous peoples globally and is useful to a discussion on transformation in a cinematic context. Tuhiwai Smith writes that to indigenise means to “centre a politics of indigenous identity and indigenous cultural action.”\(^{810}\) Identifying as indigenist in outlook Ward Churchill describes this as the prioritising of indigeneity and critiquing and conceptualising alternatives to the “social, political, economic, and philosophical status quo.”\(^{811}\) Indigenising the screen is advanced by both Mita and Selwyn. This implies Māori control and the cinematic centring of Māori and Māori aspirations that will in turn transform the screen. Mita refers to this as a form of power that has global implications saying:

\(^{806}\) Ibid., 135.
\(^{807}\) Mita, “The Soul and the Image,” 49.
\(^{808}\) Ibid.
\(^{809}\) Loretta Todd, “Decolonising the Screen,” in Te Pua, ed. Leonie Pihama (Tāmaki Makaurau: Puawaitanga, Te Whare Waananga o Tamaki Makaurau, Special Issue, 2000), 19-22.
\(^{810}\) Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 146.
For 90 minutes or so we have the capability of indigenising the screen in any part of the world our films are shown. This represents power and is one reason we make films which are uniquely and distinctly Māori.812

In the context of Kaupapa Māori film theory, transformation is founded on emancipatory principles involving the privileging and centring of indigeneity as a strategic intent of the filmmaker. Selwyn indigenised the screen with Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēneti by purposefully employing predominantly Māori actors, incorporating tikanga and centring a formal style of te reo Māori.813 This challenged the hegemony of the English language as both superior and inherently more cinematic than indigenous languages and transformed assumptions as to what constitutes ‘real’ cinema.814

Runningwater proposes that film can become a “creative tradition with native people” allowing for the existence of an indigenous creativity and knowledge in interpreting the use of film from an indigenous perspective.815 Processes of film production were transformed by Māori filmmakers who brought new knowledge and built on existing knowledge founded in Māori worldviews and practices. A local example is Barclay’s approach to filmmaking during the Tangata Whenua series. He transformed dominant filmmaking practices by making technology work in a way that enhanced the kaupapa and maintained the integrity of the production.816 He adapted camera and sound technology so it was consistent with his desire to be a listener rather than an intruder.817 These innovations are grounded in Māori knowledge, practices and processes. They reinforce the status of kōrero or conversation, sit comfortably with the concept of hui as a circular rather than linear process, and emphasise the importance of storytelling. However, as Barclay explained this was a difficult task given the use of “technology within a climate which so often demands precision and answers.”818 Filmmakers including Mita, Selwyn and Barclay successfully trained Māori in the craft of

813 “Selwyn, Don [Filmed Presentation],” (Waka Week: University of Waikato, 2003).
814 Shohat and Stam, Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media, 193.
816 Barclay, “Interview with Barry Barclay.”
817 ———, “Address to Ngā Aho Whakaari Conference.”
818 ———, Our Own Image, 9.
filmmaking, transforming the makeup of the cinematic and broadcasting workforce. Their achievements and creative collaborations influenced Māori and those that work with Māori.

Film that speaks, claims, validates and names from a Māori base can be transformative for an audience, both Māori and non-Māori. It is relevant to the shaping of Māori identities and the identities of our children and youth. A Kaupapa Māori cinematic space has the potential to transform notions of the Māori place in film and filmmaking environments.

The Development of Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework

I arrived at the six key themes that now form the key thematic categories of Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework: 1) Māori voices; (2) Māori worldviews and concepts; (3) collectivity and relationships, (4) responsibility and accountability; (5) challenge and resistance and; (6) transformation.

In Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework I have articulated the central concern/s that each thematic category addresses. Themes two and three each have two central concerns; one addresses the film text and the other addresses the filmmaking processes, theme four is concerned with the filmmakers, and theme five has three central concerns, the film text; the filmmaking environments and the filmmakers respectively. The importance of the filmmakers, the filmmaking processes and the context in Aotearoa emerged strongly from the analysis of the literature and interviews. As a result, filmmaking practices, values, people and processes are made explicit in the theoretical framework. The related elements provide an idea of some of the broad areas that I considered under each theme and broad questions are included to provide examples of some of the questions I posed as part of the analytical process. Although the categories and elements are separated out for analytical purposes
and proved to be a useful and practical way of applying the framework to the films, they are interconnected.

The theoretical framework expressed here is not intended to provide an exhaustive list of categories, elements or questions. Neither is it meant to provide a checklist or set of criteria that films must meet in order to establish a Māori ‘authenticity’ or be called Māori. It is important to bear in mind that the key themes were informed by both the literature and the films examined in the case studies. Therefore, further categories and elements may arise from analyses of other films to inform future iterations of this theoretical framework.
Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic Categories</th>
<th>Central Concerns</th>
<th>Elements May Include</th>
<th>Broad Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Māori Voices</td>
<td>Where the Māori voice is located in the film and the nature of that voice.</td>
<td>Te reo Māori, storytelling, histories, experiences, mana wahine, mana tane and identity.</td>
<td>Who is telling the story? Is the Māori voice centred? Is the Māori voice privileged? What is the nature of that voice? Is the story told from Māori perspectives? Does the film primarily speak to a Māori audience? Are Māori positioned as the ‘norm’ or Other? Does the film legitimate, honour and reflect Māori experiences, histories, aspirations and identity in their diversity and complexity? In what ways?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Māori Worldviews and Concepts</td>
<td>How Māori worldviews and concepts are represented in the film.</td>
<td>Māori concepts, worldviews and practices e.g. Tikanga and wairua</td>
<td>How does the film represent Māori worldviews and practices? Are Māori worldviews central to the film or peripheral? How does it honour and legitimate or does it marginalise, exoticise or appropriate? Are Māori worldviews expressed in filmmaking practices and how is this manifested? What challenges, struggles and solutions are associated with this?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The application of Māori worldviews and practices in the making of films.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) Collectivity and Relationships</td>
<td>How notions of collectivity and the associated roles and obligations are expressed in the film. The application of collectivity and that nature of the relationships in the filmmaking processes.</td>
<td>Social structures (whānau, hapū and iwi), collectivity, kotahitanga and connectivity (tūpuna, whanaungatanga and whakapapa).</td>
<td>Does the film express notions of individuality or collectivity? How does the film express notions of collectivity and inter-relationships? What role do Māori concepts of collectivity and connectivity play in advancing Māori aspirations in film?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Responsibility and Accountability (This category relates to the filmmakers rather than the films)</td>
<td>Examine expressions of responsibility and accountability as articulated by Māori filmmakers. Wider obligations and accountabilities that may extend to indigenous peoples globally. Kaitiakitanga.</td>
<td>What motivations/aspirations are articulated by the filmmaker? Are notions of accountabilities and responsibilities that extend beyond the individual expressed? What concerns are raised by filmmakers who identify as Māori?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(5) Challenge and Resistance</td>
<td>The ways in which challenge and resistance are represented in the film. The power dynamics occurring in the filmmaking environment.</td>
<td>Colonisation, racism, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, self-determination, power and counter hegemonic representations.</td>
<td>In what ways does the film depict issues of oppression, colonisation and racism? Does it challenge issues of oppression, colonisation and racism? How does it engage with, challenge or disrupt hegemonic discourses and stereotypes? What power dynamics are occurring in the filmmaking environments? For example, who are the beneficiaries of Crown funding? Do dominant structures and funding policies support of hinder the telling of stories?</td>
</tr>
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</table>
The ways in which challenge and resistance are articulated by the filmmaker.

| (6) Transformation | The transformative potential of the film. | Solutions, representations that are liberatory, validating and inspirational. Decolonisation and indigenising the screen. | Does the film offer liberatory and inspirational representations of Māori? Does it affirm and uplift? Does it challenge us to rethink internalised hegemonies? Does it offer hope and solutions? Does it attempt to bring about change? How is this expressed by the filmmaker or manifested in the film text? | told and driven by Māori? What stories get told? Are Māori cinematic aspirations addressed within the wider issues of Crown obligations, Te Tiriti and Māori status as tāngata whenua? What struggles and achievements are articulated by Māori filmmakers involved in realising Māori cinematic aspirations? |
Summary

Kaupapa Māori theory, as discussed here, embraces the diversity and complexities of Māori experiences and understandings of the world. Because of this diversity and the expansiveness of Māori concepts, the potential of Kaupapa Māori is also vast and should not be limited to particular notions of Māori worldviews. Kaupapa Māori film theory is an evolving field and my intention, in adding to its development, is not to be definitive or prescriptive.

The themes I developed and used to structure this chapter initially emerged from analyses and reviews of literature, film texts and interviews. This in turn provided the initial basis for the shape and content of Kia Manawatū: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework. The framework drew on the thinking and writings of filmmakers, Kaupapa Māori theorists and practitioners and was tested as part of the analytical process. The categories and associated elements were developed specifically for a cinematic application with the expectation that they will be expanded on and developed. My intention is that the application of Kaupapa Māori to a cinematic context will further develop and legitimise Māori centred film theory. It asserts our right to construct theory from our own base in order to make sense of the world. Crucial to this discussion is an analysis of unequal power relations and colonisation. Kia Manawatū: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework has the potential to be applied to other areas, for example, literature and television.

Kia Manawatū: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework encompasses an analysis of both filmmaking environments and film texts, offering a richness of understandings, informed by Māori worldviews and experiences. Interrogating film texts in isolation from the environments in which they are produced is unlikely to uncover unequal power relations and colonial practices. Any analysis must also be cognisant of the complexities of film production including the numerous restrictions of state and commercial imperatives that may or may not be consistent with the aspirations of Māori filmmakers. However, as history reveals,
these tensions have been opportunistically and strategically responded to by Māori filmmakers in order to produce programmes driven by Māori agendas and creative visions.

Decolonisation, indigenising and transformation are applicable to film and particularly to the possibilities and potential of Māori driven film. With resistance comes hope, signalling the celebratory aspect of Kaupapa Māori film theory and the work, sense of purpose and commitment of many indigenous filmmakers. With this in mind the act of filmmaking is a celebration not only of survival but of creativity and achievement in adverse circumstances. In the following chapter, *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework* is applied in the case studies to illuminate filmmaking processes and to interrogate the films *Ngati, Mauri* and *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*.
Chapter Five

Ngati: Barry Barclay

Introduction to the Case Studies

I use the concept ‘ko wai koe’, discussed in my introduction, as a structural reference for the following three case studies. Therefore, each case study begins with a pepeha type format that gives a brief personal history followed by an overview of the work history of each of the filmmakers. This allows for personal insights and reflections on the filmmakers’ lives and work history, providing a context for the analyses of Ngati, Mauri and Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti using Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework.

*Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework* provided the framework for the textual analysis of the three films in the case studies. I did not want to make other theories fit when Kaupapa Māori works perfectly well as it articulates Māori understandings and experiences offering both a richness and complexity of analysis. Although the framework contains categories and elements that follow a sequence it is not ordered hierarchically and while analysis follows this order in the case studies it is done for structural reasons. In addition, each film is not required to cover each category.

Analysing these three films requires an examination of the broader environments operating at the time such as funding and where data is available, the circumstances and processes involved in the films’ inception through to its production and exhibition. Describing filmmaking practices highlights the additional complexities facing Māori who attempt to incorporate Māori worldviews and tikanga in the processes of production. *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework* works best in discussion and engagement.
with the filmmakers and it is possible to cover the circumstances and filmmaking practices in reasonable detail in the Ngati case study because Barclay spoke and wrote about his experiences. However, because of limited information, the same level of analysis is not possible for Mauri and Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti.

The case studies begin with Barclay, his work in film and television, and in particular examines his first dramatic feature film, Ngati (1987).

**Brief Personal Background**

Filmmaker, writer, theorist and thinker, Barry Barclay, described himself as having Ngāti Apa and Pākehā heritage.819

Barclay (1944 - 2008) grew up in the rural countryside of the Wairarapa near Martinborough, Aotearoa. His upbringing gave him an early understanding of class issues and racism that he explains provided a “touchstone for every single major film” he was involved in.820 Barclay attended secondary school run by the Marist Brothers and left Aotearoa in the early 1960s to join the monastic order, eventually studying for the Roman Catholic priesthood. He left the priesthood, returning to Aotearoa when he was 21 and worked in radio prior to becoming a filmmaker.

**Television and Filmmaking History**

The following account gives an overview of Barclay’s work experience in film and television, providing further context for an analysis of his first feature film, Ngati. Barclay moved from radio and began his filmmaking career in his twenties when he was employed by a small independent film company, Visicom Films. Here he received his grounding in film as a cameraman making educational films for the farming community.821 When the company closed down because of a lack

819 ———, "Interview with Barry Barclay."
820 Roger Horrocks, "New Zealand Film Makers at the Auckland City Art Gallery: Barry Barclay," (Auckland City Art Gallery, 6 December 1984).
821 Barclay, "Interview with Barry Barclay."
of work, Barclay moved to Pacific Films. Under the tutelage of producer John O’Shea he worked on trade films, television commercials and documentaries produced by Pacific Films. The *Tangata Whenua* television series marked Barclay’s significance and uniqueness as a Māori filmmaker.

*Tangata Whenua* (1974) was directed by Barclay and produced by O’Shea. The series gives voice to Māori histories, knowledge and culture that challenge hegemonic representations and discourses. It marked a major milestone in both Barclay’s life and work.\(^{822}\) His involvement in Ngā Tamatoa, the Māori rights activist group formed in the 1970s, and the making of the series supported and clarified Barclay’s thinking about the potential of film. He found that the visual media provided a site where he could combine and prioritise personal expressions of Māori identity with his wider commitment to Māori aspirations.\(^{823}\) These experiences also created a foundation that allowed Barclay to build and expand on his analysis of racism and colonisation in Aotearoa.\(^{824}\)

At the time of making the series Barclay decided not to speak about his involvement with Ngā Tamatoa to his immediate colleagues because the investment in the series was essentially from the State via the broadcaster. Barclay anticipated that his membership in a group that resisted and challenged Pākehā hegemony could result in strong reactions from both the State and individuals, thereby jeopardising the production.\(^{825}\) Barclay’s reluctance can be understood in a framework of governmentality and institutional racism where governments and institutions normalise and legitimate certain forms of knowledge, understandings and practice that maintains the advantages of the dominant group.\(^{826}\)

*Tangata Whenua* was exceptional not only because it put Māori perspectives on the screen with little outside interpretation, but also because of the principles that guided the actual making of the series. Barclay’s transformational filming methods founded on Māori worldviews and concepts such as hui and the status of

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822 Horrocks, "New Zealand Film Makers at the Auckland City Art Gallery: Barry Barclay."
824 Barclay, "Amongst Landscapes,” 123.
825 Ibid.
conversation were introduced in Chapter Four. Utilising the concept of hui Barclay refused to impose expectations as to how a story should be told.827 This was in direct contrast to dominant documentary practice that imposed a linear approach and an authoritative Pākehā voice. The concept of hui interprets debate as cyclical where everyone has a right to speak regardless of status or who is perceived to be the expert. Quick solutions are not the aim and it is the substance of the kōrero that is valued as it works towards collective advancement. This reflects Barclay’s commitment to foregrounding the voices of iwi, hapū and whānau, rather than outside experts. Barclay also valued the ‘talking head’ that in his experience was generally disliked by producers and audiences.828 As a result, voice-over is used infrequently in the series and the role of the interviewer – Michael King, is primarily one of a listener who does not dominate the narrative. This reflects Barclay’s desire to avoid the use of a ‘hero’ presenter or ‘hero’ interviewer because he believed the community should tell the story.829 At the time Barclay was largely unaware that his methods were seen to be a “drastic break with tradition.”830

Barclay explains that both King and the aspirations of Ngā Tamatoa were significant contributors to the subtext where issues of justice, tino rangatiratanga and sovereignty ideologically underpin the series, reflecting Barclay’s wider concerns and political analysis.831 Barclay recalls filming the transportation of a shed through the streets of Porirua to its final resting place where it would function as a marae. He explains that this symbolised “the return of the people, to the place where they stood” and the wider struggles of tāngata whenua to reclaim sovereignty.832

_Tangata Whenua_ did not attempt to overtly explain or offer simple solutions which may have led to the criticism that the series raised more questions than it answered.833 However, _Tangata Whenua_ was very popular at the time and remains

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827 Barclay, _Our Own Image_, 14.
828 Ibid., 9-18.
829 _______, “Address to Ngā Aho Whakaari Conference.”
830 ———, _Our Own Image_, 59.
832 Ibid., 122.
833 ———, _Our Own Image_, 14.
an important and unique series. Its archival significance makes it additionally significant because the work contains a unique body of knowledge that was generously shared by Māori on film. This becomes increasingly precious with the passing of time and reinforces the status of film as taonga. In a personal interview Barclay reflected on how this directly influences decisions made in the field and during post-production:

It’s an amazing thing to think that while you’re filming, this will turn quite rapidly into taonga and having that in mind you shoot different sorts of things and you keep them on the screen for a little bit longer. It changes the way you handle your material.\(^8\)

As discussed in Chapter Four, Barclay’s growing concern about kaitiakitanga or guardianship of these taonga and how they should be preserved for future generations emerged during the *Tangata Whenua* series. His thinking was to develop and become central to his theoretical writings and future work in film.

*Tangata Whenua* marked the establishment of creative Māori/Pākehā control in a collaborative environment where the production and technical crew assisted with the development of ideas, procedures and practices to incorporate and uphold Māori worldviews, aspirations and concepts.\(^8\) These practices broke new ground establishing possible workable alternatives for future filmmakers in the practical craft of filmmaking. Barclay’s philosophy, that fostered the creation a Māori cinematic space with minimal direction from the production team, established the potential of film and television to honourably voice Māori aspirations and issues of self-determination. Knowledge of tikanga and Māori culture that Barclay openly spoke of learning during the making of the series, his innovative filmmaking practices combined with a probing intelligence, created a foundation for his future work and theoretical engagement with filmmaking.

After making the *Tangata Whenua* series Barclay spoke of deliberately moving away from Māori projects. His reasoning was based on the concern that his

\(^8\)\textit{Our Own Image}, 17.
success with the series would make him a safe bet for funders resulting in a lack of opportunities for emerging filmmakers. Barclay describes the projects he directed during this time as Pākehā stories.\footnote{Barry Barclay, “Lecture on the Neglected Miracle,” (Film, Television & Media Studies: University of Auckland, 1998).} Included in this category are the lesser known experimental documentaries and dramas for television, *The Town that Lost a Miracle* (1972), *Ashes* (1975) and *Autumn Fires* (1977), all produced by John O’Shea. *The Town that Lost a Miracle* records the memories of locals and visitors to Ōpononi, a small community in Northland where Ōpo the dolphin swam in the harbour. Barclay included Māori knowledge that conveys the deep significance of Ōpo’s arrival, offering viewers interpretations beyond the prevailing Pākehā experience. Barclay directed and scripted *Ashes*, a drama using T.S. Elliot’s poem *Ash Wednesday* as a linking device. The drama follows the lives of a priest and three women, building on the theme of resignation. *Autumn Fires* is set in the Hokianga where an elderly Pākehā woman recounts stories of her life to her nephew. Slowly paced and visually beautiful it includes memories of romance and thoughts on spirituality.\footnote{Horrocks, "New Zealand Film Makers at the Auckland City Art Gallery: Barry Barclay."}

Barclay also directed the documentary *Aku Mahi Whatu Maori/My Art of Maori Weaving* (1977) that celebrates and examines the skills of weavers Rangimarie Hetet and Rangituatahi Te Kanawa. The documentary runs for thirty minutes, was made for television and supported by the QE II Arts Council.\footnote{New Zealand Film Archive, Personal Email Correspondence, October 2010.} As with the *Tangata Whenua* series, the documentary was committed to centring Māori voices without the use of an interpretative or dominant Pākehā voice. *Aku Mahi Whatu Maori/My Art of Maori Weaving* is an example of film as taonga because it is a valuable record of two extraordinary weavers who share their knowledge and practice.

Throughout his career Barclay was concerned with indigenous global issues and actively sought to establish connections.\footnote{Barry Barclay, “Lecture on the Neglected Miracle,” (Film, Television & Media Studies: University of Auckland, 1998).} In the late 1970s and early 1980s he worked on projects overseas and helped to raise funds to film the relocation of half-a-million farming families in Sri Lanka as the result of the Mahaweli River
Project. This resulted in the unfinished film *Mahaweli* (1979). Barclay was co-director and co-scriptwriter with John O’Shea as producer. Rory O’Shea, who had previously worked with Barclay on numerous productions, was a cameraman. Barclay’s increasing concerns about guardianship and the related issues of intellectual copyright and patents led him to develop the film project *The Neglected Miracle* (1985). The film would become his first full length feature documentary. *The Neglected Miracle* explores genetic plant resources, patents and ownership from the perspectives of marginalised and indigenous peoples battling transnational seed corporations. Issues of sovereignty and rights raised in the *Tangata Whenua* series are expressed on a global scale. Barclay’s articulation of genetic exploitation was visionary and expressed indigenous and Māori struggles before the full significance was realised. The issues raised in the film encouraged Māori to lodge the Wai 262 claim, related to indigenous flora and fauna and the wider issues of cultural and intellectual property rights, with the Waitangi Tribunal in 1991.

Seeking to ensure multiple voices were heard in *The Neglected Miracle*, Barclay incorporated Māori concepts that had governed the making of the *Tangata Whenua* series. The incorporation of hui and marae principles allowed a space for anyone to speak with honesty and Barclay ensured that there was minimal intervention from the crew and director. Challenging dominant filmmaking practices he also advanced concepts of whānau and collectivity when he undertook group interviews. Barclay believed that this supported and enhanced the interviews because of positive group dynamics as well as increasing the participants’ confidence because they were surrounded by family and friends. This is reflected in Kahurangi Waititi’s philosophy to film practices discussed in Chapter Four where whānau members were encouraged to be included and contribute to interviews with kaumātua; a practice grounded in Māori concepts of collectivity and relationships. After working overseas on film projects Barclay

840 Horrocks, “New Zealand Film Makers at the Auckland City Art Gallery: Barry Barclay.”
841 Ibid.
842 Independent News Scoop, "Poroporoaki: Barry Barclay,”
844 ———, *Our Own Image*, 11-12.
845 Waititi, “Māori Documentary Film: Interiority and Exteriority.”
returned to Aotearoa in the mid-1980s. He was disappointed to find that after the hope offered by the *Tangata Whenua* series there was little progress in Māori film and broadcasting opportunities. As a result, he advocated for Māori aspirations in film and television with renewed determination.

In 1987 Barclay directed the documentary *Te Urewera* about the Urewera National Park in the iwi territory of Tūhoe. It was one of six in a series of documentaries on National Parks promoted by the Natural History Unit of TVNZ. Barclay’s commitment to establish opportunities for Māori in film and television resulted in his desire to employ and train Māori crew, a commitment he carried over to the making of *Ngāti*. Although training funds were available to upskill current TVNZ staff he had to justify his case to management. Barclay was confronted with Pākehā hegemony that refused to acknowledge the need to apply Māori expertise and specialist knowledge to filmmaking environments. Approval came too late as the Māori crew members were rostered to cover the Pope’s visit and Barclay expressed anger at the lost opportunities.

Barclay’s application of Māori concepts to film practice and his determination to address aspirations of tino rangatiratanga remained at the core of his filmmaking endeavours. Building on his earlier methods, Barclay requested a longer pre-production schedule for *Te Urewera* to allow adequate time to talk with Tūhoe elders. He compensated for this by a shorter filming schedule. Barclay’s sense of collectivity and community led him to track down and interview a range of people including those he describes as minor characters. Working with producer Neil Harraway and cameraman Swami Hansa, Barclay deliberately centred the stories of the mana whenua – Tūhoe - and their association with the land. Rather than celebrating National Parks, *Te Urewera* celebrates Tūhoe and the generational relationships with Te Urewera. The documentary raises issues of Māori alienation from land through Pākehā laws that include the establishment of much of Te Urewera as a National Park and the associated policies that restricted Māori

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846 Horrocks, "New Zealand Film Makers at the Auckland City Art Gallery: Barry Barclay."
848 Ibid., 116.
849 ———, *Our Own Image*, 40.
850 Ibid.
851 Ibid., 11.
access. By adapting film practices to support a Māori kaupapa the material collected is unique and evident in interviews on Tūhoe rongoā, histories and connections with the land.852 Complaints resulted from viewers who were angry, demanding a more familiar and less threatening focus on nature rather than a reminder that Māori inhabit the land and continue to express aspirations of sovereignty.853

The making of Ngati (1987) allowed Barclay to expand and transfer his film practices and philosophies, honed in the making of documentaries, to feature length dramatic film. This will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter but it is important to raise the theme of self-determination that occurs in Ngati in relation to Barclay’s wider body of work. Stuart Murray who examines Barclay’s filmmaking proposes that “though Ngati and The Neglected Miracle are films that differ in many ways, they are united by the core concerns of legitimacy and self-determination.”854 Indeed, both Māori and indigenous aspirations globally create an important context within which Barclay’s thinking and work must be located. He frequently referred to the synergies between indigenous global communities and Māori communities which informed his development of Fourth Cinema.855

The international success of Ngati helped Barclay raise funds for Te Rua (1991) which he wrote and directed, with John O’Shea as producer. Te Rua centres Barclay’s ongoing advocacy of kaitiakitanga, indigenous self-determination and issues of justice. The story traverses rural Aotearoa to Berlin as it follows a Māori hapū seeking to recover carvings stolen generations earlier which are housed in the basement of a German museum. Murray reveals that there is some “irony in the fact that it was a European funding source that kick-started the idea of the new film.”856 Te Rua conveys the differences between Māori and non-Māori values, laws and worldviews pertaining to guardianship and ownership respectively. Te Rua is also concerned with conflicting individual and collective values and priorities occurring within indigenous communities. As importantly, the film

852 Ibid., 10-11.
853 ———, “Amongst Landscapes,” 117.
856 Murray, Images of Dignity: Barry Barclay and Fourth Cinema, 71.
reveals power imbalances expressed through individuals, institutions and the State. At one point a lead Māori character Rewi, played by Wi Kuki Kaa, climbs a ladder in an attempt to physically elevate his position in the face of the impending force of the State. The attempt to repatriate the stolen carvings fails but an agreement is reached returning kaitiakitanga or spiritual guardianship to the hapū. Barclay explains that the film involves notions of copyright and sharing but for this to occur on a meaningful level “the dignity of guardianship needs to be given to the people who originated the material.”

Te Rua was not as successful as Ngati and Barclay believed that it was “universally loathed outside Māoridom.” Structural and technical deficiencies can make Te Rua confusing and disjointed at times; for example, there is substantial cross-cutting between the narratives and underdevelopment of certain plots and themes. Despite this, the lack of success, in part, may be due to Barclay’s refusal to ‘talk out’ to a non-Māori audience (the film speaks primarily to an indigenous audience) and explain Māori concepts and worldviews in substantial detail. Also, the overt challenge to dominant western belief systems, the uncovering of unjust legal regimes and the exposure of power imbalances may have created unease amongst a western audience used to seeing their viewpoints represented and validated. Barclay recalls that some Pākehā reactions to Te Rua were angry or defensive because they believed they were poorly represented and portrayed as spiritually deficient. Te Rua was not released in Germany even though pre-sales were arranged. Shelton, the NZFC Marketing Director at the time, believes that, in part, this was due to the negative representations of the German characters. Murray proposes that Barclay’s films became increasingly political after Ngati, expressing Barclay’s growing concerns with indigenous issues.

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859 Murray, Images of Dignity: Barry Barclay and Fourth Cinema, 76.
860 Tuckett, “Camera on the Shore.”
862 Lindsay Shelton, NZFC Marketing Director (1979-2001), Personal Interview, February 2011.
The commitment to indigenous politics of self-determination and justice led Barclay to make the feature length historical docu-drama *The Feathers of Peace* (2000). The docu-drama was inspired by Michael King’s book *Moriori: A People Rediscovered* (1989). It tells the story of the Moriori of Rekohu (Chatham Islands) from the 1790s to the 1870s and their almost total demise through enforced slavery and land confiscations, firstly through British invasion and later with the arrival of Māori from Ngāti Tama and Ngāti Mutunga iwi.

The film was written and directed by Barclay with Don Selwyn as executive producer. The script sat with the NZFC for approximately six years and was eventually commissioned when NZOA and TV One decided to broadcast an authorial series, consisting of one-off documentaries made by senior directors. As a result of the NZOA ‘Māori quota’ requirement, lobbied for by Māori and led by Barclay, a Māori programme had to be included in the series. Barclay believed that while he was not undermining the script it would not have been accepted without the quota. The *Feathers of Peace* was shot on digital video on a very small budget. Barclay was aware that he had to satisfy two audiences – the general or mainstream audience and the Māori/indigenous audience. He strategically found ways to maintain the integrity of the Māori voice by utilising the concept of *poroporākī* (farewell to the dead) and simultaneously positioning the film to appeal to a general audience through detailed historical references. Barclay describes this as a story tactic that embraces two worlds which is driven by funding and broadcasting requirements. I have retained his following account almost in its entirety as it offers a unique understanding of his strategic and practical approach to solving this dilemma in the making of *The Feathers of Peace*:

One was for the general audience to the western sort of mind…The kind of detail I chose was historically impeccable. It’s in the history as the western mind understands it. It was written somewhere and it had dates to it and there were records. So, I constructed the whole vision using that material because that would be safe to the western eye. But from the

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865 Barclay.
866 Ibid.
Māori eye, I don’t know that that counts. We will respond to that too but there’s another thing. For me that was summed up when somebody said..."Well it’s poroporakī." …somehow you embrace all those details, you salute them as part of our view, as part of the past and you pay tribute to them, and tomorrow there’s a new dawn coming. Now, in the actual way the story was told for that poroporakī feel, I wanted it dignified. I slowed the whole thing down, I gave it a solemnity and on the other hand I got lots of concrete detail on the historical level. Maybe that’s an example of how on a major topic one shapes things…absolutely completely differently if you were making it just for an indigenous audience. I think I would have made it so amazingly differently if I knew it was going to be shown only to Māori and shown perhaps amongst our near cousins in the Pacific or indigenous people in Canada and so on. I would have had another landscape of storytelling open up altogether…when you want to make a film in the mainstream, for general audiences, the need is to come up with some kind of formula or some kind of story tactic. You could almost call it [the] embracing of both worlds.867

*The Feathers of Peace* makes visible and challenges the injustices of colonisation and invasion. Of relevance is Stephen Turner’s notion of a ‘cinema of justice’ where a form of justice can be witnessed and brought into historical consciousness that which is lost or rendered invisible by dominant discourses.868 He proposes that *The Feathers of Peace* acts in this capacity; as a ‘cinema of justice’ or a popular court of appeal with the potential to realise justice.869 Turner’s ‘cinema of justice’ fits with Kaupapa Māori film theory as it identifies indigenous storytelling in film as a potential site of resistance in the struggle for justice; a site where the experiences of the colonised are voiced. While *The Feathers of Peace* is provocative and portrays Māori as invaders, it offers an analogy to the British invasion of Aotearoa and the subsequent colonisation and near extinction of the Māori population. In this sense Barclay employs film for wider indigenous purposes by acting as a court of appeal where issues of justice are aired, witnessed

867 Ibid.
and adjudicated. This supports the powerful potential of film as a site that can uncover the injustices of the past and educate on issues of racism and colonisation.

Additionally The Feathers of Peace challenges and resists hegemonic constructions of Māori physicality. Barclay intentionally offered an alternative construction to the Māori male ‘warrior’ depicted in Once Were Warriors because like Hokowhitu felt it gained hegemonic consent from many Māori men. The Māori ‘warrior’ in The Feathers of Peace is brutal and ruthless, far removed from the stylised sleek images in Once Were Warriors.

The Kaipara Affair (2005) is another documentary made under the NZOA ‘Māori quota’ and screened on TV One. It was written and directed by Barclay with Selwyn as producer. On one level it is concerned with over-fishing, fishing rights in the Kaipara Harbour and tensions between local and commercial fishermen. However, as Barclay explains the film is more about community action and sovereignty where Māori and Pākehā work together to effectively combine the western legal system and tikanga. In the making of the film Barclay says that the purpose was not to “educate people about sovereignty”, but to reveal aspects of a community that have not been seen in the media or on television. Barclay followed previously established practices grounded in Māori concepts such as beginning the shoot with a mihi (form of address, greeting) and screening an “advanced work-in-progress” to the community as well as taking the final film back to the community before it was delivered to the producer.

Barclay was more concerned with the complexity and integrity of the project rather than a fast delivery that reflects the imperatives of a commercial broadcasting model. Essentially he wanted to represent the community honourably, maintain the trust they placed in the filmmakers, and not be driven by

871 Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 144.
873 Barclay, “A Pistol on the Table.”
875 Barclay, “A Pistol on the Table.”
other agendas. These concerns were echoed when the film was completed. Barclay expressed his anger at the way the original documentary (133 minutes) that screened in the New Zealand Film Festival was cut to a 70 minute television version by the production team. He felt that the edited version removed the key “incident of two worlds coming together to engage with the state”, diminished the community and hapū involved, undermined tino rangatiratanga, marginalised women and made the documentary issue-driven. This is consistent with Barclay’s unorthodox approach to narrative filmmaking and frequent challenges to parameters imposed by broadcasters including the requirements to simplify stories and fit programmes into a broadcast schedule. Barclay had his name removed from the television version and wanted protocols developed so this did not occur again.

Another key milestone in 2005 was the publication of Barclay’s seminal writings on the protection of indigenous intellectual and spiritual treasures, Mana Tuturu, where kaitiakitanga was expanded on in-depth. He critiques western values and assumptions that underpin the Intellectual Property Laws arguing that they do not protect but exploit; in particular the laws fail to protect indigenous knowledge and taonga. Unsurprisingly, his analysis concerns not only Māori but the indigenous global community.

Consistent with Barclay’s observation of film as taonga that becomes increasingly precious with the passing of time is his notion of collective responsibilities. This led to the innovative project Rangiwhakaoma in the Wairarapa. The project was committed to training local Māori to film and archive conversations with iwi using inexpensive digital technologies. Barclay recognised the power of stories in conversation and saw their preservation as a priceless asset. His vision for the project was “about capturing our own stories on our own cameras, to capture them in our own day for our descendents.” Barclay continued to work on documentaries and prior to his death he was working with communities in the

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876 Ibid.
877 Ibid.
879 Barclay, Mana Tuturu: Maori Treasures & Intellectual Property Rights.
880 ________, "Address to Ngā Aho Whakaari Conference."
881 Ibid.

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Hokianga, borrowing camera equipment and keeping costs to a minimum with the intention of screening films locally.\textsuperscript{882}

Throughout his career Barclay received numerous awards both nationally and internationally. He was honoured as an Arts Foundation Laureate in 2004 for his contribution to cinema; awarded the New Zealand Order of Merit (2007) for his services to film and; was inducted into the Dreamspeakers 11\textsuperscript{th} Annual International Film Festival Walk of Honour.

Barclay frequently addressed ethical and political challenges during his filmmaking career. He developed innovative practices in film production and was continually seeking solutions that would maintain the integrity of his beliefs and worldviews. Key themes developed and explored throughout his work include issues of indigenous self-determination, justice and kaitiakitanga. These emerged during the making of the \textit{Tangata Whenua} series and were later developed and interrogated in his films, presentations and writings. For example, Barclay’s Fourth Cinema was conceptualised within Māori paradigms but encompasses indigenous filmmaking globally and the associated aspirations of cinematic self-determination. Fourth Cinema owes its development to Barclay’s broad experiences in filmmaking and his theoretical debates that challenge orthodoxies in the filmmaking environments, practice and narrative construction to ensure a safe space for a Māori cinematic voice. This brief biography offers a context for the following examination of \textit{Ngati}.

\textsuperscript{882} \textemdash, "Interview with Barry Barclay."
Ngati

Introduction

Ngati is chosen for particular consideration because it is the first dramatic feature film to be directed, written and predominantly made by Māori. Ngati is also described as the first feature film to be made by an indigenous filmmaker. As a result, Ngati was groundbreaking, transforming ideas of cinema in Aotearoa. It is one of a small handful of dramatic feature films that position Māori at its centre, enabling a Māori voice to be heard that is driven and creatively controlled by Māori. In addition, Ngati is a film of both national and international standing, winning a number of local and international awards including the Best Film Award at the Taormina Film Festival in Italy (1987). It was the first film from Aotearoa to be screened at the International Critics Week at the Cannes Film Festival. Ngati was directed by Barclay, produced by John O’Shea and written by Tama Poata. The film was shot in the small coastal communities of Tolaga Bay to Ruatoria on the East Coast of the North Island. Ngati was produced in 1986 and released in 1987.

Synopsis

Ngati is set in 1948 in the fictional rural, coastal town of Kapua (cloud). At this time, Aotearoa was experiencing major social changes, including the return of service men and women from World War II, the migration of Māori to the cities, the introduction of new technologies and the restructuring of industry. A factor impacting on community life for Māori occurred after World War II with the return of the Māori Battalion who had suffered severe loss of life.

The narrative structure of Ngati allows three interlocking stories of equal importance to unfold; (1) how the community, including Tione, come to terms

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883 Cairns and Martin, Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films, 102.
884 Ibid.
with young Ropata’s serious illness and eventual death; (2) the threat of the closure of the local freezing works and the community’s reaction and; (3) Greg Shaw’s personal journey as he discovers his whakapapa.

The first act sets time and place, introducing characters and the three plot lines. Greg, a young doctor from Australia arrives in Kapua. He is both arrogant and racist believing he is non-Māori. Greg stays with the Bennetts, a Pākehā family, who have lived in Kapua for years and are accepted as a part of the community by local Māori. Sally, a young Māori woman, returns home from the city only to clash with her father, Iwi, who is a leading member of the community. She finds it difficult to accept traditional Māori healing methods. Her twelve year old brother, Ropata, is dying from leukaemia and is supported by his loyal friend Tione. Lured by increased financial returns farmers are sending stock to outside freezing works rather than the local works, jeopardising its economic viability. Scenes revolving around the closure of the freezing works, the main employer in the area, highlight the serious effect this would have on the economic base of the community.

In the middle section Tione begins to come to terms with Ropata’s impending death. Ropata is emotionally supported by tohunga, Uncle Eru. Greg begins to find his place amongst the community but it is not until later in the film that he discovers his Māori whakapapa. Sally settles into the community although the relationship with her father remains strained. The owner of Crosby’s sheep station offers Iwi the job of managing the station, but not one of total control. At this point the characters are in a state of change and issues of identity, racism, and self-determination are raised.

In the final act resolution and reconciliation occur. After Ropata’s death, Tione begins a healing process with the support of Iwi, Greg, and in particular Uncle Eru. A hui on the marae finds a community solution to their economic problems led by Sally and supported by Iwi. Iwi is offered and accepts the management job at the station with total control. Greg, who finds out that his mother is Māori,

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886 Cairns and Martin, Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films, 105.
becomes committed to learning more about his whakapapa and heritage, promising to return to Kapua.

In contrast to dominant forms of storytelling where there are often one or two leading roles, there are a number of characters in *Ngati* who are of equal importance. These characters are all critical to the telling of the three stories. The three narrative strands are also of equal weight, indicative of Barclay’s commitment to Māori notions of collectivity that emphasise the importance of the collective without diminishing the role of the individual. The key themes can also be viewed in terms of individual and collective journeys within a Māori community setting. Greg’s journey is related to the discovery of his Māori identity that he was previously unaware of. Sally journeys back to her iwi and whānau where her relationship with her father matures and she finds her place in the community. The community experiences collective economic problems and work together to resolve them. Ropata journeys into death supported by his whānau and friends and is then grieved for by them. Tione particularly goes through a very personal journey as he comes to terms with his friend’s illness and death.

**The Production of Ngati**

*Ngati* was produced during a time of general resurgence in filmmaking in Aotearoa and at a time when Māori were advocating for access to film and television. Informed by his participation in *Nga Tamatoa*, membership in Te Manu Aute, and the innovative documentary practices created during the *Tangata Whenua* series, Barclay was well prepared to direct *Ngati*. There are four key elements that exemplify his preparedness: firstly his desire to give voice to a community as opposed to an individual; secondly his ability to adapt camera and sound technology so it was consistent with a desire to be a listener rather than an intruder and; thirdly a political analysis and in particular of identity, racism and colonisation. Finally, Barclay himself spoke of the knowledge he gained during the making of the *Tangata Whenua* series that translated into the making of his first feature film, *Ngati*. 
The word ‘ngāti’ is a tribal prefix, for example Ngāti Porou, and in this context suggests the inclusion of all iwi. Scripture Poata, of Ngāti Porou descent, deliberately used the word ‘ngāti’ to be inclusive of all Māori audiences. More specifically, the iwi of Ngāti Porou is central, as the story emerges from Poata’s experiences of being raised in a rural community with close connections to his iwi.

Poata spoke of ‘tramping the streets’ for years with the script until he eventually collaborated with Barclay and producer O’Shea. Poata is credited as Associate Producer and Scriptwriter. His role as associate producer and the agreement he made with O’Shea meant Poata had a continuing interest and ongoing decision-making role in Ngati. For Poata, his position was not a desire for status but to ensure that his story retained integrity.

As discussed, Ngati revolves around more than one event and does not privilege one storyline. Barclay speaks of the conflict that arose when a Hollywood scriptwriter argued that the plots were not linked. It was suggested that Barclay link two of the plots, Ropata’s illness and the closing of the freezing works, through pollution from the works that then affected Ropata when swimming in the local polluted bay. Barclay was angered by this criticism and explains that the linking in the narrative structure of Ngati is the community. He felt that the scriptwriter’s solution offered a pat linking device that conformed to current thinking as to what constituted a successful script. Despite Barclay’s efforts to reject and challenge dominant cinematic formats, he acknowledged the pressures that are applied to conform. Although referring to documentary, Barclay’s observation is relevant to dramatic film when he proposes that filmmakers need to be aware of what is being imposed in order to reject it. This approach offers Māori filmmakers possibilities that reach beyond dominant formats and worldviews.

887 Williams, "A Dictionary of the Maori Language ", 231.
888 Cairns and Martin, Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films, 125.
890 Cairns and Martin, Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films, 124.
891 Barclay, Our Own Image, 57.
892 ______.
Getting *Ngati* funded in a manner that was consistent with the kaupapa laid down by Barclay and Poata required a “series of complex negotiations with a variety of bodies.”[893] The kaupapa was overtly political and included: the intention to employ and train a substantial number of Māori crew; work in accordance with tikanga Māori and; produce a Māori driven film. Producer O’Shea was clear in his communications that Pākehā values would not be imposed on the development of the film. In his personal records concerning the development of *Ngati*, O’Shea wrote that he was particularly cautious not to intrude Pākehā attitudes on what he considered to be a Māori driven perspective where his role was to support, not to impose.[894] In addition, the production team were determined to produce a non-confrontational drama without violence or sex.[895] This led Poata to reject an idea from a prospective investor to include a “hot” heterosexual bedroom scene, and as a result of these types of negotiations he realised the pressures exercised when seeking film finance.[896]

*Ngati* was pitched to the NZFC by O’Shea as a film that “may be regarded more as a cultural than a commercial project,” and therefore a worthy undertaking.[897] This is evidenced in a letter to the NZFC where O’Shea writes that *Ngati* is a “film that is likely to be difficult to finance from commercial sources.” He argues that he is not “hopeful that investment schemes previously or currently applied to film financing” are relevant.[898] O’Shea’s argument would have contributed to the Commission’s support of the film. This is supported by Shelton’s view that O’Shea was a “key player” in persuading the Commission to invest in a film under the control of Māori.[899] Further reasons, raised in Chapter Three, may have

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[895] Ibid.


[899] Shelton.
included an unspoken NZFC commitment to Māori projects.\textsuperscript{900} Practically however, the Commission expected \textit{Ngati} to achieve theatrical release.\textsuperscript{901}

Loans were obtained from the NZFC and other investors, including bank loans.\textsuperscript{902} The expectation by investors was that \textit{Ngati} would appeal to both a national and international audience and the NZFC invested in its production and international distribution.\textsuperscript{903} Murray explains that this type of investment meant that \textit{Ngati} was required to include storylines that would appeal to “majority, non-indigenous, viewers.”\textsuperscript{904} The bicultural Bennetts, a Pākehā family, who are an integral part of the predominantly Māori community, may offer some familiarity and connection for white, non-indigenous audiences. This observation does not suggest that the Bennetts were only included as a response to investor or financing pressure as the family is present in early drafts of the screenplay.\textsuperscript{905} They not only reflect the makeup of rural communities at the time but their representation reinforces the Māori centred values at work in \textit{Ngati} as they are relatively peripheral, facilitating a non-Māori audience’s identification with the Māori characters. However, Greg, who is ostensibly white, offers a comfortable way for the dominant white culture to enter into a Māori world while remembering that he has a greater purpose that is connected to notions of identity formation.\textsuperscript{906} What must have been competing demands required a commitment to maintain a Māori centred vision from the script through to the processes of production and distribution. Barclay clearly expresses his vision of \textit{Ngati}:

\begin{quote}
IT’S ABOUT BEING MĀORI – and that is political. It’s a determined attempt to say what it’s like being Māori…it’s looking after your auntie…it’s looking after your visitor…It is politically deliberate –
\end{quote}

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\textsuperscript{900} Waller, "The New Zealand Film Commission: Promoting an Industry, Forging a National Identity," 254.
\textsuperscript{901} Horrocks.
\textsuperscript{902} Cairns and Martin, \textit{Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films}, 129.
\textsuperscript{903} Murray, \textit{Images of Dignity: Barry Barclay and Fourth Cinema}, 61.
\textsuperscript{904} Ibid; O’Shea, “Summary of Conversations with David Gascoigne.”
\textsuperscript{905} Tama Poata, "Ngati Screenplay [with Various Corrections]," in \textit{Pacific Films Collection} (Wellington: New Zealand Film Archive, 4 September 1985).
\textsuperscript{906} Cairns and Martin, \textit{Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films}, 116.
\end{flushleft}
One strategy was the commitment to train and hire Māori as production crew. As with Barclay, Poata, also a member of Te Manu Aute, believed that Māori creative control and technical participation was essential. To achieve this they decided to run a training course at a Polytechnic Institute in the Hawke’s Bay where trainees would be chosen to work on the short film Ka Mate! Ka Mate! shot entirely in te reo Māori, and then crew on Ngati. With funding from the NZFC, thirty trainees consisting of Pākehā and Māori were selected and paid modest salaries by the Labour Department; Barclay supplied the materials and facilities. He believed that the learning experience should be led by Māori with a Māori kaupapa. As a result, the course was founded on Māori concepts and worldviews underpinned by Māori aspirations, not only in the way the course was run, but the broader goal of advancing a vision of Māori cinema. Barclay recalls coming up against Pākehā hegemony when he was challenged by Polytechnic administrators who did not believe a film course should include the teaching of te reo Māori, the feeding of students and the inclusion of children whose mothers attended the course. Barclay writes that this experience opened his eyes to the opposition and struggles when setting up Māori led initiatives. The course successfully trained twelve young Māori who went on to crew on Ngati.

Murray argues that it would be an over-simplification to regard the concepts underlying the course as a “form of ‘Māori only’ essentialism” given the inclusion of Pākehā and the variety of government agencies involved. However, Barclay had argued with the Labour Department for Māori only trainees in an effort to address inequities in the workforce. A Māori only group was perceived by the

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908 Cairns and Martin, Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films, 125.
910 Barclay, Our Own Image, 32-33.
911 Ibid., 33-34.
912 Ibid., 36.
913 Ibid., 33-36.
914 Anon, "Press Release: Ngati," (Wellington: New Zealand Film Archive, No Date ).
915 Murray, Images of Dignity: Barry Barclay and Fourth Cinema, 55-56.
Department to be ‘racist’ and the final group was comprised of a third Pākehā.\textsuperscript{916} The Labour Department’s stance reflects the enduring ideology of ‘one people’ that masks racism and denies the embedded nature of Pākehā power and privilege. More positively, this example of imposed assimilationist values meant that Barclay, who accepted the conditions, had an opportunity to educate future Pākehā filmmakers about a Māori kaupapa in the hope that they would then contribute to making changes.

For \textit{Ngati} in accordance with the script setting, locations were deliberately chosen in the Ngāti Porou tribal area of Tokomaru Bay, nearby Waipiro and Anaura Bays. A pōwhiri occurred at Iritekura marae the day before filming started.\textsuperscript{917} The pōwhiri, an ancient process of encounter, is associated with the welcoming and hosting of manuhiri (visitors, guests) onto the marae. The nature of the encounter will determine the outcomes. If it is a good process then the ensuing relationships will be positive.\textsuperscript{918} After the formalities, food is shared, and this allows manuhiri to move freely amongst the host people.\textsuperscript{919} Members of the NZFC attended and as a result built good relationships with the production team.\textsuperscript{920} Based at Waipiro Bay, many of the production team slept on the marae.\textsuperscript{921} Barclay explains that operating in this way is enhancing individually and collectively saying “you can achieve so much more. It is liberating for both crew and community.”\textsuperscript{922} Further involvement of mana whenua and the local community occurred in a number of areas in the film’s production including acting roles, catering and the supplying of props.\textsuperscript{923}

Barclay built on previous working relationships in the making of \textit{Ngati}. For example, cinematographer Rory O’Shea and producer John O’Shea were key members of the team. Rory O’Shea had worked as Director of Photography in

\textsuperscript{916} Barclay, \textit{Our Own Image}, 33-34.
\textsuperscript{918} Barlow, \textit{Tikanga Whakaaro: Key Concepts in Māori Culture}, 99; Glavish.
\textsuperscript{919} Barlow, \textit{Tikanga Whakaaro: Key Concepts in Māori Culture}, 100.
\textsuperscript{920} Barclay.
\textsuperscript{921} Lomas, "A First for the Maori: Ngati," 3.
\textsuperscript{923} Cairns and Martin, \textit{Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films}, 133-34.
television and films in Aotearoa, Europe and the United States. John O’Shea was a veteran producer with a long list of credits referred to previously and worked closely with Barclay throughout the development and production of Ngati. Both John O’Shea and editor Dell King went on to work with Barclay on Te Rua.

Barclay openly challenged unspoken orthodoxies in regard to production protocols. Consistent with his approach to training a Māori workforce, Barclay was determined to incorporate Māori processes and practices on a day to day basis during the production of Ngati. Karakia occurred every morning and was conducted by an elder of the area rather than an elder brought along for the shoot. This respected the status of mana whenua. However, tensions arose when the crew were asked to approach the shoot in a manner unfamiliar to them. Problems occurred during the planning and shooting of the tangihanga scene that reflected not only differences in worldviews, but also the hegemony of Pākehā assumptions and beliefs. Gatherings require extending hospitality to guests by feeding them well as a mark of respect and honour. If this does not occur then shame is experienced by the host. There are additional and deeper reasons why food (kai) is important at tangihanga that will not be addressed here. Barclay describes the food props prepared for the scene by the Pākehā art department as grossly inadequate. When he challenged the department they were insistent that the amount of food was acceptable. Rather than arguing, Barclay approached local Māori who early the next morning killed two cows for the scene. Although there will be tensions between the director and crew, given the collaborative nature of filmmaking, this provides an example of the persistence and entrenchment of Pākehā worldviews that allows little room for others. To find a solution Barclay was forced to turn to Māori who immediately understood the concept of manaakitanga and the significance of food in these situations. If the art department’s approach had prevailed, a Māori audience would have

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927 Barclay, Our Own Image, 71-72.
928 Ibid.
immediately recognised the lack of food and viewed it as a significant error that would force the question as to whether the film had integrity or appropriate Māori control.

From the outset Barclay attempted to find a Māori First Assistant Director to manage these types of situations but none were available. He observed that Pākehā, however sympathetic, when put under stress, would revert to Pākehā thinking and practices. Barclay compensated by having a team of young Māori with little filmmaking experience but good understandings of Māori worldviews and practices. He then carefully selected production crew who he believed could work under Māori authority, but as indicated this did not always result in smooth working relationships.929 Barclay’s ‘unconventional’ approach that was in fact grounded in Māori worldviews, led him to believe that the crew thought the shoot was disorganised.930 Barclay, who at this point was a novice dramatic feature filmmaker but accomplished documentary filmmaker, generally spoke highly of the crew but confessed that even in his position as director it was not “easy to hang on to the most basic of cultural values even when one has the authority.”931 Despite Barclay’s privileged role as director with creative decision-making power, he came up against pervasive Pākehā beliefs and practices. A further example given by Barclay was the need to insist that the crew shoot close-ups of the men preparing the food in the tangihanga scene because they thought it was not in ‘good taste’ and during the editing process a wide shot was inserted. However, Barclay successfully argued to keep this small scene in.932 Applying Māori worldviews and practices founded on Māori epistemological and metaphysical traditions were rejected at times, making it a battle of compromise, justification and explanation. Despite these setbacks Ngati was shot in only five weeks on a small budget and maintained good relationships with iwi and the local community.933

930 Barclay, Our Own Image, 66-67.
931 Ibid., 73.
932 Ibid., 72.
933 Ibid., 67.
The tangihanga scene also elucidates both Barclay and Poata’s commitment to consult with mana whenua and uphold tikanga. Poata consulted with kaumātua from the area during the script’s development and they also assisted with the practical aspects of the script’s execution that ensured the tikanga of the area was upheld. During script development kaumātua raised issues connected to the burial scene. It was decided that filming could not occur in the existing urupā (cemetery) because the area is tapu. For the production a mock urupā was built, and tikanga governed because death was represented. Barclay recalls that it would have violated tikanga to actually dig a hole so no earth was turned.

Barclay’s transformational production practices grounded in kaupapa Māori that emerged in Tangata Whenua were extended and refined during the making of Ngati. Working within Māori authority he applied tikanga and Māori worldviews to conduct on location that included processes of encounter, set and props design, and photography, described above. This also provided legitimation and support for Māori filmmakers who were already working or wanted to work in similar ways. Murray elaborates:

It [Ngati] also established procedures and protocols pertaining to all aspects of the production that constituted a radical new approach to the process of obtaining Indigenous images and telling Indigenous stories.

However, as time progressed Barclay became understandably reticent about articulating specific Māori processes that might be seen to be prescriptive or definitive. Recently Ngā Aho Whakaari released a ‘code of ethics’ grounded in tikanga to “facilitate industry practices between film and television practitioners and the Māori community.” For example, it refers to the incorporation of karakia during the production and Māori practices required in depictions of tangihanga that Barclay pioneered in the making of Ngati. However, Barclay argued that while protocols are not in themselves a bad thing this could lead to an

934 Cairns and Martin, Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films, 125.
935 Ibid.
936 Barclay, Our Own Image, 71.
938 Barclay.
expectation that automatically following a set of rules guarantees cultural appropriateness. An additional danger is the establishment of a hierarchy of Māori practices and credentials that impose a set of rigid criteria that fix and legitimate what can be an evolving practice. Instead, Barclay put increasing emphasis on engagement with iwi and the communities in which he filmed rather than defining or following a set of rules. He elucidates:

The thing about filmmaking is that it’s very intimate. You go into a community and it’s them being filmed. So the process is really, the first and perhaps only one for me is, work it out locally. And there are lots and lots of little details.

Reflecting on his position when making Ngati, Barclay who is Ngāti Apa, was aware of his role as an ‘outsider’ when filming in other iwi territories saying:

I’m the first to say - my starting position is to say I’m an outsider. I know nothing about anything when I go into a community. I’m an ignoramus. I’m there at their sufferance. And I use the word sufferance deliberately. If you go in with any other attitude I think you don’t deserve to be called a Māori frankly. So I’m a stranger if I go into Ngāti Porou…You get weighed by the results.

Barclay’s reference to his ‘outsider’ status recognises the authority of mana whenua. Therefore, as Ngāti Apa, while Māori, he is an ‘outsider’ in Ngāti Porou who are mana whenua and must act accordingly. Barclay’s reference to being a stranger in the above quote is consistent with notions of iwi sovereignty and resists conceptualising Māori as a homogenous group. However, as discussed, there are wider collective Māori understandings based on concepts and worldviews that are shared. Associated with this is the responsibility Barclay carried as a filmmaker to not only present alternative images centred in Māori perspectives and worldviews, but to also maintain the integrity of the production.

940 Barclay.
941 Ibid.
942 Ibid.
943 Ibid.
throughout its entirety to ensure tikanga was not violated and the mana or authority of the community and iwi he filmed was upheld.

Barclay’s innovative and considered film practices led him to avoid using a dolly during filming, believing that it detracted from the observational leisurely style he was aiming for. This decision was also made in conjunction with the problem of financial constraints and the inexperience of actors in hitting their marks.\footnote{Barry Barclay, "The Control of One’s Own Image," \textit{Illusions}, no. 8 (June 1988): 13-14.} Murray writes that “much of the narrative and thematic dimensions matches and develops the organisational and technical aspects of filmmaking Barclay had developed in his documentary work.”\footnote{Murray, \textit{Images of Dignity: Barry Barclay and Fourth Cinema}, 56.} For example, Barclay’s emphasis on community is represented in the way he framed his shots so the individual is not paramount but represented as a part of the collective or community.

Rather than a conscious decision to work in opposition to orthodox cinematic practices, Barclay was driven to establish and advocate for the inclusion of Māori practices and worldviews. In a cinematic context Barclay responds to Smith’s challenge to Māori academics not to leave Māori epistemologies at the door in order to participate through his determined and successful effort to have Māori control the making of \textit{Ngati}.\footnote{Smith, "Straying Beyond the Boundaries of Belief: Maori Epistemologies inside the Curriculum," 50.}

\section*{Exhibition and Reception}

While members of the \textit{Ngati} production team participated in distribution and marketing strategies that were requirements of NZFC investment, other activities occurred that challenged orthodox film exhibition.\footnote{Murray, \textit{Images of Dignity: Barry Barclay and Fourth Cinema}, 25.} The intention to exhibit \textit{Ngati} in an unorthodox manner was signalled in early communications with the NZFC where John O’Shea put forward their intention to set up a “rural travelling scheme manned by hitherto unemployed Māoris.”\footnote{O’ Shea, "Summary of Conversations with David Gascoigne."} Although this did not eventuate the first screening of \textit{Ngati} was at Iritekura marae in 1987 for the community and iwi involved in the production and in particular the elders who
Barclay acknowledged as the spiritual guardians of the production.949 The reaction
to the film was positive and years later Barclay described these types of responses
as some of the finest awards he received as a filmmaker.950 Screening Ngati at
Iritekura marae reflects Barclay’s articulation of Fourth Cinema exhibition
practices and is consistent with expressions of Māori worldviews outlined in
Kaupapa Māori film theory. Barclay carried the responsibility he felt to Ngāti
Porou throughout the exhibition of the film and described it as an honour and an
opportunity to show them off.951 Consistent with Barclay’s commitment to
indigenous audiences he organised screenings in Hawai’i soon after the positive
reception at the Cannes Film Festival.952

Ngati was entered into the Listener Film and Television Awards in 1988 but the
production team considered withdrawing the film because of the ‘Hollywood’ feel
and competitive nature of the awards. This was seen as contradicting the kaupapa
of Ngati that was grounded in collectivity and community. A resolution was
reached and Ngati received four awards and these were given directly to Te
Runanga o Ngāti Porou who had representatives at the award ceremony.953

Ngati was sold for theatrical release to Australia and Canada, and for television in
countries including England, Japan, Spain, Iran and Botswana.954 The film
received critical success nationally and internationally and was generally received
positively by reviewers where the gentle pace and beautiful imagery was
frequently praised. In Aotearoa reviewers were predominantly affirmative with
descriptions including striking visuals, moving and gentle story-telling.955 Māori
responses to Ngati were frequently positive and participants in a research study I
undertook found it reaffirming. After viewing Ngati they expressed pride in the

950 Murray, Images of Dignity: Barry Barclay and Fourth Cinema, 63.
951 Barclay, “Interview with Barry Barclay.”
953 Cairns and Martin, Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films, 102;
Barclay", 67.
954 Shelton.
955 Helen Martin, "Cinema; Timeless Ebb and Flow," Listener, 26 September 1987; Philip
film and being Māori. Australian reviewers appear to have been divided about the film. Writing from Australia, Leigh Paatsch described *Ngati* as an important film that needs to be seen, praising the director’s refusal to follow the “fast pacing of modern cinema.” In contrast Neil Jillett of the *Melbourne Age* criticised the pace, dialogue and acting in *Ngati* arguing that “the film is so gently paced that it often comes to a standstill.” In spite of his criticisms Jillett found *Ngati* displayed a disarming quality and dignity.

*Ngati* was criticised for the performances of some of the actors including newcomer Connie Pewhairangi who played Sally. Barclay explains that he deliberately chose to cast a non-professional actor in a main role explaining that Connie Pewhairangi has the feeling of the “Māori girl next door.” At times the performances in *Ngati* are stilted but overall they are convincing. Despite Barclay’s desire to recruit Māori cast and crew, Greg was played by a non-Māori actor. Emerging from discussions with Barclay, Murray reveals that the “whole production was a juggling act between making the film that he [Barclay] and Tama Poata wanted to make and satisfying the Film Commission.” This led to compromises between the use of professional and non-professional actors in lead roles. Casting practices illuminate investment pressures on indigenous filmmakers to have a ‘universal star’ or non-Māori cast in a leading role to cater to the dominant Pākehā audience. However, with no hard evidence the reasons why Barclay cast a non-Māori in a Māori role remain speculative.

Aware that a significant audience for *Ngati* resided in Aotearoa the production team identified their audience as Māori and also “Pākehā who are interested in Māori affairs.” Alongside investment pressures this resulted in pragmatic decisions including casting. The more technical aspects of *Ngati* such as the

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956 Angela Moewaka Barnes, "Ngati" (Unpublished Masters Research Study, University of Auckland, 1999).
959 Ibid.
960 Ibid.
961 Barclay, *Our Own Image*, 62.
963 Ibid.
964 Personal Email Correspondence, 9 October.
965 O’Shea, "Letter from John O’Shea to Jim Booth (New Zealand Film Commission)."
production practices, art and set design and cinematography were informed by Māori worldviews and practices, including notions of collectivity, tikanga and iwi consultation. Barclay built on previous filmmaking experiences, and in particular *Tangata Whenua*. As a result *Ngati* transformed dramatic feature film production practices, paving the way for current and future generations of Māori filmmakers as well as filmmakers generally.

**Ngati: Textual Analysis**

The following textual analysis of *Ngati* privileges *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework*.

**Māori Voices**

*Te Reo Māori*

*Ngati* strategically employs language in symbolically and politically resonant ways while still accommodating the ‘needs’ of local and international distribution. At the time of writing and producing *Ngati*, te reo Māori was in serious decline and Māori strongly advocated for the protection and nurturing of the language. English is the predominant language spoken in *Ngati*, but not the only language as te reo Māori is incorporated to a lesser extent. This is most certainly an audience consideration and the use of both Māori and English languages recognises a local and international English speaking audience. It also recognises the fact that the majority of Māori are not fluent in te reo, underscoring the loss of the language. However, this echoes a point made earlier concerning hierarchies of language. This is most evident in the Hollywood cinematic context, where English is the prevailing language; reproducing the global status of English as a superior language that indirectly invalidates indigenous languages and diminishes linguistic possibilities in cinematic contexts.966 Sales of *Ngati* were problematic in North America due to the perception that audiences would have difficulty understanding the ‘New Zealand’ accent although this is not a unique problem facing Aotearoa.967 There are indications that the situation is improving. Recently

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Taika Waititi stated that he was reasonably sure *BOY* would not need to be subtitled in English for a North American audience.968

Te reo Māori is the first language heard in *Ngati* during the opening credits with *Haere Mai* followed by the hymn, *Tama Ngākau Mārie*. The prominent positioning reinforces the status of te reo Māori as the indigenous language of Aotearoa. This is further supported in the hui scene, occurring later in the film, where the future of the freezing works is discussed by a reference (spoken in te reo Māori) to English as the language of “te ao pōuri” – the world of darkness that also underscores the colonising agenda that suppressed te reo Māori. Te reo Māori is spoken throughout *Ngati* and while some dialogue is subtitled there are also occasions when subtitles are absent. Characters traverse seamlessly between te reo Māori and English, incorporating snippets of te reo Māori into everyday conversations that are not subtitled. Generally this is done in a manner that conveys the meaning and requires minimal fluency in the language. For example, simple phrases such as ka pai (good, well done) and e hoa (friend, mate) are interspersed throughout dialogue delivered in English.

The absence of comprehensive subtitling creates what Murray describes as linguistic spaces that can only be accessed by Māori language speakers.969 These linguistic spaces promote and take for granted the validity of te reo Māori, affirming its place in the world regardless of whether or not all Māori are fluent. This is illustrated in the hui scene where the community gather to discuss the closure of the freezing works. An elder’s whaikōrero that is reasonably substantial in length, is not subtitled. The elder recites specific iwi connections, referring to the tribal area of Ngāti Porou. A non-speaking Māori audience familiar with events governed by Māori protocols will recognise the formality of the occasion if not the substance of the speech. The Pākehā businessman attending the hui impatiently asks what is being said. Mac, chairperson of the marae committee and convener of the hui, purposefully translates the whaikōrero incorrectly. In a manner that is consistent with a Pākehā worldview Mac explains it as a concern for the people affected by the closure of the freezing works. The elder then refers

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to the maunga (mountain) Hikurangi and Mac translates this as grazing lands for stock. The word Hikurangi is recognised by the businessman and this supports Mac’s incorrect translation. Unless the viewer has an understanding of protocols, iwi identity and te reo Māori, Mac’s response could be missed or misinterpreted; but for those who do, it is an example of the film’s understated and gentle humour. In this instance the humour emerges from a distinctly Māori worldview and experience of colonisation.

The scene reveals a sense of Pākehā unease demonstrated by the businessman, when for a moment he becomes the ‘othered’, marginalised by the indigenous language and culture, having no understanding or control over either. He is outnumbered, in a Māori domain, governed by Māori protocols where everyone has a right to speak. In an attempt to maintain the dominant position he expects an explanation that is consistent with his values and worldview. However, Mac is aware that the protocols and meanings associated with whaikōrero, are entirely appropriate in the setting and cannot be interrupted or simply translated to fit in with Pākehā culture and expectations. This aligns with Smith’s assertion that colonisation and its associated representations of Māori as primitive and superstitious result in Māori caution when translating aspects of our worldviews that are not easily transferable to Pākehā ways of knowing. The scene also conveys the sense of threat that can be engendered when indigenous cultures privilege or simply give voice to their language and culture without explaining or apologising, and in doing so challenge the position of the dominant group.

The film strategically promotes te reo Māori, challenging the privileging of the colonisers’ language in cinema. Situating the film within a Māori world, rejecting the colonial gaze, Ngati does not always explain itself for the benefit of a non-Māori audience. Barclay takes the Māori audience for granted and as evidenced in the hui scene speaks directly to a Māori audience where others may engage but on

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970 Smith, "Straying Beyond the Boundaries of Belief: Maori Epistemologies inside the Curriculum," 46.
Māori terms. This echoes Barclay’s stance on the political aspects of Ngati saying: “this is the Māori world, take it or leave it.”

Taking a Māori audience for granted, the film addresses the audience as if the audience is Māori. The privileging and centring of the Māori voice occurs through the use of te reo Māori but also through the representation of Māori as the ‘norm.’ The collective pronoun ‘us’ and ‘we’ is reiterated by Māori characters and refers to both the Māori community and iwi in Ngati that by extension embraces a Māori audience collectively. For example, one of the drovers wants Iwi to manage the Pākehā station to “help us”, the Māori community. Another is expressed by the bus driver who upon discovering Greg’s Māori whakapapa remarks that Greg is “one of us then.” This situates Pākehā as Other, inverting colonising discourses and offering a film that ‘talks in’ by speaking directly to a Māori audience from a Māori perspective.

Identity

The exploration of collective identity as opposed to individual identity is a strong theme in Ngati. It involves the notion that the individual is conceptualised as a part of the collective. Ngati has no heroes and scriptwriter, Poata, upheld the concept that everybody counts in the Māori community. Therefore, the community is the hero, not any one individual. Barclay writes that he attempted to direct Ngati in that “spirit, not only because the writer wished it so”, but also because this was how he approached his work in film. This was evidenced early on in Barclay’s work on the Tangata Whenua series where individual experiences and stories that embraced the collective were paramount. The first programme in the series, The Spirits and the Times will Teach, examines moko but located within wider historical and contemporary stories that embrace tūpuna, whānau, hapū and iwi.

Cinematography, through the use of the wide angle lens, also situates the individual within the frame of the community, supporting the notion that the

971 Barclay, Our Own Image, 74-80.
973 Barclay, Our Own Image, 59.
974 Ibid.
individual is a part of the collective. The predominant visual style of Ngati is consistent with Barclay’s intention not to use the camera in a manner that is “arrogant” or attempting to “hype things up;” a position he introduced in the Tangata Whenua series. The slow leisurely pace of Ngati is supported by long takes, the use of the wide angle lens and a long lens for panning shots. This adds to the realist and observational style of the film where the camera does not impose on the action, reinforcing the focus on community life.

Congruent with Barclay’s emphasis on the importance of community where everyone is of interest, and in the style of documentary filmmaking, he attempted to capture the minutiæ of life by creating a tapestry of images. This involved capturing the many aspects of peoples’ lives and presence on the marae and in the community. There are a number of shots throughout Ngati that celebrate community and illustrate day to day acts such as swimming, fishing, food preparation and gathering seafood. The tapestry of community that Barclay captured, despite his belief that he failed to fully represent the “physical details of Māori communal life,” conveys meanings beyond the image. For example, the hui scene is interspersed with outside shots and during the burial scene there is a cutaway to young children playing in the sea, all indicating the layered activities that occur in any community and that life goes on regardless of important meetings and tragedy.

The narrative strand that follows Greg’s personal journey revolves around issues of identity that are individually driven and also located within the collective aspirations of the film related to belonging through whakapapa. Arguably, Greg can be seen as a protagonist by an audience with certain expectations of storyline. His story, read only as a discovery of individual identity, may be privileged by a dominant audience as it conforms more closely to conventional narratives. In this context the more complex aspects of belonging through whakapapa and the associated responsibilities and accountabilities may be missed. Murray proposes

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977 Barclay, Our Own Image, 68.
978 Ibid., 67.
that *Ngati* operates on multiple levels offering narratives that appeal to a dominant audience while privileging Māori meanings within codes of conventional film storytelling techniques.979 Barclay’s strategy clearly plays out when Greg discovers he is Māori. The moment is not revealed on screen; rather his reaction to this information is presented to the viewer. Greg says: “So I’m a Māori,” pauses, and then ruefully adds that he cannot even pronounce the word Māori properly. There is not the expected dramatic moment of revelation and Greg does not struggle or have any sense of bewilderment or crisis of identity. His response is contemplative and self-mocking.

Christine Thompson writes that Greg’s discovery of his identity is one of the film’s “least convincing aspects…it’s all a bit too gee-gosh simple.”980 Thompson’s criticism is misplaced. Rather than emphasising Greg’s personal reaction to the news, *Ngati* concentrates on wider issues of Māori identity related to Greg’s desire to find out about his whakapapa and the associated responsibilities that require him to learn about being Māori. For example, Greg asks Tione why he uses water when he leaves the urupā and is told that it is necessary to clear the tapu, with no further explanation. Tione simply states: “You should do this if you’re a Māori.” Greg replies “I’m only a new Māori.” In addition, Greg is not required to struggle to gain acceptance by the community as a result of his newly discovered identity. In a later scene he is acknowledged by Sally’s mother, Hine. She greets him in te reo Māori, identifies his whakapapa and in doing so establishes Greg’s connections and place in the iwi.

The understated representation of Greg’s new-found Māori identity is indicative of wider issues present at the time of making *Ngati*. In the 1980s Māori individual and collective identity was clearly articulated for both personal and political reasons. This was associated with issues of Māori self-determination and reclamation. It could be said that Greg’s storyline reflects the wider political issues of indigenous identity that Barclay was also engaged with, rather than the more emotional and internally focused aspects associated with claiming identity. Murray supports this observation recalling Barclay’s response that he had never

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thought about his decision not to emphasise or dramatise Greg’s revelation that he is Māori because his interest lay with the other storylines and characters. I suggest that Barclay privileges the notion of a collective identity rather than an individual identity; a theme that recurs throughout his work.

**Māori Worldviews and Concepts**

*Māori Knowledge and Worldviews*

*Ngati* legitimates Māori knowledge, worldviews and concepts. Māori healing, tikanga and connections with the land, the living and the dead are all present. The film’s narrative represents tensions between rongoā Māori and western medicine through a conflict between Sally and Iwi over Ropata’s cancer treatment. The complexities are not glossed over or ignored, and attitudes towards rongoā Māori in *Ngati* are diverse. Sally’s challenge occurs in the first act when she argues with her father, Iwi, about the effectiveness of traditional healing. In contrast, Iwi views Ropata’s illness as mate Māori (Māori sickness). Iwi openly puts his faith in Māori methods of healing, believing that western medicine has diminished the power of the tohunga to heal Ropata. Opposing him, Sally questions the usefulness of the tohunga calling it “mumbo jumbo.” Although questioning the validity of rongoā Māori and openly challenging these practices Sally remains comfortable and confident about her identity. She is not represented as less ‘authentically’ Māori thereby embracing the diverse experiences and complexities of identity formation. On one level Sally’s challenge can be viewed as a clash between generations reinforced by the effects of the rural urban drift. This is complicated by the various positions on healing expressed in the film by both Māori and Pākehā where the proponents and antagonists are not overtly presented as right or wrong. The power to cure however, does not lie with the tohunga or with western medicine as neither can save Ropata.

On a wider level the debate can be placed within the political context of the deliberate erosion and devaluing of Māori healing practices as well as the introduction of diseases that came with colonisation. References are made in the film to a contagious epidemic in the community that resulted in a high Māori

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981 Stuart Murray, Personal Email Correspondence, 9 October 2008.
mortality rate, including Greg’s mother. Iwi’s challenge to the authority of western medicine resonates with the struggle to legitimate Māori methods of healing. The Tohunga Suppression Act (1907) was not repealed until 1964 and forced Māori healing practices underground, making it difficult to pass on knowledge, reinforcing the superiority of western medical practice and demeaning Māori medical knowledge.982 As a result of colonisation the status and place of rongoā in Aotearoa remains complex and contentious today. Ngati does not attempt to reconcile the conflict between Māori and western medicine but respects and validates both disciplines, offering possibilities of a harmonious coexistence.

Māori worldviews are central in Ngati through the use of aesthetic devices and narrative that illustrate the importance of the connections between people and tūpuna; people and land; the universe and beyond. Early scenes place people within the landscape, as a part of it as opposed to dominating the environment. The opening shot is an example of the dramatic photography that captures the landscape in which the community resides. In failing light, a wide shot depicts the small figure of tohunga, Uncle Eru, in the rugged landscape as he slowly but purposefully wends his way up the hill. By placing the tohunga in the opening shot, although the audience is unaware of his role at this stage, Barclay suggests connections between people and the environment that encompass spiritual elements. The identity of the tohunga is realised shortly after this when he is greeted at the door and conducts karakia in the room of the dying boy, Ropata. A representation of community that coexists with and gains sustenance from their environment is in contrast to dominant narrative preoccupations where individuals battle to gain dominance over their environment. For example, Pākehā settlers in The Piano are constantly struggling to overcome their environment and impose a version of colonial order.

982 Durie, Whaiora: Maori Health Development, 45-46.
**Concepts and Practices**

Tikanga Māori practices and concepts, including wairua (spiritual dimension that extends beyond the tangible), are important elements in *Kia Manawatu; Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework*. Throughout *Ngati* spaces are allowed for their expression and are interwoven into the aesthetics. Scenes of karakia at Ropata’s bedside appear throughout the film, not only representing Māori practices but validating and normalising those practices. Wairua is not exoticised in *Ngati*; practices are made visible and represented as an important aspect of life and an accepted way of being. For example, sensing his friend’s death, Tione and those around him respond not in astonishment but with acceptance and respect. The repeated and lingering shots of shoes being removed before entering Ropata’s house cannot be overlooked and emphasise its importance in Māori practice, presenting it as everyday.

The tangihanga scenes incorporate aspects of tikanga that include karanga. Food is prominent in the filming of the tangihanga scenes and shots of food preparation draw in themes of manaakitanga and emphasises the important role food plays in respect of tapu and noa (free from restrictions). A prominent shot of a beast carried on horseback may have been opportunistic but gains significance in light of Barclay’s failed efforts to convince the art department of the role food plays and his determination to maintain its depiction in the story. The tangihanga scenes are shot at Ropata’s house and not the marae. Reasons for this can only be speculative and may be related to the tikanga of the area and restrictions surrounding the representation of death discussed previously.

*Ngati* refuses to offer up Māori spirituality and Māori processes for consumption by a dominant audience. The practices are integrated into the film and neither explained or commented on in any depth. This reflects Barclay’s notion of ‘talking in’ and speaks directly to a Māori audience without translating meanings for a non-Māori audience.983 Māori worldviews and concepts are placed in context and presented as an essential way of being while retaining significance in the narrative.

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In Kapua, the effects of colonisation are reflected in negative economic forces, urbanisation and the introduction of disease such as influenza. Death and pathology are associated with colonialism and Ngati combats this association by stating the principles and values that underpin the Māori community. Within the narrative, death is portrayed as a natural part of life and does not override the parallel plots. Ngati encapsulates for Barclay, the notion that whatever happens to individuals, the “tribe will move on...a sense that the people will continue.”984 In her analysis of Ngati, Cushla Parekōwhai writes that Ropata’s death reminds the community not to “forget the values of their past. For the community which remembers will survive – no matter what.”985 This is articulated by Uncle Eru when he tells Tione not to forget the values of their tūpuna and to hold on to the knowledge and wisdom that is handed down from generation to generation – whakapono, tūmanako, me te aroha - truth, hope and love. These values are repeated when he speaks to the community gathered to mourn the death of Ropata. Maintaining connections to tūpuna and remembering the knowledge that has been passed down are essential to the collective well-being of Kapua.

Collectivity and Relationships

Whānau, hapū, and iwi

Whānau, hapū and iwi are strong themes in Ngati. The film reinforces notions of collectivity and relationships by privileging the specific iwi of Ngāti Porou as well as resonating with iwi and Māori generally. Generations are represented as living together, not always in harmony but with an underlying commitment to an empowering collective and collaborative model. Sitting alongside this are the obligations and loyalties that support the whānau, and by extension, hapū and iwi.986 This is illustrated in the relationship between Iwi and his daughter Sally. Despite their differences Iwi supports Sally when she provides a solution to the economic crisis. Additionally, Tione is supported during Ropata’s illness by the community and in particular, Uncle Eru. In contrast, the only Pākehā family living

984 Ibid., 59.
985 Parekowhai, “Kōrero Ki Taku Tuakana: Merata Mita and Me,” 76.
in the community reflect the concept of the nuclear family and to a lesser extent express loyalties and commitments that extend to the community and each other.

Sally’s return home is a further expression of whānau and her decision is grounded in Māori understandings of place and belonging. Barclay discussed well-meant Pākehā criticism of the narrative for not explaining in detail why Sally returned home. He felt this did not need greater explanation as it would be instinctively understood by a Māori audience. A close reading of the text reveals a number of obvious and understandable reasons for Sally’s return home that express the philosophy of whānau and her sense of loyalty and obligation. These include the prospect of her father losing his job, her mother’s pregnancy and Ropata’s illness. Barclay felt this was probably too explicit for a Māori audience and was surprised that “some Pākehā audiences hanker after some other motivation, something more dramatic.” A less obvious reason is alluded to in the final scene when Sally, on deciding to stay in Kapua, speaks to her kuia. The kuia tells her that in her time the young people returned home because it was their tūrangawaewae, literally meaning a place to stand, conveying a sense of belonging in respect of where you are from; a place to stand in the tribe. Previously acknowledged as “a good kid” for returning home, this exchange reinforces Sally’s decision to remain in Kapua where she belongs. In an intangible sense the exchange implies the spiritual connection of people to the land and tūpuna.

The importance of the generations and the maintenance of knowledge is a recurring theme in Ngati. Consistent with the concept of whānau, and by extension iwi and hapū, every member of the community has a role. Uncle Eru is the repository of knowledge and passes his wisdom on to Tione, who in turn teaches Greg. Tione is a young boy and although this does not fit with the tuakana (older) and teina (younger) model where the teaching roles are taken on by the oldest, it is appropriate because Tione has the greater knowledge in terms of Māori understandings. In the final scene Barclay felt the “encapsulating final image for a Māori audience is not the romantic storyline (that cements the

987 Barclay, Our Own Image, 49-50.
988 Ibid., 50.
relationship between Greg and Jenny Bennett) so much as the very last shot, Iwi walking off past Tione, handing him some sweets as he goes (from generation to generation).” Ngati opens with the tohunga and closes with Tione, emphasising the cycles of life and the passing on of knowledge through the generations.

Challenge and Resistance

Challenging Colonialism

Barclay deliberately wanted to return the colonial gaze and in doing so reveal and disrupt power relationships. This is most evident in his inclusion of an overt Māori gaze in an early scene in Ngati. The bus to Kapua parks on the side of the road so that the driver (Māori) can converse with a friend (Māori) who is riding a horse. The horseman begins to ride away but stops to gaze directly at outsider Greg, the only passenger on the bus. Greg, who is assumed to be Pākehā, deliberately ignores him and stares straight ahead. As the horseman knocks on the window, the shot cuts to the bus driver. Returning to the horseman the camera follows him as he goes in front of the bus and asks the driver who is the “flash fella in the back?” Barclay had not intended to interrupt the shot, however, during the editing process the producer insisted that Greg would have acknowledged the horseman. At this stage the only alternative was to insert a shot of the bus driver “without interrupting the flow of the scene.” Barclay believed that this concession played to a Māori and Pākehā audience. He explains:

> In staging the shot in the way I did I was quite conscious that I was playing directly to an as yet unseen Māori audience, but during the edit I weakened and chose to play for both audiences.

Although Barclay felt he had compromised by inserting a shot of the bus driver, the audience remains sutured into a looking relation that forms around the Māori horseman’s gaze. The scene cleverly subverts the colonial gaze where Pākehā become the Other and the power of surveillance rests with Māori.

989 Murray, Images of Dignity: Barry Barclay and Fourth Cinema, 60.
990 Barclay, Our Own Image, 54.
991 Ibid., 53.
992 Ibid., 54.
Later in the film a further reference is made to the colonial gaze that reveals its power of observation through an exchange between Tione and Ropata. Tione reminisces about a near death experience where the two friends almost drowned and were forced to walk naked along the beach on their return home. It is not the near death experience that is of concern but unease expressed by Tione who remembers “all these Pākehās with their binoculars following us all the way.” There is a tension between Tione’s statement about the Pākehā gaze within the film and the relationship between the film and a Pākehā or non-Māori audience who are observing Māori life. Gauthier describes this as watching Māori and identifying with them, depending on the camera’s placement, but remembering that ‘we’ [non-Māori] can never be Māori.993 Brief exchanges in Ngati remind the viewer that the world of Kapua is not ideal or isolated from colonial impositions despite the beauty of the landscape and the deceptive simplicity of life.

An early school scene offers another example of the lived experiences of colonisation. The small primary school is located in the Kapua community, with Pākehā teachers and Māori pupils. The children sing Jerusalem outside the classroom led by a Pākehā teacher and headmaster. They all sing in English, rising to a crescendo with “till we have built Jerusalem in England’s green and pleasant land”. The main meaning of this line is the intent to work unremittingly for the establishment of the ‘Kingdom of heaven’ in England. Given the elision of Christianity and English identity this speaks clearly to the colonial ideal of establishing England in Aotearoa’s fair and pleasant land. Although representative of the times the nature of the representation, where Māori children obediently sing a song whose meaning is alien, exposes further meanings. Both parties (teachers and children) become complicit in the colonial drive to reform the natives, although within unequal power relationships. Ngati strategically employs language in symbolically and politically resonant ways and here the use and expression of the English language and culture exposes hierarchies that maintain the privilege of the dominant group. It reveals the intent of the colonial agenda to diminish the very foundation of Māori knowledge and identity. In addition, the song is Christian and the scene speaks to the dual identities that the children have.

inside and outside of the school, reflecting both western and Māori ideologies. Duality is represented in Ngati through religious and spiritual beliefs and practices, language, western and Māori medicine and Māori/Pākehā identities. Alongside the brief exchanges described above, scenes of this type signal that Kapua is not a community isolated in time and place, immune to the forces of the civilising mission and cultural imperialism.

*Racism*

Kaupapa Māori film theory calls for critical analyses of racism and Māori/Pākehā relations. Greg’s character reveals the wider issue of racism alongside the Pākehā businessman from the freezing works. Greg’s racism is initially overt, likening Māori methods of healing to that of a “witch doctor” and making racist remarks about Aboriginal Australians, calling them “Abos”. He slowly changes his racist assumptions as he makes connections with the community and realises his Māori identity. In spite of Greg’s belief in his superiority as a Pākehā, he is nevertheless treated hospitably by the community who know his whakapapa and patiently await his transformation. In the final scene Greg’s transformation is complete. He makes the decision to return to Kapua to practice as a doctor saying “I thought I was sent here to teach the natives something about the outside world. I’ve been a bit stuck up eh, I was the pupil.” Greg’s story offers a twist on Hollywood’s love of the white man making good amongst the natives when he becomes a native, not through association, but whakapapa.

Racism is also evident in a scene between two Pākehā representatives from the freezing works and the chairperson of the marae committee, Mac. They meet at the marae as a clean up is in progress. The Pākehā men are there to attend an arranged hui where the future of the freezing works is to be discussed only to discover that the hui is postponed until the next day, much to the irritation of the older Pākehā representative. During the brief exchange racist attitudes are revealed, embodied by the older Pākehā character who retorts: “Can’t you people even organise yourselves to get to a meeting?” and “had a bit of a party last night?” The insinuation is that Māori (as a group) prioritise fun over business, do not have the required commitment when dealing with serious matters of economics and cannot adequately keep to time. Māori become the
undifferentiated Other, with their inherent depravity and deviance. The scene sadly has resonance today and reveals racist attitudes and dominant discourses about Māori. The construction of Māori as ‘savage,’ embodying childlike, primitive and less advanced human development than the colonisers is expressed through the Pākehā businessman’s response. Throughout the discussion Mac maintains his dignity and refuses to be intimidated; his allegiance clearly sits with the community. Mac’s patience suggests that he has previously encountered racism and has developed considered responses in order to survive. By slipping racist attitudes into the conversation Barclay exposes the insidious and prevalent nature of racism and colonisation.

Tino rangatiratanga

Tino rangatiratanga is a common thread in Barclay’s work. The storyline in Ngati concerning the threatened closure of the freezing works symbolises Barclay’s views on self-determination and the importance of community. The freezing works, which are the major employer in the area, are threatened with closure when local farmers begin to send their stock to other facilities. Simultaneously, business representatives are trying to convince Iwi to be the manager of the local stock station. Although they want him to run the business they are reluctant to give him control. Iwi finally agrees to manage the station on the condition that he has total control. This way he will be able to guarantee that stock will be supplied to the local freezing works. A hui is called and Sally acts as the catalyst for the community in determining their own economic security. After listening to the men, Sally stands and suggests that the community take control of their own business affairs. It is relevant to raise the concept of hui that Barclay incorporates into his filmmaking. In this scene hui is cinematically expressed where debate is cyclical and everyone has a right to speak regardless of who is perceived to be the expert. Although the men dominate the hui it is Sally, a Māori woman, who has the courage to propose an iwi based solution and she is supported by the older women playing cards in the kitchen. Sally’s speech extends beyond the immediate problem of the freezing works closure promoting a wider notion of Māori and iwi self-determination when she says:
Let us run our own freezing works, our own farms, our own fisheries. Let us run them ourselves.

Her strategic solution is supported by her father, Iwi, who suggests that the community buy the freezing works and form a corporation. The storyline is accessible to a majority audience and on one level is an issue of economics and business acumen. This reflects the economic climate in the period Ngati is set and the neoliberal reforms occurring during the making of the film. However, the storyline also functions to express aspirations of tino rangatiratanga that are Māori based and strongly articulated during the 1980s and continue to have relevance today. Although screenwriter Poata believed that Ngati did not specifically depict Te Tiriti but expressed a “sense of tribal mana” the aspirations expressed in the film resonate with tino rangatiratanga in Article Two of Te Tiriti.

Biculturalism and Power

Decision-making within the community is represented as equitable and this extends to the Pākehā Bennett family. In this sense Māori/Pākehā relationships are good and this reading supports Barclay’s aim to “demonstrate how in New Zealand, at some levels at least, Māori and Pākehā can get along just fine.” Barclay’s comment reflects a predominantly courteous approach to Māori/Pākehā relationships and the faith and hope he held for positive outcomes. However, an examination of the Bennett family reveals obvious differences between Māori and Pākehā that highlight wider inequities. Representing an accurate picture of the historical era it is not surprising that the Pākehā characters belong to a wealthier socio-economic group. Apart from the Pākehā outsiders who are business representatives, the Bennett family appear to have the only car in the community. Although they live modestly they are middle class professionals who are not in danger of losing their livelihood or are struggling to survive financially. Greg, perceived to be Pākehā, has an equivalent socio-economic status. This suggests that because Greg was brought up with Pākehā privilege he was able to access and attain his medical credentials that may otherwise have been denied him.

994 Cairns and Martin, Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films, 124.
995 Barclay, Our Own Image, 62.
996 O’Shea, “Summary of Conversations with David Gascoigne.”
Therefore, the biculturalism in *Ngati* offers possibilities of co-existence and mutual respect but represents wider structural and power inequities. At the same time, because the Pākehā characters operate at the margins and Māori are central, *Ngati* promotes Māori self-determination where the iwi of Kapua (mana whenua) welcome non-Māori as manuhiri on Māori terms and within a Māori authority. Murray argues that *Ngati* “advocates an idea of a bicultural New Zealand that is fundamentally Māori in spirit.”

*Ngati* works against bicultural aspirations that do not address issues of power, self-determination and mana whenua status.

The bicultural aspect of the film is the least convincing and Dr Bennett appears to be too good to be true. At one point he explains the meaning of tohunga to Greg who has recently discovered his Māori whakapapa. This could be positively read as the potential of Pākehā to live respectfully in two worlds, but at the same time is discomforting given the colonial hegemony and attendant regimes of power that suppressed Māori language and culture. Critic Christina Thompson writes about the “Māorisation” of the Pākehā characters in the film, where a “different kind of assimilation” offers an “interesting solution to the problem of racial relations.”

Claims to “Māorisation” of the Pākehā characters appear to be based predominantly on bicultural practices evident in Dr Bennett’s use of te reo Māori and understanding of rongoa. However, Thompson’s conception of Pākehā assimilation cannot offer a comprehensive solution to race relations as it does not address structural issues or take into account power relationships and the effects of colonisation that *Ngati* expresses. The Bennettts and the associated aspects of biculturalism probably have less significance for an indigenous audience than a majority audience. This is supported by Murray who suggests that the representations of biculturalism in *Ngati* possibly received more interest from non-indigenous critics than did ideas of iwi and whānau.

**Counter-hegemonic Constructions**

*Ngati* offers counter hegemonic constructions of Māori that reveal complexity and diversity. Māori representations affirm and uphold Māori identities of mana tāne.

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998 Thompson, “*Ngati*,” 28.
and mana wahine. The representations of Māori men are multifaceted and not idealised. Iwi and Dike (Tione’s father) are stubborn and surly respectively. Dike’s character, who retreats into heavy drinking, is based on Poata’s experiences of men who fought in the Māori Battalion and returned spiritually bereft. Iwi, while stubborn, is a humble leader who eventually learns to consider the opinions of others. Representations of Māori men are diverse in Ngati, working against stereotypical ‘warrior’ images, and dominant constructions of Māori hypermasculinity.

Ngati represents Māori women as strong and vital contributors to the community. Poata explains that the women from Ngāti Porou were powerful and refused to be intimidated. This is presented on screen. For example, it is Sally who confidently and powerfully articulates the solution to the economic crisis, demanding that her voice be heard. Characters including Hine (Iwi’s wife) and Nanny support the whānau and community with an intelligent and determined strength.

Summary

Ngati transformed ideas of cinema in Aotearoa and how it relates to Māori as well as having indigenous global ramifications. In part this is because Ngati is the first feature film to be controlled by Māori and is referred to as the first feature film to be made by an indigenous person. In addition to these unique qualities Barclay privileges and centres indigeneity as a strategic intent in creating a healthy and inspirational Māori cinematic site that expresses Māori experiences, offering hope and solutions. Ngati provides an audience with counter hegemonic images of Māori that are complex yet overwhelmingly positive and optimistic. Being Māori is taken for granted and Māori worldviews, concepts and te reo are affirmed and accepted as valid and legitimate. With his gentle observational style, Barclay captures the mana of Māori that emerges from a distinctly Māori base. Although

1000 Cairns and Martin, Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films, 124.
1002 Cairns and Martin, Shadows on the Wall: A Study of Seven New Zealand Feature Films, 125.
1003 Ibid., 102.
Pākehā are represented, Māori dominate the screen. Kapua is a community, but more importantly it is a Māori community where Pākehā may reside on Māori terms. While attentive to the narrative Ngati is political and concerned with broader issues including Māori aspirations, colonisation and racism, making visible unequal power relations. Ngati is visually beautiful and lyrical, creating a site that is simultaneously creative and political.

By representing a historical narrative that conveys notions of self-determination and collectivity, Ngati creates alternative memories that are distinct from colonised views of Māori history and speaks to the present. This allows us to ‘know’ our past and has the potential to transform both our own historical perceptions and those of others. Ngati created new ways of imagining and capturing how we see ourselves in the world and on screen.

The commercial imperatives associated with the feature film industry requiring filmmakers to attract large audiences resulted in Barclay’s strategic approach to his work and his constant resistance to the packaging of the indigenous image for dominant consumption. Taking for granted a Māori and indigenous audience, Barclay was aware of the practicalities of filmmaking that required him to negotiate between two worlds not only in regard to the film’s content but in the processes of production. Despite commercial imperatives Barclay allows Ngati to work on a number of levels that pragmatically accommodated both a non-indigenous and indigenous audience.

Building on his practices and thinking developed while working on the Tangata Whenua series Barclay transformed dominant filmmaking practices by making technology and filmmaking practice work in a way that reflected kaupapa Māori while maintaining the integrity of his productions. Māori worldviews and practices are central not only in the film text of Ngati but essential elements in its production. The making of Ngati reflects Barclay’s approach to filmmaking as it required a strong Māori presence and contribution. His successful creative collaborations influenced Māori and those that work with Māori. Barclay’s

1004 Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 34-35.
commitment to train and employ Māori on Ngati laid the groundwork for a Māori future in dramatic feature filmmaking. He mentored younger creatives and technical crew in ways that were consistent with tuakana/kaumātua roles. Māori currently working in film including Owen and Kahi were inspired by Barclay’s films and saw the importance of continuing this work. Barclay also felt a strong sense of responsibility to honourably represent Māori on screen. Responsibility extended to the communities in which he filmed and Barclay was committed to respecting mana whenua with an emphasis on consultation and respect of tribal authority. These elements make Barclay a pioneer and transformational filmmaker.

1005 Duncan Petrie and Stuart Duncan, A Coming of Age (Auckland: Random House, 2008), 173; Owen.
Chapter Six

Mauri: Merata Mita

This chapter covers Mita’s work in film and television and in particular examines her dramatic feature film *Mauri* (1988).

**Brief Personal Background**

Filmmaker, theorist and teacher, Mita identifies strongly as a woman from Te Arawa iwi, and hapū Ngāti Pikiao and Ngāi te Rangi. She says:

> I am Māori, I am woman, I am family, I am tribe…

Mita (1942-2010) was raised in a predominantly Māori community at Maketū in the Bay of Plenty, where te reo Māori was the primary language spoken. School brought Mita into closer contact with Pākehā and attendance at Te Puke High School increased her awareness of racism. Moving to Auckland she trained as a Home Science teacher. Mita became increasingly disillusioned that her training only perpetuated a system that entrenched social and economic hierarchies. Although the University Māori Club gave her a sense of belonging, Mita seriously considered moving back home due to feelings of alienation resulting from the urban environment and marginalisation of Māori. This was in contrast to the rural environment she was brought up in where she felt a strong sense of belonging and of being Māori. She was dissuaded by her family who were keen for her to succeed. It was unusual for someone from her community to attend Training College and Mita felt obligated to finish her studies. On graduating from Training College in the early 1960s at the age of 19, Mita moved to Kawerau to teach. She was given the ‘difficult’ students, predominantly Māori.

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1008 Ibid., 39-40.
and Pacific, who were expected to fail. Mita successfully experimented with new teaching techniques that supported their learning.\textsuperscript{1009} Aware that her students learned visually she decided to purchase a camera with her own money. Instead of assigning her students a conventional essay, she asked them to script, act, film, and edit a short film. This signalled the beginning of Mita’s foray into film and video.\textsuperscript{1010}

Mita eventually found the teaching environment too restrictive and tiring. She moved back to Auckland with her children in the early 1970s and undertook relief teaching.\textsuperscript{1011} She also worked in a variety of other jobs including packing sweets at Heards and cleaning. Her co-workers at Heards encouraged her to join Ngā Tamatoa, the Māori rights activist group that Barclay belonged to.\textsuperscript{1012} Mita saw this as a huge learning experience and, like Barclay, her films in the 1970s and early 1980s, such as \textit{Bastion Point: Day 507} (1980) and \textit{Patu!} (1983) were heavily influenced by her involvement with the group.\textsuperscript{1013} Syd Jackson, a founding member of Ngā Tamatoa, saw Mita’s later work in film as a “continuation of the work she had been doing as a member of Ngā Tamatoa.”\textsuperscript{1014}

Oral traditions incorporating whakapapa, whaikōrero and storytelling are important elements of Mita’s filmmaking.\textsuperscript{1015} The oral tradition acts as a powerful conduit for the transference of whakapapa, stories and histories through the generations, traversing time and space. This practice makes connections with the past and present and communicates knowledge and identity that incorporates expressions of creativity and spirituality. Mita saw herself as the modern day equivalent of the individual in the iwi, hapū or whānau who carried the oral tradition. Associated with this position are the related responsibilities to honour

\textsuperscript{1009} Ibid., 41.
\textsuperscript{1010} Ibid., 42-43.
\textsuperscript{1011} Horrocks, "New Zealand Film Makers at the Auckland City Art Gallery: Merata Mita."
\textsuperscript{1012} Myers, \textit{Head and Shoulders}, 46-47.
\textsuperscript{1013} Richard Rautjoki, "Rangatira - Making Waves: Merata Mita," (Television Documentary 1998); Myers, \textit{Head and Shoulders}, 47.
\textsuperscript{1014} Rautjoki, "Rangatira - Making Waves: Merata Mita."
\textsuperscript{1015} Whaikōrero can be described as formal speech making/oratory. It generally follows a pattern where certain elements are expressed including the acknowledgment of those who have passed on, the ancestral house, Mother Earth, the living, and purpose of the gathering. Barlow, \textit{Tikanga Whakaaro: Key Concepts in Māori Culture}, 167-68.
and maintain histories and connections with the past that keep a culture alive. Therefore, Mita’s approach to film embraces the telling of collective experiences that must inform as well as entertain. Mita was to develop and incorporate these elements in her filmmaking practices, theoretical approaches and in the stories themselves.

**Television and Filmmaking History**

The following account is an overview of Mita’s work experience in film and television, providing further context for an analysis of *Mauri*. Mita’s first significant involvement in the film industry occurred in 1977 as the result of a referral from a friend. This led to her working with a Japanese crew and later a Canadian crew who were filming in Māori communities. She was then approached by filmmaker Chris Strewe who needed assistance with his documentary *Waitangi: The Story of a Treaty and its Inheritors* (1977). Mita accepted the role of co-ordinator but became increasingly concerned about films that examined and misrepresented Māori. This led her to view her work on these types of films as a training opportunity that would enable her to make films that represented Māori from a Māori perspective.

*Karanga Hokianga Ki O Tamariki* (1979), commissioned by Pā Tate, a well-known and respected Māori priest, was the first film Mita directed. The crew included cinematographer Leon Narbey, and sound operator and co-editor Gerd Pohlmann, establishing the beginning of a long working relationship. *Karanga Hokianga Ki O Tamariki* was intended to record a papal delegation attending a Māori Catholic festival in Pangaru, a Northland community in the Hokianga. Expanding on the brief, Mita chose to go behind the scenes and focus on the local Māori community. The documentary covers Māori processes, such as pōwhiri, at length as well as raising issues of colonisation. In what could have been a male dominated documentary, given the rituals of Catholicism, Mita manages to give

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1016 Horrocks, "New Zealand Film Makers at the Auckland City Art Gallery: Merata Mita."
1019 Ibid.
1020 Rautjoki, "Rangatira - Making Waves: Merata Mita."
women prominence; particularly through representations of waiata and karanga. This reflects her philosophy to represent the collective experience that acknowledges the importance of community as opposed to institutions.\footnote{Horrocks, “New Zealand Film Makers at the Auckland City Art Gallery: Merata Mita.”} In doing so Mita pays respect to the land, the ancestors and the living. Peters proposes that it was ironic that a Church funded film that critiqued colonisation and incorporated a deliberate Māori perspective launched Mita’s career.\footnote{Peters, “Oppositional Voices: Radical Left Documentary in Aotearoa New Zealand”, 170.} However, it needs to be raised that while it may create ambiguity, for some Māori, the practice of Christian doctrine is not perceived to be in conflict with Māori politics and identity.

Mita’s analysis of colonisation, evident in Karanga Hokianga Ki O Tamariki, alongside issues of power relationships and marginalisation, identifies her position as a filmmaker. Mita explains that she situates her filmmaking within a context of struggle and as a Māori woman she is concerned with “… injustice, land, te reo Māori, the Treaty, and racism” as well as women and gender issues.\footnote{Mita, “Trick or Treat,” 38; Horrocks, “New Zealand Film Makers at the Auckland City Art Gallery: Merata Mita.”} Mita is reluctant to categorise herself as a political filmmaker not only because she views this as limiting her potential, but also because Māori rights and aspirations should not be subsumed within a broad and marginalising category.\footnote{Tony Mitchell, “Merata Mita: A Dangerous Independent,” Filmviews, Winter 1983, 7; Bruce Jesson, “Bruce Jessson Interviews Merata Mita: Film and the Making of Politics,” The Republican February 1983, 9.} Cognisant of the limiting and reductive nature of categorisation, much of Mita’s work is political in the sense that she analyses power and seeks to represent the interests of those who are marginalised. Mita is a strong advocate of mana wahine; this was evidenced early in her career when she joined the television production team on Koha in the early 1980s.\footnote{Merata Mita worked on Koha from 1980 to 1981 in the roles of researcher, reporter and presenter.} Her role as presenter was challenged by some who likened the set of Koha to the marae and applied particular protocols as a way of arguing that Mita had no right to speak because this was a man’s role.\footnote{Rautjoki, “Rangatira - Making Waves: Merata Mita.”} Mita refused to be silenced, believing that tradition and culture could either be used as a form of oppression or could challenge expected norms and push boundaries.\footnote{Myers, Head and Shoulders, 56.}
Mita’s drive to represent issues of injustice and in particular injustices against Māori is apparent in the documentary *Bastion Point: Day 507* co-directed by Mita, Narbey and Pohlmann. The film centres on the day that police and military removed Māori rights advocates from land at Takaparawha, (Ngāti Whātua). The land was occupied in order to prevent its sale by the Crown. The footage was shot in 1978 but due to a lack of funding the film was not completed until 1980. Attesting to the determination and commitment of the filmmakers who found ways to access free or low cost equipment, the documentary was made with only $2,500 from a QE II Arts Council grant.  

*Bastion Point: Day 507* is a milestone in cinematic engagement with Māori struggles.

Consistent with aspects of oral traditions the documentary establishes connections between the past and present that honour iwi collective experiences. Mita’s voice-over commentary at the outset of the film relays the processes of colonisation by recalling the Crown’s historical mistreatment of Ngāti Whātua and relentless confiscation of land. During the coverage of the eviction, events unfold with no narration. The presentation of evidence includes footage and sound shot on the day, still photographs, television news coverage and radio reports. This allows the audience to bear witness to the unfolding of events. Close shots of the land occupiers convey strength, resistance and challenge through facial expressions, words and actions such as the haka. The intention of the Māori leaders to maintain passive resistance is clearly represented in the film echoing earlier leaders such as Te Whiti o Rongomai and Tohu Kakahi. Mita celebrates and affirms mana wahine through the selection and positioning of powerful images of Māori women. For example, in the midst of the eviction a kuia involved in the occupation holds onto the pou (post/pole) for support, simultaneously conveying a sense of strength and grief.

The documentary disrupts hegemonic and emotive patterning of Māori as ‘violent’ or ‘radical political activists’. Dominant representations of this nature are
evident in media coverage at Waitangi and the foreshore and seabed debate.\textsuperscript{1029} Bastion Point: Day 507 is an example of Tuhiwai Smith’s ‘counter story’ where stories incorporate memories of injustices that expose and explain issues of racism and colonisation.\textsuperscript{1030} “Coming to know the past” through creating indigenous and alternative memories can transform our “colonized views of our own history (as written by the West).”\textsuperscript{1031} Counter stories become a powerful form of resistance.\textsuperscript{1032}

Mita’s alliance with Narbey and Pohlmann led to future film collaborations that linked Māori issues with other political struggles, representing a strong alliance between Māori and socialist empathies in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This is illustrated in the three documentaries, the The Hammer and the Anvil (1979), Kinleith ’80 (1982) and The Bridge: A Story of Men in Dispute (1982). The Hammer and the Anvil follows the history of the New Zealand trade union movement. It examines inequalities and includes discussions on the changing roles of women in the workforce, male attitudes and the Māori and Pacific workforce. Kinleith ’80 covers worker perspectives on the paper mill strike and The Bridge: A Story of Men in Dispute recounts workers’ diverse experiences of the long industrial dispute during the construction of the Māngere Bridge in Auckland.\textsuperscript{1033} Kinleith ’80 focuses on the Tokoroa community, examining women’s involvement in decision-making both as partners of striking workers and as workers themselves. Community collaboration is emphasised because of the crucial role it played in supplying the families of striking workers with food and money. Peters writes that documentaries that centred Māori including Karanga Hokianga Ki O Tamariki, Bastion Point: Day 507 and the later Patu! were generally seen to be driven by Mita whereas those focusing on working conditions and class were Pohlman’s domain.\textsuperscript{1034}

\textsuperscript{1029} Phelan and Shearer, “The "Radical", the "Activist" and the Hegemonic Newspaper Articulation of the Aotearoa New Zealand Foreshore and Seabed Conflict.”; Abel, Shaping the News: Waitangi Day on Television; Rankine, “Media & Te Tiriti O Waitangi 2007.”
\textsuperscript{1030} Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 144.
\textsuperscript{1031} Ibid., 34-35.
\textsuperscript{1032} Ibid., 150-51.
\textsuperscript{1033} Mita’s roles: The Hammer and the Anvil as co-producer and co-cirector, Kinleith ’80 as researcher and The Bridge: A Story of Men in Dispute as co-cirector.
\textsuperscript{1034} Peters, "Oppositional Voices: Radical Left Documentary in Aotearoa New Zealand", 172.
Mita’s collaboration with Pohlmann and Narbey allowed her to develop her filmmaking skills and work on some exceptional documentaries, however conflict arose when her perspectives and understandings could not be satisfactorily expressed. She recalls difficulties arising during the editing of *Bastion Point: Day 507*. Mita felt that the perspective she brought to the film was undermined by Narbey and Pohlmann who, she believed, wanted to present the police as doing their duty. Although Mita was finally satisfied that *Bastion Point: Day 507* was consistent with her analysis, the collaboration on *The Bridge: A Story of Men in Dispute* failed to acknowledge racism and sexism to the extent she would have liked. These experiences illustrate Mita’s drive to ensure that the films she was involved in expressed her philosophies and understandings of injustice and oppression informed by her identity as a Māori woman.

The documentary, *Keskidee - Aroha* (1981) co-produced and co-directed by Mita and Martyn Sanderson is a further example of her commitment to provide an analysis of colonisation and offer counter hegemonic representations of Māori on screen. The film documents a London based black theatre group as they toured Aotearoa, visiting Māori communities and marae. *Keskidee - Aroha* observes the interactions and responses from Māori and members of the theatre group whose worldviews and expectations are challenged during the tour. Following oral traditions Mita honours and presents stories connected to the areas the theatre group visits by talking with local iwi and communities. As a result wider issues of colonisation are able to emerge, including the alienation of land and importance of te reo Māori. Māori gangs are represented in a constructive and positive way that is in contrast to dominant negative media depictions. For example, gangs that reside in areas visited by the theatre group are represented as hard working and community orientated. Time is spent with an urban gang who are setting up a centre in order to get young people off the streets. These types of representations are consistent with Mita’s desire to make a dent in prevailing misrepresentations of Māori.1036

1035 Myers, *Head and Shoulders*, 51-54.
Films that are immediate recordings of important events, where minorities struggle against state forces or big business are significant elements in Mita’s work and can be seen in her next major documentary *Patu!* (1983). The film covers the growth of the anti-apartheid movement and the extraordinary events leading up to and during the rugby Springbok Tour of Aotearoa in 1981. The government enabled the Tour by choosing to grant visas to the South African players; this divided the country setting supporters of the Tour and anti-Tour demonstrators, who were against the South African system of apartheid, against each other. Up to the Tour, anti-apartheid demonstrators mobilised and marched but the government refused to change its position and the Tour went ahead. During the Tour demonstrators gathered in large numbers and represented a wide cross section of the community; in all over 150,000 people participated in demonstrations. The police were armed with batons and brutal clashes occurred between demonstrators and police in the streets and in particular outside the rugby stadiums. The Hamilton game was stopped when anti-Tour demonstrators broke police barriers and staged a sit-in on the rugby field, resulting in clashes between rugby supporters and anti-Tour demonstrators. Similar to *Bastion Point: Day 507*, *Patu!* was not scripted prior to filming nor commissioned by a broadcaster but evolved and developed as the stories and events unfolded.

As with *Bastion Point Day 507*, *Patu!* uses handheld cameras, footage predominantly shot from within the protest rather than distant vantage points, has minimal narration and incorporates a range of photographic images and radio commentary. This creates a space for the viewer to establish their own interpretations and analysis; although as Peters correctly surmises a supporter of the Tour would find *Patu!* an uncomfortable experience. *Patu!* gives voice to the wide range of people involved in mobilising against the Tour. This reflects Mita’s decision to speak to a broad audience because she wanted to acknowledge the mass mobilisation of middle class Pākehā who tried to stop the Tour. Despite this there is a strong Māori voice in *Patu!* that challenges the myth of a

1039 Mita, “The Soul and the Image,” 47.
racially harmonious country. The film clearly articulates the need for Pākehā to urgently address colonisation and racism in Aotearoa and constantly reminds the audience of the historical and ongoing struggles of Māori. This is reinforced during the final credits with a music soundtrack in English and te reo Māori. *Patu!* incorporates the powerful voices of Māori women; for example Donna Awatere and Hilda Harawira are given space to speak eloquently about Māori experiences of colonisation. This is reminiscent of Mita’s earlier struggle to ensure a Māori woman’s voice on *Koha*. *Patu!* reflects oral traditions with its non-linear structure, which does not rigidly follow a chronological order and links the past and present. In addition, the layered soundtracks and intercutting of images convey additional meanings. This is seen when Mita includes two cutaway shots of an elderly non-Pākehā woman as she quietly gazes out from her window at the battle between police and anti-Tour demonstrators. Repetition of the shot emphasises the elderly woman’s role as witness to the unfolding events; creating speculation about her internal commentary.1040

The making of *Patu!* required extensive collaboration and Mita continued her alliance with Pohlmann and Narbey as well as working with filmmakers including Gaylene Preston and Roger Donaldson. The main credit for cinematographer goes to Barry Harbet and additional camera work includes Alun Bollinger and Waka Atttewell who worked in various sites around the country. The vast amount of footage was shaped and overseen by Mita in her role as producer and director.1041 Annie Collins who previously worked with Mita on *Keskidee - Aroha* was editor. At the time Collins was aware of opposition based on the perception that Mita would bring a Māori bias to the film.1042 The criticism illustrates the hegemonic assumption that a Pākehā viewpoint is ‘neutral’ or ‘universal’. This resonates with Balibar’s description of racism, which assumes the existence of two main groups in society, the universal and particularistic.1043 In 1998 Mita’s partner, Geoff

1041 Patu as a verb means to strike, beat or thrash and as a noun means weapon. Patu was also the name given to one of the well organised squads that directly confronted police lines at the final test match at Mt Eden Park, Auckland.  
1042 Rautjoki, "Rangatira - Making Waves: Merata Mita."  
Murphy, reflected on Mita’s filmmaking career by describing the racism in the film industry, which meant Mita had a double battle to fight.\footnote{Rautjoki, “Rangatira - Making Waves: Merata Mita.”}

*Patu!* was made on a very small budget consisting of a $13,000 grant from QEII Arts Council and a loan of $18,000 from the NZFC secured much later in the production.\footnote{Martin and Edwards, *New Zealand Film 1912-1996*, 91.} Shelton believes that the Commission had no option but to invest in *Patu!* because it was a project that had absolute support and commitment from everyone working in the industry.\footnote{Shelton.} Mita was openly critical of the inequitable investment and exercise of power by the NZFC. She challenged the industry as a whole to address injustices and make a space for Māori and marginalised voices.\footnote{Merata Mita, “A Film Maker’s Manifesto,” *Alternative Cinema* Spring/Summer 1984/85, 19.} Her appointment to the Board of the NZFC in the mid-1980s took Mita by surprise and she speculates whether this was a strategy to co-opt her.\footnote{Myers, *Head and Shoulders*, 71.} However, her continued critique of inequitable funding structures and advocacy for Māori access to filmmaking suggest it was a failed strategy.\footnote{Ibid.}

Documentaries such as *Bastion Point: Day 507* and *Patu!* were an immediate response to political events, which meant they were not scripted to a level that would meet the expectations of potential investors such as the NZFC. Therefore, funders would have to take a risk, something that institutions are generally averse to. The historical unwillingness of the NZFC to invest in documentaries may have also contributed to their lack of support, along with the highly politicised nature of the events covered in *Patu!* that exposed racism and colonisation in Aotearoa. This implicates funders in perpetuating regimes of colonial power that Mita sought to critique. However, QEII Arts Council was a smaller funding body with different objectives and was prepared to take a risk.

Mita also experienced considerable police attention during the making of *Patu!* when an attempt was made to seize material for evidence in pending court cases against anti-Tour protestors. This led to the production team sending raw footage

\footnote{Rautjoki, “Rangatira - Making Waves: Merata Mita.”}
to a laboratory in Australia.\footnote{Ibid., 60; Rautjoki, "Rangatira - Making Waves: Merata Mita."} Working on Koha at the time, Mita was threatened with dismissal by television management because of her involvement in Patu!. She points out inconsistencies as similar threats were not applied to colleagues who organised an anti-Tour art exhibition and attended rugby games.\footnote{Myers, Head and Shoulders, 58; Peters, "Oppositional Voices: Radical Left Documentary in Aotearoa New Zealand", 183.}

Patu! was distributed nationally through independent cinemas. Two major cinema chains, Amalgamated and Kerridge Odeon refused to distribute or screen the documentary for political reasons.\footnote{Pascale Lamche, "Interview with Merata Mita," Framework 25 (1984): 9.} As with Bastion Point: Day 507, Patu! was also shown around the country at venues including marae, universities and art galleries.\footnote{Myers, Head and Shoulders, 52-67.} The film was distributed internationally and generally well received with the Guardian calling Patu! “unquestionably one of the strongest and most vivid documentaries of recent years.”\footnote{Shelton, The Selling of New Zealand Movies, 59.}

Throughout her career Mita took on acting and advisory roles in film. For example, her role as Matu in Utu! directed by Murphy discussed in Chapter Three in relation to Mita’s determination to address the construction of Māori women as chattels. She had a similar experience when she was involved in the early scripting of The Quiet Earth (1985) where she argued that the roles of women were objectified.\footnote{The Quiet Earth is directed by Geoff Murphy. An apocolyptical event wipes out the population except for a few survivors who are determined to ensure their own survival.} She was also concerned about the representations of Māori men and felt that the main Māori male character in the film was tokenistic. Although changes were eventually made as a result of Mita determinedly arguing her case, she found the experience extremely frustrating and isolating.\footnote{Myers, Head and Shoulders, 64.}

Two documentaries made after Mauri and directed by Mita are also worthy of mention - Mana Waka (1990) and Hotere (2001). Mana Waka is a feature length documentary. It was originally commissioned fifty years earlier by Tainui leader Te Puea Herangi as a record of the building of three waka taua (war canoes). The
archival footage was retrieved and the project was supported by Te Arikinui Dame te Atairangikaahu (Māori Queen). As with Karanga Hokianga Ki O Tamariki, Mita extended the film’s original brief which, in this project, was to shape the footage of the building of the waka into a feature film. An idea occurred when she uncovered spiritual elements in the story and also became aware of the strength of Dame Te Puea and her vision as a leader. Mana Waka follows the felling of the trees, the building of the waka, and their launch, but Te Puea also features significantly, including coverage of her investiture. In-depth coverage of the carving of the waka is provided with no voice-over, only the sound of the chisel, as the audience witnesses the transformation of the wood. Mana Waka is a moving documentary that not only records the building of the waka but also historical events and places of significance and valuable depictions of tūpuna. Working again with Collins as editor they based themselves at Tūrangawaewae marae at Ngāruawāhia in the Waikato. Mita was aware of the deeply spiritual and emotional responses from elders when they watched the film.1057 This resonates with Barclay and Kahurangi Waititi’s notion of ‘interiority,’ or wairua referring to the unseen elements or spiritual essence residing in film at a deeper level. While it is difficult to articulate, this element requires attention.1058

Hotere (2001) directed by Mita was co-produced with Eliza Bidois Owen with executive producer Barrie Everard. The documentary covers Māori artist Ralph Hotere’s work and space is given to represent his art work cinematically. As with her previous documentaries, exposition is not prominent, creating a space for the viewer to establish their own interpretations and analysis. Hotere includes references to land and whakapapa, present in Mita’s previous work. Most recently, Mita co-produced Waititi’s latest dramatic feature film, BOY.

Mita contributed to an international indigenous community as teacher, advocate and mentor. In the 1990s Mita spent much of her time in the United States and worked in Hawai‘i as Assistant Professor at the Academy of Creative Media, University of Hawai‘i Manoa, teaching indigenous screenwriting, aesthetics and

1058 Barclay, “Celebrating Fourth Cinema,” 7; Waititi, “Māori Documentary Film: Interiority and Exteriority.”
production. She saw her university role as assisting with translating oral traditions to the screen.\textsuperscript{1059} Mita was directly involved with: National Geographic’s All Roads Film Project (provides seed grants to help indigenous or minority culture filmmakers produce films or videos); ImagineNATIVE Film Festival in Canada and; the Sundance Institute’s Native Programme. In 2003 and 2004 Mita was the Artistic Director and Creative Advisor to the Sundance/Moonstone screenwriters labs held in Aotearoa. She was also an adviser to the Australian Film Commission’s inaugural screenwriters’ workshop for Aboriginal Australian writers and directors called The Long Black Writers Lab (2005).\textsuperscript{1060} Locally, Mita was appointed to the NZFC, Te Paepae Ataata.

Mita did not solely work on Māori and politically driven projects. She worked in Hollywood where she was credited as Assistant to Director Geoff Murphy on the science fiction, big budget film, \textit{Freejack} (1992). She is also credited as Second Unit Director or Assistant Director on Murphy’s \textit{Ghosts of the Confederacy}, an episode in the American film series, \textit{The Magnificent Seven} (1998), a western set in the post-Civil-War era. These examples suggest that not all of Mita’s filmmaking is explicitly charged. This may be for reasons of economics, opportunity or the desire not to limit creativity because of expectations that Māori filmmakers must always produce work that fits into particular categories.

Struggles against injustices that include the effects of colonisation and racism are strong themes in Mita’s work. In addition, she offers counter hegemonic representations of Māori and in particular advances mana wahine. These elements persist in her work and are developed and expressed in dramatic form in her feature film, \textit{Mauri}. Mita’s emphasis on the oral tradition and the importance of storytelling that connects Māori with histories, tūpuna and wairua are important elements in her work. This brief biography offers a context for the following examination of \textit{Mauri}.

\textsuperscript{1060} "Merata Mita," www.wiftauckland.org.nz/events/merata_mita.
Mauri

Introduction

*Mauri* is chosen for particular consideration because it is, to date, the only dramatic feature film to be solely directed and written by a Māori woman.1061 *Mauri* also belongs to a small group of dramatic feature films that have Māori creative control, position Māori at their centre, speak directly to an indigenous audience and emerge from Māori realities. *Mauri* is the only dramatic feature film Mita wrote and also directed. *Mauri* is a film of both national and international significance, receiving acclaim overseas and winning third prize at Italy’s Rimini Film Festival and Douarenenez Cinema, France in 2001.1062 Geoff Murphy, who had extensive film experience, was Associate Producer and Mita was the Producer. Murphy previously worked with Mita on *Utu* and *Patu!*. *Mauri* was released in 1988, a year after the release of *Ngati* and was also shot in a rural community on the East Coast of the North Island.

Synopsis

*Mauri* is set in the 1950s in the small, fictional, rural, coastal community of Te Mata. With a similar location and historical setting to *Ngati*, *Mauri* also reflects the migration of Māori to the cities. In particular though, *Mauri* focuses on the urbanisation of young Māori men and the major effects Māori experienced as a result of changing economic times. This is expressed in *Mauri* in a number of ways including a focus on city gangs and the increasing disproportionate Māori prison population. In the 1950s Māori men constituted 18% of the prison population despite the fact that they were only 4% of the total population.1063

*Mauri* has several storylines. Although the story of Rewi Rapana (Zac Wallace) is a dramatic focus frequently referred to as the main storyline, this interpretation

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These two stories provide the foundation around which a number of events, stories and characters are intertwined and revealed. Rewi ostensibly returns to the small community of Te Mata after many years. His deeply troubled behaviour and brief flashbacks suggest a problematic past. The reasons for Rewi’s torment and secretive behaviour are not revealed until the end of the film when he explains his past transgressions to Kara. It turns out that Rewi is an imposter and his real name is Paki Selwyn Hemopo, from the iwi of Ngāti Wero. While living in the city he joined a gang and was involved in a failed robbery that saw him arrested and jailed. Making his escape he stole a car and picked up the real Rewi Rapana who was returning to Te Mata after an absence of twenty years. After hours of driving, where Rewi Rapana talks about his life in-depth, the car rolls and the real Rewi Rapana is killed. After taking Rewi Rapana’s identification, medallion and bone taonga Paki pushes the car, with Rewi inside, over a cliff. Paki then goes to Te Mata posing as the recently deceased Rewi Rapana. Kara and the community accept him, offering him spiritual, emotional and physical support. Kara is the lynchpin of the whānau and community and the custodian of the ancestors’ knowledge and wisdom. She gently guides events and relationships with a certainty derived from her spirituality and connections with the land. Kara passes on her love and knowledge to her mokopuna (granddaughter) Awatea and niece Ramari. After Ramari is rejected by Rewi, who cannot form a relationship due to his internal conflict over his deception, she marries a local Pākehā farmer, Steve Semmens. Prior to the marriage Steve Semmens lived with his father, Mr Semmens (Geoff Murphy) who had acquired Māori land in the community by dubious means. Mr Semmens is overtly racist and refuses to accept his son’s marriage to Ramari. Kara’s nephew Willie, the leader of a gang, lives in the city but visits home regularly. He is later murdered by one of his gang members, Herb, a minor character. In the final section Rewi, who is being chased by police, seeks to address his transgressions by returning to the scene of the car accident at Kara’s behest. At the time of Rewi’s reconciliation with his past and subsequent arrest Kara dies peacefully surrounded by whānau.

1064 The Mauri Press Kit for example describes the film as the “story of a man, Rewi, who reclaims his spirituality.” In Mauri Press Kit, ”Mauri: A Presentation for a Feature Film by Merata Mita,” (New Zealand Film Archive).
Mauri deals with the broad themes of identity, colonisation and its counterpart, racism. Identity is expressed in complex ways, including Rewi’s status as an impostor which contrasts against Kara’s strong sense of identity. Racism is threaded throughout the film and blatantly expressed by Mr Semmens. Kara’s nephew Willie embodies the effects of colonisation and urbanisation through his gang membership and violent death. Foundational to Mauri is the representation of Māori worldviews and community, including connections to land and people and aroha embodied by Kara.

The Production of Mauri

Released a year after Ngati, Mauri was made within similar political, economic, social and technological contexts. Mita was an experienced filmmaker having successfully directed documentary features and worked on dramatic feature films. These experiences gave her a strong foundation for the making of Mauri that is particularly informed by her upbringing. At the time of production, Mauri was the second dramatic feature film that centrally positioned Māori characters as protagonists and was driven and controlled by Māori creatives. It is additionally significant because it strongly articulates a Māori woman’s voice. However, an examination of production processes on Mauri is limited in comparison with Ngati which Barclay wrote about in his book Our Own Image. There is no comparable information on Mauri, resulting in a significant gap in the history of Māori filmmaking.

Mauri is not iwi specific and therefore encompasses all iwi. Similar to Poata and his writing of Ngati, Mauri draws on Mita’s own iwi connections and experiences in a rural community where te reo Māori was the primary language spoken.1065 Mita recalls that Pākehā predominantly held positions of power but within the Māori community an authority grounded in Māori worldviews operated. Mita elaborates:

1065 Myers, Head and Shoulders, 38-39.
It was like two worlds co-existing, this very safe and secure Māori world that I lived in, and another world outside with different social patterns and an order or authority that clashed with my own.1066

The role of Kara also reflects Mita’s childhood experiences where she observed women elders absorbing the pain of others and “trying to put everyone on a path that would keep them whole and steadfast.”1067 Because of previous experiences working on films such as *Utu* and *The Quiet Earth*, Mita was determined to have control over the scripting of *Mauri.*1068

Like Barclay and Poata, Mita perceives that her approach to narrative structure is in conflict with dominant practices. The narrative structure of *Mauri* is consistent with oral traditions where multiple connections are made between the past, present and future, and time is not necessarily perceived as a steady sequential progression. This is evident in Mita’s work, including *Bastion Point: Day 507* and *Patu!*, where historical connections are made that link the past, present and future. Mita explains her thinking:

> I don’t have what they call a rational sense of sequential events. I don’t see time in a chronological order at all. My past goes back over a thousand years, which could be yesterday, and it applies to the future as well.1069

Although events in *Patu!* for example, are not strictly chronological there is a sense of order and progression. In *Mauri* flashbacks impinge on the present, traversing time and space, but overall events follow a chronological order. Mita describes the influence of the oral tradition on her narrative structure, where story is layered, and as each layer is pulled back, more is revealed allowing for a depth of meaning to emerge.1070 This is evident in the gradual revelation of Rewi’s deceit and transgression. Critics including Peter Calder and Brian McDonnell

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1066 Ibid., 39.
1067 Television, "Kete Aronui: Series 5, Interview with Merata Mita."
1068 Myers, *Head and Shoulders*, 64.
1069 Ibid., 52.
wrote that the film’s structure and storyline were confusing. Confusion can result from the late explanation of Rewi’s troubled and erratic behaviour that is only signalled through brief and unexplained flashbacks. This is confounded by the seemingly implausible acceptance of the imposter Rewi by the community, despite a twenty year absence. These structural and narrative elements make *Mauri* a complex story that can at times confuse.

Echoing Barclay’s experience, Mita found that she was asked for further explanations about events and characters in *Mauri*. She received frequent questions from Pākehā wanting to know why Willie was killed. Mita felt this was the need for reassurance and a denial of racism, because Willie’s character exposes the harsh ongoing realities of colonisation.

In the 1980s during the writing of *Mauri*, although definitions varied, biculturalism was widely discussed as a strategy to promote equity between Māori and Pākehā and to challenge Pākehā monoculturalism. As discussed in Chapter Two, although biculturalism made some gains it failed to adequately address issues of power and injustice. Mita explains that one of her motivations for making *Mauri* was to examine both Pākehā and Māori cultures from a Māori perspective, including the imperative that Māori become bicultural and live in two worlds. This resonates with Walker’s analysis of biculturalism arguing that Māori, by definition, are bicultural because they have to function in two worlds to survive, but Pākehā are not similarly required. Mita observes that the bicultural requirement led Māori to significantly modify their behaviour in Pākehā environments. She argues that this manifests as the “schizophrenic existence of so many Māori in Pākehā society” leading to internalised and externalised expressions of conflict. This state becomes a psychological prison that can be worse than jail. Mita represents the psychological conflict in *Mauri* through allegory and in particular the character of Rewi, who is tortured by his dual

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1075 Mita, "The Soul and the Image," 49.
1076 Ibid.
existence and cannot live in peace until he resolves his situation. It was Mita’s aim to offer resolutions in *Mauri* that addressed these conflicts without resorting to violence. She hoped to offer a transformational experience that would bring “re-growth and rebirth.”  

*Mauri* was made primarily for a Māori audience but allows a Pākehā audience a glimpse at the conflict Māori experience as the result of colonisation. Mita explains:

> Hopefully it [*Mauri*] allows them to see into the kind of schism that exists in Māori society, that which I described as being internalised is what so many Māori people carry inside of themselves and which other groups of Māori people give expression to in the streets.

Mita’s intentions reflect Barclay’s ‘talking in’ where the indigenous voice is centred and others can listen in, but on Māori terms. However, she was also aware of the competing demands associated with privileging the indigenous voice and investment imperatives to attract a dominant non-indigenous international audience. Like Barclay, this led Mita to promote the need to make indigenous centred films that speak to an indigenous audience which do not subordinate that voice in order to appeal to a mass audience. It is however difficult for indigenous filmmakers to achieve this given the collective nature of filmmaking, vested financial interests and the pressures to attract a ‘broad’ (white) audience. Mita felt that indigenous stories, evident in *Bastion Point: Day 507*, and their unfamiliarity to funders meant that indigenous filmmakers had additional struggles securing funding. This resonates with earlier discussions related to funding inequities that implicate the Crown and its agencies in perpetuating regimes of colonial power evidenced in the types of stories that are predominantly funded. Despite these issues investment for *Mauri* was eventually secured from

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1078 Ibid.
1079 Ibid.
1080 Barclay, *Our Own Image*, 74-80.
1082 Clark, "Merata Mita Nurturing the Power."
1083 Myers, *Head and Shoulders*, 71.
the NZFC and private investors.1084 This may have resulted from an unspoken commitment by NZFC to invest in Māori projects, raised in Chapter Three.1085 As with Ngati, the Commission expected that Mauri would achieve theatrical release, which would have influenced their decision to invest.1086

Some of the crew had worked with Mita on previous projects. Mauri had a predominantly Māori cast and crew and Mita’s commitment to this was based on aspirations to create a Māori feature film industry. Mita hoped that Ngati and Mauri would contribute to this aim and as a result increase the need to have Māori actors, key creatives and technicians.1087 Like Barclay, Mita believed it was essential to employ Māori crew given the content and depth of Māori worldviews expressed in the film.1088 It was an extraordinary achievement that, of the fifty-three crew, thirty-three were Māori, given both the need to satisfy the funders’ technical expectations and that there were very few Māori experienced in filmmaking at the time.1089 As a result Māori participation in the film industry increased. For example, Fred Renata began working as an electrical engineer and started his filmmaking career as a lighting assistant on Mauri.1090 His goal was to become a camera operator and he has since gone on to be Director of Photography on feature films including Magik and Rose (2000), Fracture (2004) and Barclay’s The Kaipara Affair.1091 Pita Turei, Assistant Director on Mauri and Karen Sidney who also worked on Ngati and crewed in the Art Department of Mauri have both continued working in film and television.

Māori professionals as well as high profile community figures worked on Mauri. The Musical Director was the late acclaimed Hirini Melbourne, a scholar and musician. He contributed to the revitalisation of the art of both making and

1084 “Mauri Production Projections,” (Wellington: New Zealand Film Archive, Not Dated).
1086 Horrocks.
1087 Casserly, “The Journey.”
1088 Ibid; Parekowhai, ”Kōrero Ki Taku Tuakana: Merata Mita and Me,” 22.
1089 Twyford, ”Mita’s Minefield.”
1091 Magik & Rose, directed by Vanessa Alexander and produced by Larry Parr explores the lives of two women living in a small town who both want a child. Fracture, directed and written by Larry Parr covers the exploits of two families as they negotiate parenting, criminal activity and life changing revelations.
playing Māori instruments, including the kōauau and pūtorino that are both types of flutes. Mita also worked with the Casting Director Don Selwyn and they chose to cast a number of non-professional actors in key roles. There were minor challenges encountered in working with inexperienced actors, such as hitting marks and achieving the level of performance required in relation to the framing, such as close shots and positioning. This is especially apparent in displays of unrequited love between Ramari and Rewi that appears, at times, overplayed. Reviewer Helen Martin, while praising Mauri, had reservations that the film was shot for emotional impact occasionally resulting in the expression of passions that were almost “too big for the screen.” Combined with a demanding script this required a great deal of skill from the actors. Overall, performances from the actors are strong and Rickard’s performance is particularly powerful. Mita was aware that the reality represented by the characters was closely aligned to some of the actors’ own experiences and in particular Eva Rickard, Zac Wallace and Sonny Waru as Hemi (kaumātua). Rickard (1925-1997), for example, was a well-known Māori rights advocate and leader in Tainui land struggles.

Although the cast was predominantly Māori some Pākehā were employed as Heads of Department. For example, Graeme Cowley was Director of Photography. Cowley and Mauri’s camera operator, Paul Leach, had worked on Utu directed by Murphy. Mita worked again with Collins who was the rough cut editor. In a personal interview Cowley spoke about the importance of the visual elements in Mauri, the landscape, buildings and the 1950s setting; motivating him to find a way to control the natural harsh lighting and variations that occur in Aotearoa. Cowley decided to use a device called the Lightflex “to introduce a colour wash over the images as an alternative or in addition to normal filtering processes.” The Lightflex is a system of image enhancement attached in front of the camera lens. Soft light is reflected into the lens and directly onto the film during filming. Cowley explains that the technique was experimental and the result of a well considered decision to combine photographic techniques that

1092 Casserly, "The Journey."
1093 Helen Martin, "Return to Te Mata," Listener, 9 September 1989, 70.
1094 Casserly, "The Journey."
1096 Duncan Petrie, Shot in New Zealand (Auckland: Random House, 2007), 134.
reflected the time period, the dramatic natural environment and the surreal quality of the story. He was pleased with the footage and believed that he achieved the control he wanted over the light and textual elements.\textsuperscript{1097} The cinematography is beautiful and captures the dramatic landscape. This was commented on by reviewers who described Cowley’s cinematography as breathtaking and dramatic.\textsuperscript{1098}

The film’s landscape was the result of Mita’s search on the East Coast for a suitable location. She eventually found the remote Okaraea or Mutton Point, on the East Coast of Aotearoa, commenting:

I knew the instant I saw it. It was incredibly beautiful – a spiritual place. The locals felt I had been led there. They were fascinated I had even found the place.\textsuperscript{1099}

Mita was committed to working with the local communities, ensuring they benefited from the production. Mana whenua, Te Whānau a Apanui, were involved in the production and hired as extras.\textsuperscript{1100} Local teacher, Tuihana Pook, co-ordinated the extras and locals were given turns to allow each community to be involved and earn money.\textsuperscript{1101} At times up to seventy extras were required.\textsuperscript{1102} Locals also assisted by bringing photos from the 1950s era and the Art Department used second-hand shops in the region.\textsuperscript{1103}

Consistent with Māori protocols and reflecting practices developed on Ngati, the production of Mauri began with a pōwhiri for the film crew.\textsuperscript{1104} Mita also accessed Māori structures and processes during the making of Mauri which she said concerned the NZFC because of their unfamiliarity and departure from

\textsuperscript{1097} Cowley.
\textsuperscript{1098} Bill Gosden, "Auckland Film Festival Catalogue," (New Zealand International Film Festival, July 1988), 63; Martin, "Return to Te Mata," 70.
\textsuperscript{1099} Twyford, "Mita’s Minefield."
\textsuperscript{1100} Anon, "Maori Film Set for Te Kaha," Daily Post, 13 February 1987.
\textsuperscript{1102} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1103} Ibid., 27.
\textsuperscript{1104} Anon, "Film Company on Location," Whakatane Beacon, 20 February 1987; ———, "Maori Film Set for Te Kaha."
dominant practice. For instance, when difficulties arose during the making of
Mauri (Mita does not give specific examples) they were settled on the marae.  

An eight week filming schedule was planned but cut short. A smaller crew
returned to film at a later date replacing some Heads of Departments including
Director of Photography, Cowley. This may have been due to financial
constraints but could also have been the result of tensions on the set. The
existence of such tensions was expressed publically by Mita and in a personal
interview with Cowley. The reason for the tensions differed in the two accounts.
Mita saw it as a “culture clash” that stemmed from racist and arrogant attitudes
similar to Barclay’s concerns during the filming of Ngati, when he was confronted
with what he saw as the persistence and entrenchment of Pākehā worldviews and
practices. Cowley however believed the tensions were the result of Mita’s
more “organic” approach to filmmaking, which was in conflict with some of the
Pākehā crew’s expectations and experiences. While I am not able to go into
this in any depth because of a lack of information I believe it is important to
mention this issue.

Exhibition and Reception

Mauri found very few overseas distributors and received limited theatrical release
in Aotearoa. However, Mita received positive responses to the film when she
screened it overseas. Reviewers in Aotearoa generally pointed out both
deficiencies and attributes. Frequently praised for its power, emotion and
cinematography, the film was criticised for its narrative structure, and the
credibility of some of the characters; in particular racist Mr Semmens. This led to
some reviewers describing the film as simultaneously imperfect and

1106 Anon, “Film Company on Location.”
1107 Twyford, “Mita’s Minefield.”
1108 Cowley.
1109 Shelton, The Selling of New Zealand Movies, 95.
magnificent. Film festival reviewer Bill Gosden succinctly described *Mauri* as a “rich brew not a smooth one.”

It is important to examine John Parker’s review of *Mauri* because he openly questioned his own colonial assumptions and limited understandings of Māori. Although not elaborating on details he explains that he refused to review *Ngati* because of an extreme dislike of the film. However, his positive response to *Mauri* forced him to come to terms with confronting his own “ignorance”, precipitating another viewing of *Ngati*. Parker’s response supports the need for Māori to produce more films grounded in Māori worldviews and experiences, highlighting the uniqueness of films such as *Ngati* and *Mauri*. More broadly, it indicates the privileged position of Pākehā, the pervasiveness of dominant worldviews that inform judgements, and the need for reviewers to reach beyond their own colonial assumptions and ignorance.

Mita recalls that some of the younger Māori crew challenged her about using the word ‘mauri’ for the film’s title. Their concern may have been for a number of reasons including the newness of representing Māori knowledge and culture on screen. The term ‘mauri’, discussed earlier, has a depth of meaning that could explain the reticence. Given the ramifications of colonisation there is a sense of holding on to and protecting Māori knowledge in order to preserve it from corruption but this means that its use and relevance in more recent times can be lost. In colonised societies there will always be a tension between protecting knowledge and using a mass medium to communicate it. Acutely aware of her responsibilities as a Māori filmmaker Mita speculated on how *Mauri* would be received by Māori. However, there is evidence to suggest that Māori were not overly concerned by these types of representations on screen.

The need to produce films like *Mauri* is reinforced by varied and positive Māori reactions to the film gathered by Tepora Kupenga. Kupenga wanted to explore

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1112 Gosden, "Auckland Film Festival Catalogue," 63.
1114 Myers, *Head and Shoulders*, 70-71; Clark, "Merata Mita Nurturing the Power."
Māori responses after observing the positive impact *Mauri* had on her two children, believing that attendance at Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori contributed significantly to their deeper understandings of the film.\textsuperscript{1115} She organised three viewing sessions attended by Māori of varying ages, including kaumātua. Participants in the focus groups expressed familiarity with and pleasure at seeing the images, symbols and concepts conveyed in *Mauri*. One participant said that they were “overjoyed at the depths it [*Mauri*] portrays.” In particular, the bird calls were described as very emotional and significant for Māori. One participant thought *Mauri* was a taonga requiring protection and as such should be viewed exclusively by Māori, resonating with the challenge made to Mita about the use of the word mauri. This represents the tension referred to above between protecting and sharing knowledge. Māori are justifiably fearful of misappropriation, dilution and loss, raising wider issues of power and culture. Ambivalence related to this issue is evidenced by another participant in Kupenga’s study who believed that it was imperative for *Mauri* to be seen by as many people as possible because it offered a “true picture” of Māori.\textsuperscript{1116} Concerns about the public sharing of Māori knowledge were offset by the desire to provide the world with alternative images of Māori that are counter hegemonic and convey the complexity and depth of Māori worldviews.

Given the significance and deeper meanings contained in Māori knowledge, Māori must continually question what knowledge can be shared safely in forums such as cinema, television or academia. How might it be used or interpreted? There is no simple response and while we remain cautious as to what and with whom we share knowledge, it is equally important to articulate our understandings and worldviews. In my experience the writings of Māori Marsden, who expresses the depth in Māori concepts, have contributed to my understandings of Māori worldviews and knowledge.\textsuperscript{1117}

Mita drew heavily on her own experiences when scripting *Mauri*, conscious of the need to carefully present Māori knowledge on screen. Informed by her work

\textsuperscript{1116} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1117} Royal, ed. *The Woven Universe, Selected Writings of Rev. Māori Marsden*. 

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behind and in front of the camera, Mita applied her skills to dramatic feature film. Although it may be the result of a lack of accessible documentation, Mita did not openly articulate the possibility of a non-Māori audience. In saying this she was aware of the pressures for dramatic feature film to attract a ‘broad’ audience. Unlike the decision in Ngati to cast a non-Māori in a Māori role, Mita cast Māori in Māori roles and the majority of her actors had little experience in film. This extended to the production team and the large number of Māori crew, predominantly inexperienced, that Mita managed to employ. These alone are considerable achievements that made a substantial contribution to the vision of Māori cinema.

**Mauri: Textual Analysis**

The following textual analysis of Mauri privileges Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework.

**Māori Voices**

*Te Reo Māori*

As with Ngati, Mauri was produced at a time when te reo Māori was in serious decline. Although the dialogue is primarily in English, Mauri incorporates te reo Māori. Like Ngati, the use of both Māori and English languages recognises both local and international English speaking audiences. However, unlike Ngati where subtitling does occur, although not comprehensively, te reo Māori in Mauri is never subtitled. At times te reo Māori is delivered in a manner that conveys the meaning and can be understood in context. Other occasions require some knowledge of te reo Māori, particularly when longer phrases are used. Exchanges of this type occur within a Māori environment, for example during conversations between Kara and Hemi and when Kara laments her nephew’s death. These linguistic spaces predominantly convey additional and deeper meanings that privilege a Māori speaking audience but do not detract from or omit vital information that informs the narrative. The decision not to subtitle te reo Māori may also be a reluctance to widely share particular forms of Māori knowledge. As importantly, the absence of subtitling provides a cinematic space that normalises te reo Māori and where the sound of the language can be fully appreciated.
Wider issues concerning the marginalisation of te reo Māori are raised in *Mauri*. The opening scene begins with Willie Rapana responding angrily to a telephone toll operator who mispronounces his surname. This is reminiscent of events in the 1980s when Māori strove for, at a minimum, a serious attempt for society to pronounce te reo correctly and more strategically to revitalise the language. Inaccurate Māori pronunciation by toll operators was prevalent during this time. The scene also reflects a particular event that occurred around the time *Mauri* was written. In 1984, Naida Glavish, a national toll operator and fluent speaker of te reo Māori, was directed to greet callers in English. She refused, insisting on her right to use the Māori greeting “kia ora”. She was demoted for her insubordination. Her case created widespread debate and Glavish was eventually reinstated when the Prime Minister, Robert Muldoon intervened. As the result of Māori advocacy significant gains related to te reo Māori and the need to pronounce the language correctly occurred in the broadcasting and government sectors. In *Mauri*, the Pākehā characters generally demonstrate very poor Māori language skills, signifying a belief in the inferiority and inconsequence of te reo Māori. Steve Semmens is the only exception and his attempts to pronounce Māori words correctly after his marriage suggests that a Māori/Pākehā union may promote a genuine desire to learn.

*Mauri* contains other examples of Pākehā arrogance and resistance to pronouncing Māori correctly. This is illustrated when a hui is called on the marae to discuss Māori recidivism and rehabilitation. During this scene a Government Minister half-heartedly attempts a mihi. He mangles the language and is laughed at by Māori. The Minister appears to be unconcerned. This is a continuation of his disrespectful behaviour, which was established earlier when he self-importantly and rudely pushed aside the women to reach the front of the group. He then made a quick bow to the kai karanga (women performing a call of welcome) reinforcing his arrogance and ignorance. His behaviour violates the tikanga of the marae ātea where decorum is expected and when walking onto the marae ātea women precede the men. Bowing is an English affectation that does not comfortably transpose onto the marae in this setting. His actions are simultaneously amusing.

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1118 Glavish.
and disturbing because they expose the ideological underpinnings that the English language is superior and Pākehā culture can justifiably override the customs of others.

Identity

Unlike Ngati, Mauri does not present us with Māori who are coming to terms with being Māori or discovering a Māori identity. The characters are firmly located in their diverse identities, apart from Rewi’s fraught existence. Mauri provides complex expressions of identity and Mita crafts an allegory for the effects of colonisation resulting in contradictions and colonial ‘schizophrenia’. Rewi’s multiple layers of identity are complex as he pretends to be what and who he is not, in order to survive. Rewi’s passing, not in the sense of claiming a white identity as he grounded in being Māori, but his claim to another man’s whakapapa, iwi and hapū requires him to deny his true identity. His experience parallels the effects of internalising colonisation and the passing as Pākehā by Māori in order to survive. His attempt to exist in two worlds leads to internal conflict. Rewi finally acknowledges the truth, not only to himself but to Kara; realising that he can no longer survive in this ‘schizophrenic’ state and psychological prison.

The effective control of light and unusual camera angles add to the sense of friction evidenced in Rewi’s character. This is reinforced by the use of flashbacks and visual flashes of memory. Rewi’s suffering also has ramifications for those he comes into contact with. This is exemplified in the mutual attraction between Rewi and Kara’s niece, Ramari. As a result of Rewi’s deceit he cannot declare his love unless he acknowledges his true identity and seeks to reconcile his past actions.

Rewi’s complicated and conflicted expression of identity symbolises the struggle of performing dual identities and the need to be true to oneself. Mita believed that colonisation resulted in an unnatural way of being where Māori had to “forgo the essence” of themselves in order to succeed in Pākehā society.1119 This suggests

1119 Clark, ”Merata Mita Nurturing the Power.”
the internalisation of Pākehā hegemony. One strategy for transformation put forward by Hingangaroa Smith is to critically ‘conscientise’ and free the indigenous mind from its grip.\textsuperscript{1120} Rewi’s plight symbolises the complex and internalised struggles of identity construction experienced by indigenous peoples and the need to ‘conscientise’ and break free. Rewi’s decision to accept and declare his true identity is transformative, freeing him from his internal torment. In another sense it is a story of redemption where he has to pretend to be someone else in order to find out who he is, he has to be an imposter in order to be accepted. When he confronts this, Rewi embarks on an inner journey of acceptance. This analysis supports Mita’s intention to offer a transformational experience that would bring “re-growth and rebirth.”\textsuperscript{1121}

Police officer, Te Riini (Temuera Morrison), represents another aspect of indigenous identity construction, unmasking the power of colonial hegemony. In order to succeed in Pākehā society Te Riini aspires to acquire a Pākehā girlfriend and achieve promotion within the force, at any cost. As a result he relentlessly pursues Rewi, despite the community’s efforts to thwart him. In order to succeed in the Pākehā world, symbolized by state power, Te Riini has left the essence of who he is ‘at the door’ and is implicated in a colonising agenda. This is evidenced in the scene depicting the hui on Māori recidivism. Te Riini purposefully stands outside the marae boundaries as he observes the proceedings. The physical marae boundaries and the invisible boundaries of aspirations and loyalties locate Te Riini as an outsider who has sided with colonial forces. Ironically the imposter Rewi is an insider. Rewi taunts him saying that he is on the “wrong side of the fence,” challenging him to be a Māori, take off his uniform and “cross the line.” This is a literal and figurative challenge that speaks to the multiple ways Māori are conflicted. It is less about ‘hierarchies of identity’ that promote markers of a Māori authenticity, but rather a plea and challenge to all Māori to critically ‘conscientise’ and free the indigenous mind from the grip of dominant

\textsuperscript{1120} Smith, “Indigenous Struggle for the Transformation of Education and Schooling [Keynote Address].”

\textsuperscript{1121} Casserly, ”The Journey.”
The scene resonates with Mita’s films *Bastion Point: Day 507* and *Patu!* where Māori were physically and ideologically pitted against each other.

Unlike Rewi, Te Riini’s character is not offered hope or solutions. He is outwitted by the Māori community and is held so tightly in the grip of Pākehā hegemony that he is probably doomed to forever be an outsider in the Māori world. Ironically, by virtue of his Māori identity he is also forever marginalised in the Pākehā world. This is in contrast to the older policeman, Sonny (Don Selwyn) who has reconciled his law enforcement role and Māori identity by selectively enforcing Pākehā institutional imperatives. This is evident when through a deliberate lack of action he facilitates Rewi’s escape to address his wrongs under Māori law.

Kara’s nephew Willie, who is also a gang member, represents a multi-faceted identity that is complicated by his rural and urban associations. His urban identity is connected to betrayal and violence, although Willie himself is not represented as violent or bad. His rural identity is whānau and iwi orientated, guided by his kuia, Kara. Willie does not reject his Māori identity or whānau connections and frequently returns home with his gang to work on the land. Willie represents a bicultural existence in a colonised society where he has dual identities but does not deny who he is. He is relatively healthy spiritually and psychologically because although he lives in an urban Pākehā dominated world, he is also grounded in a Māori world. If he was unable to return to Te Mata and Kara his existence could become tortured like Rewi. Symbolised by Willie’s character, *Mauri* does not suggest that urbanisation always equates to a loss of Māori identity or disconnection but it does suggest a certain pathology associated with living in the city. Willie is not represented as being less Māori than other characters who reside in the rural community.

The name of the small rural community is Te Mata. The noun mata has a number of meanings including face, countenance, eye, headland and summit. Although there is no evidence of Mita’s reasoning behind the name, her layering of

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1122 Smith, "Indigenous Struggle for the Transformation of Education and Schooling [Keynote Address]."
meanings and the importance of the location to her suggests it was chosen for a particular reason. Mata, translated as face or countenance, is the more obvious meaning as it is related to identity and what is shown to the world. This is evident in Rewi and Kara; Rewi presents a masked identity whereas Kara declares her true identity.

Mauri does not present us with a single or simplistic unified notion of Māori identity. Nor does it promote an authentic essentialised Māori identity but grapples with the diverse experiences and complexities of identity formation. Unlike Ngati’s predominantly positive representations, Mauri traverses a range of Māori identities from the very positive, represented by Kara, to the conflicted, represented by Rewi, to the malevolent, represented by gang member Herb who is responsible for Willie’s murder.

**Māori Worldviews and Concepts**

**Knowledge, Practices and Concepts**

Mita acknowledges wairua as an active force in her filmmaking and this is evident in Mauri. Wairua is an essential element in Kaupapa Māori film theory. There is an intangible spiritual element (interiority) in Mauri that exists beyond the tangible expressions of wairua contained in the film text. This is difficult to communicate and in many ways indefinable but as Barclay argues, its existence needs to be voiced in film.

Mauri has a circular structure beginning with birth, progressing to death, and the release of Kara’s spirit that returns to the spiritual dimension, Hawaiiki (Māori ancestral homeland), although this does not suggest finality. It is also circular in terms of the revelation of Rewi’s deceit that slowly unfolds resulting in his return to the site of his crime. The circular structure of Mauri, where events mark the stages of a person’s temporal existence, are expressed through Māori worldviews and concepts. The birth that occurs almost at the beginning of the film is represented in this way. In a western hospital setting Kara takes control of the birthing process from the bemused Pākehā doctor. She refuses the doctor’s scalpel

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1123 Rautjoki, "Rangatira - Making Waves: Merata Mita."
to cut the umbilical cord, handing him a piece of pāua shell that has been used for this purpose through the generations. As was common in hospitals dominated by western practices, it was assumed that the whenua or placenta would be disposed of by the staff. Kara immediately insists on taking the whenua home saying it is a “part of us, it must go back to the land”. She reinforces her point by speaking in te reo Māori. Kara’s actions validate Māori knowledge and practices, simultaneously illustrating the tension between Māori healing and western medicine. Here the status of western medicine is challenged and Māori practices prevail.

Returning the whenua to the land is also a circulatory concept, meaning that on death we return to the place where the whenua is buried. The practice of returning the whenua to the land or earth (also referred to as whenua) illustrates the connection between people and the land. Marsden explains this connection:

Papatūānuku was the personified name for the earth and whenua, the common name… Whenua was the term both for the natural earth and placenta. This is a constant reminder that we are of the earth and therefore earthly. We are born out of the placenta and therefore human.

The notion of connections is reinforced in the sequence that immediately follows the hospital birthing scene. The opening visual frames a small group of Māori elders set amongst the coastal rural landscape. Motionless, they blend with the environment becoming a part of the land through the use of wide shots that embrace land, sea, sky and people. Karakia emanates from the group as they return the whenua to the land and Kara places a flax kit containing the whenua, into the niche of a tree, following ancient tikanga practices.

Returning the whenua is presented here as an expected spiritual practice of significance that is not exoticised either through the use of strange camera angles or portentous music. The cinematography not only captures the dramatic landscape of land, sea and sky but the spirituality conveyed in Mauri. In this scene

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1125 Glavish.
1126 Royal, ed. The Woven Universe, Selected Writings of Rev. Māori Marsden, 68.
the elders are covered in a soft light that is juxtaposed against the sharper colours and outlines of the landscape. *Mauri* achieves the surreal quality Cowley alluded to, conveying a sense of spirituality and peace. The effect is particularly evident in the more intimate scenes in Kara’s house, through sepia tones and diffused light and also during the final scene as Kara’s spirit journeys to Hawaiiki. The ‘point-of-hearing’ throughout *Mauri* originates from Māori. ‘Point-of hearing’ is raised by Shohat and Stam who borrow from sound theorist Michel Chion. In contrast to *Mauri*’s indigenous ‘point-of hearing’ Shohat and Stam explain that ‘natives’ in colonial adventure films are “heard as if through the ears of the colonisers,” where sounds such as drums are usually presented as libidinous or threatening.\footnote{Shohat and Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, 209.} *Mauri* offers us an opposite ‘point-of-hearing’ where the dominant sound as the elders return the whenua emanates from those involved in the process and is entirely in te reo Māori. As spectators of *Mauri*, we are invited to listen in, but on Māori terms, determined by a Māori voice.\footnote{Barclay, *Our Own Image*, 74-80.} The ceremony is silently observed by interloper, Steve Semmens on horseback as he watches from a distance. At no time is his point-of-view represented and the audience witness the Pākehā gaze. Steve Semmens is ignored by the elders, apart from Kara who briefly returns his gaze, and the focus of the scene remains on the proceedings. He is later chastised for his arrogance. These scenes reinforce the importance of the process and affirm Māori cultural practices. Representing Māori practices in this way challenges constructions of Māori as the exotic Other offered up for western consumption. As importantly, it privileges Māori by providing cinematic spaces that affirm the legitimacy of Māori worldviews, knowledge and practice.

Connections to the environment and notions of circularity are also expressed through a focus on environmentally driven temporal measurements. Nature offers the audience a cyclical sense of time that follows the cycles of day and night, the phases of the sun, moon and seasons, rather than a more rigidly defined timeline. This is manifest in visual representations of the physical environment including close-ups of the setting and rising of the sun. The only reference to man-made measurements of time is a clock that Kara tells Willie will stop working when he

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\footnote{Shohat and Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, 209.}
\footnote{Barclay, *Our Own Image*, 74-80.}
dies. Rather than a tool to measure time the clock is used as a device that is intrinsically linked to Willie’s mauri or life force.

Wairua is also embodied by kaumātua Hemi and particularly by Kara; they have knowledge and wisdom that links the physical and spiritual worlds. Spirituality, as an integral dimension of being that extends beyond physicality is evident in Kara’s connection to Willie and her absolute knowledge that Willie is in danger. Kara gently expresses concern about Herb to Willie and as Willie leaves she gives him a pounamu heitiki (greenstone pendant carved in an abstract human form). The heitiki connects Willie to the previous generations who have worn it. It may also be regarded as a kaitiaki, a guardian to watch over him. During Willie’s departure Kara’s concern is palpable, enhanced by the sound of the kōauau and reinforced by Herb’s comment about Kara’s apparent sadness. Prior to giving Willie the heitiki Kara conducts the appropriate karakia. The connections with tūpuna and the spiritual realm that this scene conveys are powerful, as is the sense of impending loss. Willie is wearing the heitiki when he is shot and it breaks just before he dies. A pause allows the viewer to contemplate the spiritual importance of the moment as he holds the broken piece in his hand. Prior to his death, Kara sleeps fitfully through a storm to suddenly wake to the sound of shattering glass at the exact time of his tragic death. She immediately knows he is dead and calls to him. The elements of nature are dramatic in this scene with torrential rain, thunder and lighting. However, they serve another purpose beyond spectacle. Nature provides signs in Mauri that Kara has the ability to interpret. Mita explains that Kara’s knowledge is not an exceptional power as she is a “part of the tapestry of life woven by those who can still read omens in nature and the landscape, whose insights, inherited from the past, give them second sight into the future.”1129 The representation of nature as a portent and the spirituality associated with this is a dramatic tradition that can transcend cultures. Shakespeare utilises thunder and lightning in his plays, signalling the introduction of other worldly beings. In Macbeth for example, thunder precedes the introduction of the three witches

1129 Clark, "Merata Mita Nurturing the Power."
Spirituality conveyed in *Mauri* is integral to the narrative, expressed in the cinematography and soundtracks. It is represented as a significant but ‘natural’ way of being. Wairua is personified by Kara who has wisdom and is connected to her spirituality but this is not romanticised as she is firmly grounded on Papatūānuku - she is human.

Birds are richly symbolic and carry a number of meanings associated with wairua and kaitiakitanga. The call of the ruru, which is repeated throughout the film, warns of impending death. The rare kotuku (white heron) is seen immediately after scenes of spiritual significance, for example after the returning of the placenta to the land. The kotuku is referred to in many whakataukī or proverbs. It is sometimes likened to the ebb and flow of life and the visitor who comes rarely. The kotuku is also represented as the carrier of the spirits of the dead to Hawaiiki. Therefore, the kotuku is an important presence in *Mauri* and is especially significant after the death of Kara in the powerful closing sequence. In this scene Awatea runs after Kara’s spirit, symbolised by the kotuku, as it soars over the land to journey to Hawaiiki, completing the circular structure of the narrative.

Cowley’s beautiful cinematography is memorable in this sequence. The sense of flight conveyed by the cinematography suggests the uplifting and soaring of Kara’s spirit before it circles the land and departs. The circular camera movement that sweeps above and around Awatea, who is the central point, suggests a pause in the journey, a farewell that strengthens rather than lessens the connection between the two. Aerial shots then allow the viewer to see the receding landscape as Kara’s spirit begins the journey to Hawaiiki. The scene has a surreal quality that conveys flight, spirituality and serenity. This is consistent with Mita’s desire not to fix the camera because she wanted to visually represent these types of elements. The camera movements suture the viewer into the action who, like the kotuku, look down on the funeral party. The strong sense of wairua expressed in this powerful scene skilfully combines visual and audio elements. During the first half of the scene the soundtrack is deceptively simple and at times sounds like the beating of the wings of the kotuku. This motif creates a feeling of other

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1130 Television, "Kete Aronui: Series 5, Interview with Merata Mita."
worldliness that is emphasised by employing the point-of-view of the kotuku observing those left behind. As the kotuku departs the sound of voices gradually builds. This closing waiata is in te reo Māori and is especially moving and haunting, adding to the spiritual significance of the scene regardless of the audience’s linguistic capabilities.

While loss and grief are present there is also a sense of an acceptance of the inevitable cycles of life. Therefore, Kara’s death does not represent an end but a continuation of her journey. It also offers hope that Kara’s knowledge, handed down from her tūpuna, will be carried through to successive generations by Awatea. Mauri does not have a tangi or burial scene but incorporates aerial shots of the small funeral party advancing silently across the land in the closing sequence. This emphasises notions of death as a journey, as opposed to an ending.

Mauri does not align Māori worldviews and practices with Christian religious concepts. In contrast, Ngati incorporates religious hymns in te reo Māori. Mauri also suggests irreverence to western religion, conveyed in a line delivered with wry humour by Kara when she talks of death and journeying to Hawaiiki. Her granddaughter Awatea asks if going to Hawaiiki is the same as going to heaven, to which Kara replies: “No, all Māoris go to Hawaiiki, some Pākehās go to hell.” This also highlights an understated Māori humour that is scattered throughout the film.

Aligned with wairua, restoration of balance and harmony is an important element in Mauri. Kara’s character not only absorbs the pain that Mita referred to when speaking of kuia in her childhood, but she also maintains balance and restores and heals. Kara embodies notions of aroha that is loosely described as love but more deeply involves positive action that seeks unity and balance. Aroha is an all-encompassing expression of love for “people, land, birds and animals, fish, and all living things.”¹¹³¹ It embraces acts of genuine compassion and unconditional love. This is most evident in Kara’s relationship with Rewi. As the story progresses Kara senses his unease and waits until he reveals the truth. When Rewi finally

¹¹³¹ Barlow, Tikanga Whakaaro: Key Concepts in Māori Culture, 8.
confesses, Kara has the wisdom and knowledge to know how he must redress his transgressions and in doing so restore balance and harmony. Rewi accepts Kara’s wisdom by returning to the site of the car accident and the real Rewi Rapana’s death. Rewi chooses this path knowing that he will be arrested and returned to jail. He is driven by his desire to seek forgiveness and end his psychological torment resulting from his fraudulent claiming of another person’s identity. The circular structure of *Mauri* is apparent in the scene of Rewi’s arrest as this is where his deceit began.

The key concern in these scenes is not Rewi’s deceit, because Kara accepts his confession in the form of fully facing up to what he has done. It is his psychological and spiritual transgressions that require immediate redress. Resolution is achieved by pursuing a Māori model of justice that is non violent and spiritually healing.

Wairua in *Mauri* is not presented as supernatural or exotic and neither is it treated with suspicion but placed in a quotidian context as a valid way of being. Barclay’s ‘talking in’ and ‘talking out’ is useful as it offers insights into how *Mauri* creates a Māori space. Mita ‘talks in’ by speaking directly to a Māori audience without translating meanings for a non-Māori audience. As a result *Mauri* offers multiple levels of meanings and understandings premised on Māori worldviews and concepts.

**Collectivity and Relationships**

Despite the tensions emanating from inside and outside of the Māori community *Mauri*, like *Ngati*, conveys a sense of connection and collectivity. However, unlike *Ngati* where the possibilities of a Pākehā and Māori unity are advanced in the form of the bicultural Bennetts, unity in *Mauri* is centred on the Māori community. The early visual juxtaposition of the elders returning the placenta to the land as Steve Semmens observes immediately sets up a contrast between Māori and Pākehā values and worldviews. Simultaneously this establishes, through dialogue and visuals, a Māori unity of purpose. Recurring tableau

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consisting of groups of people set against the dramatic landscape creates a visual expression of unity of movement, connection and purpose that is specifically Māori.

Production design by artist Ralph Hotere, praised by some reviewers, establishes a sense of place, unlike *The Piano* where Māori have no obvious place of residence and appear to inhabit the trees.1133 A small thatched wharenuī, rua (storage pit) and urupā (cemetery) sit comfortably within the landscape evoking relationships with the land inherent in the concept of ahi kaa or historical occupation.1134

*Whānau Hapū and Iwi*

The concept that the individual is a part of wider collectives - whānau, hapū, iwi - is a recurring theme in *Mauri* and exists despite individual actions and motivations that may appear to create conflicts. For example, Willie’s gang membership and urban existence does not exclude him from belonging to the Māori community in Te Mata. Kara embraces her whānau with unconditional love and extends this to Rewi. Although not directly of that whānau or hapū, he is Māori, just not the Māori he claims to be. This further complicates Rewi’s multifaceted identity where he is, and is not, an imposter. Rewi finds some solace in Te Mata and his strong connection to Kara extends to her whānau and the wider Māori community. While Rewi has a complicated sense of belonging, he is committed to the obligations, values and loyalties that are associated with collective structures. His loyalty is reciprocated by the community, which protects Rewi as he flees from the law in an attempt to make amends for his transgressions.

Māori elders are honoured in *Mauri* reinforcing their knowledge and role in the whānau, hapū and iwi. Throughout *Mauri* references and connections to tūpuna are given prominence. The knowledge and wisdom Kara possesses is a gift from her tūpuna that she passes on to the next generation through example. The presence of Awatea as a learner and observer of Māori knowledge reinforces the

1134 This describes the burning fires of occupation relating to title to land through occupation by a group, over time, with a common whakapapa. Securing and keeping safe.
role of mokopuna and their position as taonga within the community. In contrast, the Semmens family have a relationship that is constantly in conflict with each other and frequently disrespectful of the community. The direct contrast between the Māori and Pākehā families is supported by cross-cutting that reinforces Māori values and concepts of whānau. To break his isolation Steve Semmens purposefully makes connections with the Māori community whereas his father, Mr Semmens, purposefully rejects and alienates everyone around him with his abusive and racist behaviour.

**Challenge and Resistance**

Barclay points out that *Mauri* does not have the ‘Costner Factor’ that was present in a subverted form in *Ngati*, represented by Greg’s character. This refers to the white man going amongst the natives as seen in *Dances With Wolves*, offering a way for the dominant culture to enter into a minority or indigenous culture in a manner that is non-threatening.1135 *Mauri* does not offer up this easy entrée into a Māori world. Viewers are immediately confronted with Māori realities and the few Pākehā that appear, apart from the Semmens, are on the margins of the story. Unlike *Ngati*, where Greg was played by a Pākehā actor, all the Māori lead roles in *Mauri* are played by Māori. *Mauri* in particular challenges dominant casting practices and investment pressures that may demand white lead actors. In these respects, *Mauri* does not cater to a white audience; this may have contributed to limited theatrical release in Aotearoa and overseas.

**Mana Wahine and Mana Tāne**

Mita deliberately set out to create a dent in prevailing misrepresentations of Māori.1136 As a result *Mauri* offers counter hegemonic constructions of Māori, not only through positive imagery, but by revealing great complexity and diversity. Māori representations in *Mauri* affirm and uphold Māori identities of mana tāne and mana wahine. The women characters in *Mauri* are not as conflicted and troubled as their male counterparts. Representing the circular aspects of life from the youngest member Awatea to Ramari and Kara, *Mauri* presents women who

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are purposeful and central to the narrative.\textsuperscript{1137} Kara, the repository of iwi knowledge and wisdom, binds the community together. She passes her knowledge on to Ramari and to a greater extent, Awatea. Ramari also has the capacity to restore harmony and through her marriage to Steve Semmens, Māori Pākehā relations within the community may be restored. This is not commensurate with the overtly positive bicultural model that is presented in \textit{Ngati} but offers some hope for future relations between the two cultures.

It is predominately the Māori women characters who reinforce connections to the land, tūpuna and wairua. This is conveyed in a powerful shot framing a group of Māori women making their way to the marae. Dressed in black they rise over the crest of a hill as if emerging from the land itself. They move as one, expressing unity of purpose and the relationship of women to the land. As they near the marae the voice of women as they karanga is given space so it can be heard and experienced in its entirety. A medium shot reinforces a triangle of women as Kara leads the karanga on the tāngata whenua side. The power of these strong cinematic images is reminiscent of Mita’s representation of Māori women in \textit{Bastion Point: Day 507}; in particular the shot of a kuia holding on to the pou, simultaneously conveying a sense of strength and grief. \textit{Mauri} makes visible and honours the role and status of Māori women in society. It is these types of representations, through image and voice that impart the mana of Māori women that pervade the film.

\textit{Mauri} affirms the mana of Māori men and challenges dominant and negative representations, including constructions of Māori hypermasculinity raised by Hokowhitu.\textsuperscript{1138} Rewi is not represented as a stoic warrior who hides his emotions and suffers heroically. He expresses extreme emotions that are anguished and visible. Rewi, like Willie, expresses strength through his emotions and wairua rather than through acts of violence. The challenging nature of these representations is evident in feedback Mita received from some young Māori men who expressed disgust and feelings of acute discomfort at Rewi’s displays of raw

\textsuperscript{1137} Clark, "Merata Mita Nurturing the Power."
\textsuperscript{1138} Hokowhitu, "Tackling Māori Masculinity: A Colonial Genealogy of Savagery and Sport."
emotions. This supports Hokowhitu’s argument that particular constructions of Māori masculinity, including Māori men as ‘warriors’, have gained hegemonic consent from many Māori men.

Mauri does not offer a simplistic view of gangs, as evil, nor are they represented as entirely positive. A range of depictions are evidenced from the outset. Mauri opens with gang members drinking tea in an innocuous domestic setting that is contrasted with later images of uncapping beer with an axe and finally the raising of a shotgun to kill Willie. Although Willie is seen as good at heart, his killer, Herb is treacherous and violent. Willie challenges dominant negative gang stereotypes, reminiscent of the positive representation of gangs in Keskidee Aroha. In contrast, Herb reinforces dominant negative stereotypes exemplified by his brutal betrayal of Willie. In a wider sense the complex and destructive nature of gangs alludes to the brutal effects of colonisation on Māori men. Mauri presents less glamorous depictions of gangs that is evident in some films; there is a startling difference between the sleek toned images of gang members in Once Were Warriors for example and the unshaven, diverse body shapes in Mauri.

Willie and Rewi represent loss, in an individual and collective sense. On an individual level there is personal sadness at the death of Willie and the inevitable arrest of Rewi. Broadly Willie and Rewi reflect the loss of the potential of Māori men to the collective through violence and jail. In contrast, Kara, who reaches her potential, dies peacefully having passed on her knowledge.

Colonisation, Racism and Self-Determination

Alongside issues of colonisation sit its counterpart racism, particularly represented by the character of Mr Semmens. He is constructed as an uncontrolled, vicious racist with no redeeming features. Within the story he is referred to as mad and viewed with contempt. Mr Semmens was criticised by some reviewers who saw the character as an over exaggeration of racist behaviour. Mita responded by arguing that this was done because she views racism as irrational and sees the

1139 Casserly, "The Journey."
1141 McDonnell, "Two Timely New Zealand Films on Race: One Old, One New," 142; Shepard, Reframing Women: A History of New Zealand Women in Film, 122.
perpetrators as crazy. Race is a site of tension and Mita’s stereotyping of Mr Semmens can be viewed as a strategic exercise of power by a Māori filmmaker. The excesses of Mr Semmens may provoke revulsion in the audience and facilitate identification with the Māori characters. However, such an extreme representation is problematic as it may inadvertently undermine the seriousness of the issue. Shohat and Stam argue that it can let ordinary racists off the hook because “they are unable to recognise themselves in the raving maniacs on the screen.”

Insights into the effects of racism from a distinctly Māori perspective are woven into the film. At one point Kara points out racist Pākehā attitudes towards the Māori Battalion and how damaging these were particularly because Māori and Pākehā were “supposed to be on the same side.” Institutional racism is presented in the form of the policemen, Sonny and Te Riini. Sonny is wise and more of an ally in the Māori community, his loyalties lying with Māori law rather than Pākehā law. In contrast Te Riini is ambitious and determined to arrest Rewi, convinced that this will result in a big promotion in the city. Te Riini’s faith in the system is subtly challenged by the now cynical Sonny who tells him that, after twenty years in the service, he still works in the rural community of Te Mata; implying that Te Riini will come up against similar racism and not progress up the hierarchy despite his efforts. A sense of lost opportunities and unrealised potential are implied. Humour is also cleverly incorporated to expose racism. For example, Mr Semmens calls Awatea a “tar baby” and when she asks Kara what this means, her kuia responds by saying “It’s the opposite of white maggot.” Duct tape is forced over the mouth of Mr Semmens by his son after a racist outburst, effectively silencing racism, if only momentarily.

Issues of Pākehā injustice are raised and challenged throughout Mauri. Dialogue interspersed throughout the earlier part of Mauri establishes loss of land. In particular, conversations between Kara and Rewi reveal that the large tract of Māori land owned by Mr Semmens may have been legally acquired under Pākehā law but remains ethically unjust. In addition, an altercation between Mr Semmens

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1143 Shohat and Stam, Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media, 203.
and the original Māori owner (Mr Rapana) over the land resulted in the incarceration of the latter revealing the power and racism inherent in the Pākehā justice system. This is established when Kara tells Rewi “When your father went up [to court] we knew he’d get done [convicted]. That’s how the law is.” There are frequent references made throughout the film that challenge Pākehā land ownership and the means by which it was acquired. The relationship between Steve Semmens and Ramari offers some hope that their union will mean the return of the land, as justice will not be gained through legal or other Crown channels.

The wider issues of self-determination and Crown acquisition of Māori land are raised in Mauri. This is evidenced in the narrative concerning the intention of the State to establish a rehabilitation centre in the community for ex-prisoners who are predominantly Māori. Kara and Rewi are against the centre arguing that the government will want to “run it,” resulting in Māori losing control and becoming “hired hands” on their own marae. Crown agents who visit the community on the pretext of consultation pay lip service to notions of partnership and reveal, that if necessary, the land will be acquired by the Public Works Act. This is reminiscent of many Māori experiences and is directly related to the documentary Bastion Point: Day 507 where land was taken under the Public Works Act. Mauri exposes and challenges colonising agendas, reminding us that Māori self-determination and struggles for justice are ongoing and lived experiences.

As well as challenging the inequities inherent in Pākehā institutions, Mauri examines Māori systems of justice and authority. In the Pākehā world, authority is connected to hierarchical roles within organisations whereas within the Māori community of Te Mata authority is connected to age, knowledge and wisdom. The distinctly different systems of law are made visible through Rewi who is aware of breaking Pākehā law but is more concerned about redress through Māori law. He seeks the authority, Kara, and follows her instructions in order to make amends.

1144 The Public Works Act (1864 & 1876) allowed for the compulsory taking of Māori land for public development. In 1886 for example, the Crown took Takaparawha (Bastion Point) for supposed defense purposes.
His arrest, a Pākehā process of punishment, is of minor consequence in this Māori centred context.

Examples of the gaze are much more overt in Ngati than Mauri. However, this does not diminish a sense of Māori agency in Mauri because Māori are centred in the film. Mauri offers us glimpses of the colonial gaze and more specifically a racist gaze, which reveals relationships between power and visuality. For example, Mr Semmens observes Rewi and Ramari through binoculars as they gather the hīnaki nets (eel pots), and in moments throughout the film he watches Awatea. Mita spoke about the Māori experience of being observed and the power inherent in this, likening it to being examined under a microscope. Given Mita’s assertion, it is likely that shots of Awatea observing nature through a magnifying glass are symbolic, providing one level of meaning related to the colonial gaze. In this case it is a young Māori woman who has the power to observe and probably has little understanding of the world she surveys.

Summary

Mauri is a distinctive and important film emerging out of Mita’s documentary work, her experiences as a Māori woman and her personal belief that as a filmmaker she has the responsibility to “correct the past” and present alternative images of Māori. Mauri made a unique contribution to the cinematic landscape in Aotearoa not only because it was the first dramatic feature film to be solely directed and written by a Māori woman, but also in form and content. The non-linear structure of Mauri traverses time and space reflecting indigenous oral traditions that are important aspects of Mita’s filmmaking. The significance of wairua and the rich symbolism conveyed in Mauri was appreciated by Māori audiences.

Mauri presents counter hegemonic and complex representations of Māori and the Māori world. As a result Mauri offers us alternatives and provides solutions

evident in the characters of Rewi and Kara. Rewi’s anguish symbolises the struggles associated with the negotiations of indigenous identity in colonised lands. Presenting colonisation, biculturalism and monoculturalism, it is Māori, not Pākehā, who are required to compartmentalise and deny who they are in order to survive. Addressing issues of identity, belonging and acceptance on multiple levels, Mauri advocates that coming to terms with one’s identity is a healthy aspiration, individually and personally. This is evident in the character of Kara who is nurturing and grounded in her identity, offering hope for future generations. Mauri celebrates mana wahine, centring Māori women who have purpose and strength.

Mauri reflects Mita’s documentary work where counter stories capture the complexities, experiences and worldviews of Māori and expose the historical and ongoing effects of racism and colonisation. The recording and honouring of Māori experiences is a powerful form of resistance. Providing a distinctly Māori approach and emerging from Māori realities, Mita’s films offer a way of talking back to prevailing images that assert the beliefs, values and language of the dominant culture.

Given the additional restraints and obstacles Mita had to overcome as a Māori woman working in a male dominated film industry her achievements are significant. This includes the extraordinary accomplishment of employing thirty-three Māori crew members on Mauri that led to further opportunities for Māori working in television and film. Mita played an important role as mentor and supporter of Māori entering the field. Arihia Bristowe, tutor at Whitireia Polytechnic, speaks of Mita as a role model and inspiration that led to her work in television.1148 Throughout her career Mita participated in the development of global indigenous cinema and worked with Māori filmmakers including Taika Waititi.

Aware of Pākehā and global audiences, but with a Māori audience as her primary concern, Mita refused to commodify Māori for mass consumption. While Mauri is

1148 Rautjoki, "Rangatira - Making Waves: Merata Mita."
firmly located in Aotearoa it has resonance internationally and in particular with indigenous peoples. Building on the groundbreaking Ngati, Mauri centres the Māori voice that ‘talks in’, this is apparent in the refusal to subtitle te reo Māori and representations of Māori concepts without explanation or exoticism. As a result, Mauri is dense with meaning, conveyed through imagery, sound and dialogue.

Mauri has a haunted element, a sadness about it that represents lost opportunities that are both individually and collectively imposed. That is, it reflects the wider effects of colonisation and racism. At the same time Mauri celebrates Māori, is uplifting and affirming, offering hope and transformation. Mita combines a depth of Māori understandings with technical experience and creates a film with a unique perspective and representation of a Māori world.
Chapter Seven

Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti: Don Selwyn

This chapter covers Selwyn’s work in theatre, television and film and in particular examines the dramatic feature film *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti, Māori Merchant of Venice* (2002) that he directed and produced.

Brief Personal Background

Don Selwyn (1935-2007) identified as Māori, from Ngāti Kurī and Te Aupouri in Northland with strong connections to Taumarunui.

Selwyn’s father left Awanui in Northland in the 1930s to find work during the Depression. His parents met and married in Ōhura in 1934. Selwyn was born in Taumarunui where he grew up with his younger siblings. As a result, Selwyn maintained very strong connections with the Taumarunui area throughout his lifetime.1149 Te reo Māori was not spoken in the family environment and Selwyn explains that “it wasn’t done to speak Māori at home.”1150 This was because te reo Māori was not spoken in the house out of respect for their Pākehā mother.1151 Selwyn’s knowledge of the language came from his travels down the Whanganui River where he would hear elders converse in te reo Māori.1152 As a young man Selwyn associated with Māori from the area who would become well-known kaumātua, including Titi Tihu, Pei Te Hurinui Jones, Hikaia Amohia and Hepi Te Heuheu. To the family these men were seen as Uncles and they contributed in different ways to Selwyn’s knowledge.1153 Selwyn spent time at Parihaka where Titi Tihu taught him about the kaitiakitanga of the Whanganui River.1154 These

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1149 Selwyn Whānau, Personal Email Correspondence, 9 June 2010.
1151 Selwyn Whānau.
1152 Ibid.
1153 Ibid.
teachings manifested in Selwyn’s advocacy to protect the integrity of Māori stories and iwi histories.1155

Selwyn left Taumarunui to attend Auckland Teachers Training College and became a qualified teacher.1156 After graduating he took up a number of teaching positions eventually returning to teach in Taumarunui where he became the deputy principal of Taumarunui Primary School. Contrary to reports that his first acting experience was in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* as Oberon in Wellington during the late 1960s, Selwyn was involved in theatre before this.1157 While teaching in Taumarunui and prior to moving to Wellington he joined the Taumarunui Repertory Society and was cast in lead roles in the musicals *South Pacific* and *Oklahoma*.1158

In 1964 Selwyn’s talent and love of theatre led him to join the New Zealand Opera Company’s production of *Porgy and Bess*, starring well-known Māori singer Inia Te Wiata.1159 The experience made Selwyn acutely aware of the lack of Māori participation in theatre and he sought to do something to improve this.1160 In collaboration with Māori colleagues and with very little financial backing, he established the New Zealand Māori Theatre Trust.1161 The aim of the trust was to transfer skills developed through Māori practices such as kapa haka (Māori performing arts), oratory and waiata to a theatrical context.1162 Two early productions, *He Mana Toa* and *The Golden Lover* were staged in 1967 and received positive reviews.1163 Selwyn eventually left the Trust because he disagreed with a shift in direction from Māori theatre and opera to cultural performance. This shift may have resulted from early formations of the Māori ‘renaissance’ that promoted the revival of traditional art forms. It may also derive

1155 Ibid., 59.
1157 Selwyn Whānau, Personal Email Correspondence, 15 December 2008.
1159 Geoffrey Darling, "Don Selwyn and Te Maori Merchant of Venice,” *Ruapehu Press*, 14 February 2002.
1160 Selwyn.
1161 Five founding members were D. Selwyn, P. Keiha, T. Te Heu Heu, Puoho Katene and T. Taurima. In Anon, *Te Ao Hou*, no. 56 (September 1966).
1162 Selwyn.
from essentialist thinking that western art forms such as opera do not have a legitimate place in the expression of Māori creativity. Although these tensions remain they are less prevalent in contemporary Māori thinking, allowing for a range of art forms. The change in direction did not deter Selwyn, and his commitment to improve Māori participation in a wide range of dramatic forms continued throughout his lifetime.\textsuperscript{1164}

Selwyn became increasingly involved in acting and in the late 1960s joined a Wellington-based Shakespearian theatre company run by Nola Miller. He toured with the company where he was cast in a number of lead Shakespearian roles including Julius in \textit{Julius Caesar} and Anthony in \textit{Anthony and Cleopatra}. He went on to play Othello at Wellington’s Downstage Theatre.\textsuperscript{1165} Selwyn recalls struggling with Shakespeare and the English poets at school but his later experiences performing Shakespeare gave him a great love and understanding of the playwright. His passion for Shakespeare and theatre experience laid a foundation for his future stage and film production of \textit{Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti}.\textsuperscript{1166}

**Television and Filmmaking History**

The following account provides an overview of Selwyn’s work experience in television and film, providing further context for an analysis of \textit{Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti}. Selwyn was able to easily transfer the skills he learnt on the stage to television. With an increase in local television drama in the 1970s, he became one of the few Māori actors who appeared on the screen with any regularity. This made him one of the most experienced Māori actors working in the field at the time. Selwyn’s first major role was in \textit{Pukemanu} (1971-72), a television drama series where he played Tai, the supervisor of a scrub-cutting gang.\textsuperscript{1167} Selwyn continued to secure television acting roles and during the 1980s and 1990s he

\textsuperscript{1164} Archie, “Don Selwyn – Still Breaking Barriers,” 59.
\textsuperscript{1165} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1167} The series is set in a contemporary small town and revolves around a timber mill.
Selwyn describes *The Governor* (1977) as a significant milestone in his television career. He was employed as an actor and cast as Māori Kingmaker - Wiremu Tamehana. In addition, he was production advisor which required him to meet with iwi to ensure that the series correctly represented historical events and Māori practices, including tikanga. Unlike Mita’s frustrating experiences in advisory roles, Selwyn found the experience positive. He felt there was a commitment on the part of the predominantly Pākehā production team and in particular producer Tony Isaac, to genuinely consult with iwi. Selwyn believed that this process gave the series depth and integrity. His experience on *The Governor* inspired him to look at how film and television could be used to ensure Māori understandings of history were made visible. *The Governor* also made Selwyn acutely aware of the absence of Māori in all areas of television production. He addressed this by becoming a leading mentor and trainer of Māori in film and television.

In a discussion with Selwyn’s whanau I found out that he got agreement from the producers to take the shell of the wharenui, used on the set of *The Governor* and built by one of Selwyn’s brothers, back to Wharauroa marae in Taumarunui. It replaced the original wharenui at Wharauroa marae that had burned down. The strong connections the family developed with the area contributed to Selwyn’s desire to have his tangi at Taumarunui. He is buried at the cemetery in

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1168 *Moynihan* was a popular New Zealand drama series set in an urban building site. With predominantly male Pākehā characters, Selwyn was the only Māori character to appear regularly. *Mortimer’s Patch* was a successful police drama set in semi-rural New Zealand. Selwyn was cast as Sergeant Bob Storey, a regular character on the series. *Marlin Bay* was a prime time drama series, set in a luxury seaside resort.

1169 Selwyn.
1170 Ibid.
1171 Ibid.
1172 Ibid.
1173 Ibid.
1174 It is interesting to note that two of Selwyn’s brothers worked on the series, one building the sets and another, a trucker, was also involved. Selwyn Whānau, Informal Communications, July 2009.
1175 _______.

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Taumarunui, in close proximity to his parents and alongside his brother Rex, who died the year Selwyn was born.\textsuperscript{1176}

Throughout his acting career Selwyn was cast in a variety of roles. His roles in Māori produced and directed dramas allowed him to delve into and represent Māori experiences, aspirations and politics; a feature that was limited in mainstream dramatic roles. For example, Selwyn was cast as Toki in \textit{The Protestors (1982)}, the father of a second key character, Angie.\textsuperscript{1177} Toki is a man who distances himself from his Māori heritage.\textsuperscript{1178} The gripping drama was based on events at Bastion Point and examines both political and personal issues. Also, Selwyn played the character Kahu, a man with magical powers in \textit{Irikura}, a drama in the \textit{Aroha} series (2001). The anthology is entirely in te reo Māori, reflecting Selwyn’s passion to promote and nurture the language.

Selwyn’s acting career in television eventually led to work in dramatic feature film but predominantly in minor roles. Although he was not confined to law enforcement roles, Selwyn’s presence and success as a policeman in \textit{Mortimer’s Patch}, possibly led to future casting in similar roles in the dramatic feature films \textit{Goodbye Porkpie} (1980), \textit{The Lost Tribe} (1985) and \textit{Mauri} (1988).\textsuperscript{1179} Behind the scenes Selwyn developed his skills as a casting director. He cast a number of films, including \textit{Mauri} and \textit{Once Were Warriors} where he worked particularly closely with Temuera Morrison who played the iconic and controversial role of Jake.\textsuperscript{1180} Selwyn explains that he was not a fan of the Māori novelist Alan Duff because of Duff’s bleak portrayal of Māori. \textit{Once Were Warriors} was Duff’s first published novel and it gained national recognition. He remains a controversial figure because of his outspoken views on Māori that focus on individual blame rather than historical and systemic issues. Despite this Selwyn decided to work as

\textsuperscript{1176} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1177} \textit{The Protestors} is a drama in the \textit{Loose Enz} series (1982).
\textsuperscript{1178} Dunleavy, \textit{Ourselves in Primetime}, 148.
\textsuperscript{1179} \textit{Goodbye Pork Pie}, directed by Geoff Murphy, is a road movie following the antics of two men as they travel from Auckland to Invercargill. \textit{The Lost Tribe} tells the story of the search for an anthropologist who was believed to have gone missing while looking for a lost Māori iwi.
\textsuperscript{1180} Peter Calder, "Footy to Fairies - and Way Beyond," \textit{Weekend Herald}, 16-17 February 2002.
casting director on *Once Were Warriors* because he wanted to ensure that a “wide range of Māori talent was considered for the roles.”

Selwyn was appointed to the Board of the NZFC for a three year term in 1989. He expressed discomfort, believing that position came with the unrealistic expectation that he would represent all Māori. This is reminiscent of concerns raised earlier and reflects the colonial hegemonic construction of the colonised as a collective undifferentiated entity where one voice is unproblematically assumed to speak for the whole. As importantly, providing a Māori position on the Board may appear to be responsive to Māori but does not adequately address issues of power and Māori self-determination. This led Selwyn and others to advocate for specific and formalised NZFC Māori funding, policy and decision-making processes that reflected Māori cinematic aspirations.

Selwyn’s membership on the NZFC Board occurred during Judith McCann’s appointment as NZFC Executive Director and the commissioning of Barclay’s *Te Rua*. Selwyn’s presence on the Board may have positively impacted on the Commission’s decision to invest in *Te Rua*, and given Selwyn’s politics it can be assumed that he would have advocated for the project. This is supported by Barclay’s observation, previously raised, that *Te Rua* was funded because the NZFC management on the board and the chair were supportive of Māori projects.

Selwyn’s commitment to mentoring and training Māori, combined with his acute awareness of the lack of skilled Māori working in film and television production, led him to formally establish a training school. Selwyn strongly believed that knowledge and expertise should be shared. In a personal interview he said “if you hang onto it in your mind – he maumau – [it is a] waste.” In 1984, together with Brian Kirby and Selwyn Muru, he set up He Taonga i Tawhiti, a twelve month film and television training course that covered technical and production

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1183 Selwyn.
1185 Selwyn.
skills, scripting and editing. Located in Freemans Bay, Auckland, the course was aimed at Māori and Pacific youth and financed by the Department of Māori Affairs. Selwyn founded the school on a Māori kaupapa, advocated for Māori youth, and valued a variety of skills rather than formal educational qualifications as pre-requisites for acceptance onto the course. In one instance he argued that carving ability was a skill that could be applied to film in terms of composition. Selwyn elaborates:

They said - look this kid left school at standard six. I said…he’s descended from a carver…he’s a good carver himself…he’s got a composition concept…he’s an artist. So when he looks down the camera he’s going to know what a good shot looks like…that’s what education is about.

During this time Selwyn experienced his directorial debut on Variations on a Theme (1989), one of the dramas in the E Tipu e Rea series. Variations on a Theme contains three stories told within a Ngāpuhi community and focuses on formal and real life learning. The drama was written by Rawiri Paratene and covers Māori experiences of education, police and death. Aspects of Māori worldviews and concepts are present in the story but not overtly explained. The first story, set at a secondary school, is about a bored schoolboy who is badgered by his sarcastic teacher. This is followed by a short piece delivered entirely through song and dance, from the point of view of a prostitute and her encounter with police. The final story offers an insight into a relationship between a young girl and her koroua (grandfather) as they prepare for the tangi of her father.

Sources vary as to the length of time He Taonga i Tawhiti ran courses but information in Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti media kit states that it closed in 1991 and an impressive total of 120 trainees attended the course. When the course was set up it was hoped that the students would gain practical experience by working on film and television programmes. The students crewed on a short

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dramatic film *Finders Keepers* (1989) directed by Geoff Murphy and produced by Don Selwyn.1189 It tells the story of a family who must solve a riddle set out in a will before they can inherit a fortune. However, practical opportunities were not as forthcoming as Selwyn hoped, and this was one of the reasons why he closed the training course in 1992 and formally established He Taonga Films with Ruth Kaupua.1190 Selwyn’s goal was to create opportunities for Māori writers and also train and mentor on ‘real’ projects.1191 Students from He Taonga i Tawhiti moved with Selwyn to work under the umbrella of He Taonga Films. Consistent with similar production companies and highlighting the systemic lack of support and viability for small to mid-range production companies, He Taonga Films was run on small amounts of sporadic funding from lottery grants, the NZFC, and production funding.1192 Issues of sustainability are a recurrent challenge for the industry as a whole but are a particular challenge for Māori. Despite the difficulties, the company produced over fifteen dramas and documentaries in both te reo Māori and English, a testament to the dedication and commitment of its founders.

One drama that stands out is *Koro’s Hat*, a short drama in the *Nga Puna* drama series (1995 and 1997) directed by Selwyn and produced by He Taonga Films. The drama is based on a short story written by Debra Rewiti. At Selwyn’s insistence she struggled but eventually worked it into an hour-long drama.1193 *Koro’s Hat* explores the themes of inter-generational relationships and death that are also present in Selwyn’s *Variations on a Theme* and *Don’t go Past with Your Nose in the Air!* (1991).1194 *Koro’s Hat* is an engaging story told from the perspective of a young girl, Babe. The drama follows her close relationship with her koroua, covering a number of issues including death and the loss of the language. Selwyn drew heavily on his personal experiences when telling stories. His interpretation of the character Babe in *Koro’s Hat* is reminiscent of Selwyn’s

1189 Ibid., 60.
1191 Hyde, "One and the Other," 93.
1194 *Don’t Go Past with your Nose in the Air!* was funded by the NZFC Short Film Fund and produced by He Taonga Films. The drama is based on a story by Hone Tuwhare, and adapted and directed by Selwyn.
sister, Iris, who is also known by her whānau as Babe. In addition, a waiata sung at the whānau party in the drama was a favourite song of Selwyn’s father.\textsuperscript{1195} Koro’s Hat won the Best Director’s Award at the Indigenous People’s Film Festival in Canada.\textsuperscript{1196}

Selwyn’s commitment to the revitalisation and nurturing of te reo Māori is evident by his inclusion of the language in his productions. The predominantly English language dramas, Variations on a Theme and Koro’s Hat, have substantial pieces of dialogue in te reo Māori without English subtitles. Progressing his commitment to the Māori language Selwyn produced and directed short television dramas in te reo Māori under He Taonga Films. They include: Te Ohaki a Nihe (1998); Tohunga (1999) with English subtitles; Maui Pōtiki (2000) and; Turia (2000).\textsuperscript{1197} Maui Pōtiki provided an acting opportunity for Ngārimu Daniels, and realising her talent Selwyn asked her to audition for Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti.\textsuperscript{1198} These dramas allowed Selwyn to progress his strategic endeavours to present te reo Māori on a dramatic visual medium as well as advance a Māori cinematic vision.

Following Nga Puna was the first series of Tala Pasifika (series one: 1996 and series two: 1999), a drama anthology produced by He Taonga Films and mentored by Kaupua and Selwyn. Their aim was to provide a site for Samoans primarily, but not exclusively, to produce, act, and write for television. Tala Pasifika is significant because it was the first drama series dedicated to telling Samoan stories.\textsuperscript{1199} Issues related to marginalisation were experienced during the making of the series. It was rejected by TVNZ for prime time and the films aired on Tagata Pasifika, a late-night Pacific current affairs programme. Selwyn was instrumental in training Pacific crew, providing much needed experience for young writers and directors.\textsuperscript{1200} He Taonga Films was also involved in producing

\begin{itemize}
\item[1195] Selwyn Whānau; ———.
\item[1196] Hyde, "One and the Other," 93.
\item[1197] Te Ohaki a Nihe focuses on a whānau and the death of their koroua, Nihe. The whānau find his last bet on the horses and wonder if it is the winning ticket. Tohunga contrasts Māori and western worldviews embodied by the tohunga and ambitious younger man, Ray Tai.
\item[1198] "The Maori Merchant of Venice (2002) Media Kit."
\item[1199] Dunleavy, Ourseves in Primetime, 274-74.
\end{itemize}
Barclay’s *The Feathers of Peace* and *The Kaipara Affair* discussed previously. In a personal interview Selwyn was pleased that *The Feathers of Peace* achieved the telling of history without compromising or obfuscating the Māori component saying:

No one wants to do a ninety minute documentary like we did with *Feathers of Peace*. I mean real in-depth documentary that fronted up, said what it was. It was history, there was not compromise…We didn’t hide the Māori component from it and what they did in the Chatham Islands…that’s facing up and we can then move on. 1201

Representing historical events in which Māori could be ethnically criticised was not something Selwyn wanted to ignore.

Never abandoning his love of theatre Selwyn founded the Auckland Koanga Māori Theatre Company in Auckland in 2003 and produced plays with a Māori kaupapa by writers including Selwyn Muru, Rena Owen and Hone Tuwhare. 1202 At the time of Selwyn’s death he was working on *The Gumdiggers* with Muru, a film script about their ancestors in the far north. 1203

Throughout his career Selwyn was a leading contributor to and advocate for New Zealand theatre, television and film. Sitting alongside this was his passion to nurture and promote te reo Māori, tikanga and Māori storytelling. His early experiences as a stage actor laid the foundation for his future career in film and television, not only as a performer but behind the camera in production and direction, culminating in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*. Later in his career Selwyn was recognised for his commitment, contribution and expertise in film and television. He received a number of awards including: the New Zealand Honours Award Officer of the New Zealand Merit (1999); an honorary Doctorate in Literature from Massey University (2002); Te Tohutiketike a te Waka Toi, the Creative New Zealand Māori Arts Board’s award (2005) and; Recipient of the

1201 Selwyn.
1202 Scoop: Independent News, “Leading Figure in Maori Theatre Leaves Us,” http://www.knowledge-basket.co.nz; “Selwyn, Don [Filmed Presentation].”
1203 Selwyn Whānau.
Arts Foundation of New Zealand Icon Award (2007). Internationally he was recognised for his contribution to filmmaking and was awarded the National Film Board of Canada Alanis Obomsawin Award (1994) for his outstanding contribution to Aboriginal filmmaking at the Dreamspeakers Indigenous Film Festival, Canada.1204

Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti

Introduction

*Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* is chosen for particular consideration because it is, to date, the only dramatic feature film entirely in te reo Māori. It is also the first feature length Shakespearean film to be made in Aotearoa. *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* was released in 2002 and is a long film, running for 158 minutes. The film is directed by Selwyn and produced by Ruth Kaupua of He Taonga Films. Māori leader, Sir Robert Mahuta advised on the dialect and is credited as Associate Producer with Selwyn’s longstanding colleague, artist and broadcaster, Selwyn Muru. *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* received critical acclaim and won the Audience Award for Best Feature Film at the 22nd annual Hawai’i International Film Festival (2002). This is significant because it was the international premiere of *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*. 1205

Synopsis

The film, *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* was adapted by Selwyn from Pei Te Hurinui Jones’ te reo Māori translation of William Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice*. Te Hurinui Jones (1898-1976) was a respected scholar, genealogist and leader from Ngāti Maniapoto iwi. Selwyn’s *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* retains the original settings of Shakespeare’s late 16th to early 17th century play. The plot and characters remain faithful to Shakespeare’s play where the themes of justice, revenge, oppression, identity and love are explored. The characters’ names are consistent with Te Hurinui Jones’ translation where Māori names are used, but for purposes of clarity in this chapter the English name is added. For example, Hairoka’s designation is Hairoka/Shylock. All the main characters are Christians apart from the Jewish characters Tupara/Tubal, Hairoka/Shylock and his daughter Tiehika/Jessica. There are also a number of characters of lesser significance including: Hararino/Salarino and Harānio/Salernio, the friends of

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1205 Valerie Wayne, "Te Tangata Whai Rawa O Weniti, the Māori Merchant of Venice," *The Contemporary Pacific* 16, no. 2 (Fall 2004): 429.
Patānio/Bassanio; Hairoka’s/Shylock’s friend and fellow money lender
Tupara/Tubal; Hairoka/Shylock’s servant Ranaharoto Kopo/Launcelot and; the
servant’s father Kopo Kaumātua/Old Gobbo.

In *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*, money lender Hairoka/Shylock lends three
thousand ducats to Patānio/Bassanio who needs money to travel to
Peremona/Belmont in order to marry wealthy heiress, Pōhia/Portia.
Patānio’s/Bassanio’s wealthy friend Anatōnio/Antonio cannot lend him the money
because his wealth is tied up in trading ships but he agrees to act as guarantor for
the loan. As a result of Anatōnio’s/Antonio’s anti-Semitism, Hairoka/Shylock
proposes a strange condition. He wants it written in the contract that he can cut a
pound of Anatōnio’s/Antonio’s flesh if the loan cannot be paid within the allotted
time. Anatōnio/Antonio readily accepts this condition, confident that he will meet
the financial requirements. When his ship is lost at sea Anatōnio/Antonio realises
that he cannot repay the loan within the agreed time. Despite pleas for mercy,
Hairoka/Shylock pursues his revenge to the Venetian courts where he seeks his
payment of a pound of flesh.

Pōhia/Portia, out of sympathy for Anatōnio/Antonio and love for
Patānio/Bassanio, disguises herself as a lawyer and cleverly argues
Anatōnio’s/Antonio’s case in court. She agrees that the contract is valid and asks
Hairoka/Shylock if a surgeon can be present to stem the bleeding when
Hairoka/Shylock takes a pound of Anatōnio’s/Antonio’s flesh. Hairoka/Shylock
replies that because it is not written in the contract he will not consent to her
request. Pōhia/Portia finds a loophole in the law and cleverly offers
Hairoka/Shylock the opportunity to show mercy. When it becomes obvious that
he will not, she returns to the exact words in the bond and uses them against him.
She argues that the contract fails to stipulate that blood can be shed, therefore, she
declares that Hairoka/Shylock must firstly cut exactly one pound of flesh, no more
or less, and secondly, no blood can be lost. If these conditions are not met
Hairoka/Shylock will lose his property and wealth. In addition, she argues that
Hairoka’s/Shylock’s intention to cut a pound of flesh from the body of
Anatōnio/Antonio represents an intention to murder and it is through these
arguments that Hairoka/Shylock loses the case and is sentenced to death. The
Duke shows apparent mercy by sparing Hairoka’s/Shylock’s life but requires him to give equal shares of his fortune to Anatônio/Antonio and the State. Anatônio/Antonio is then allowed to make a judgment and directs Hairoka/Shylock to hold half of his wealth in trust to be given on his death to his daughter Tiehika/Jessica and her Christian husband Roreneto/Lorenzo. The final judgement also requires Hairoka/Shylock to renounce his Jewish religion and convert to Christianity.

The romantic subplot involves three couples who must overcome obstacles before they can marry. The wealthy heiress, Pôhia/Portia resides in Peremona/Belmont. Due to the express wishes of her deceased father her suitors must choose between three chests made of gold, silver, and lead. The successful suitor is the one who chooses the chest with Pôhia’s/Portia’s image inside. Both the Pirinihi o Morako/Prince of Morocco and the Pirinihi o Arakona/Prince of Arragon fail to choose the correct chest and it is Patânio/Bassanio who succeeds. Pôhia/Portia is relieved because she has fallen in love with him. During their courtship her companion Nerita/Nerissa meets Patânio/Bassanio’s friend Karatiâno/Gratiano; they also fall in love and marry. Meanwhile, Hairoka/Shylock’s daughter, Tiehika/Jessica falls in love with Christian, Roreneto/Lorenzo. Knowing that her father will stop her from marrying a Christian she steals his jewels and the couple elope, much to the anger and shame of Hairoka/Shylock. Tiehika/Jessica must renounce her Jewish religion in order to marry Roreneto/Lorenzo and become a Christian. Selwyn includes the closing romantic scene (Act 5) of Shakespeare’s original play where Tiehika/Jessica, who is now married to Roreneto/Lorenzo, learns of her father’s will that leaves her half of his wealth and Anatônio/Antonio hears good news about his ships.

Selwyn provides an opening sequence that cleverly and abstractly introduces the key themes. This is not present in Shakespeare’s original or Te Hurinui Jones’ text. The sequence begins with Hairoka/Shylock and an excerpt from his speech, “hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions…”, establishing the theme of oppression, cutting to a ship navigating stormy seas, representing Anatônio’s/Antonio’s doomed business ventures, establishing the financial theme, to Peremona/Belmont establishing the Māori world and Roreneto/Lorenzo and
Tiehika/Jessica, establishing the romantic theme and ending with Peremona/Belmont.

At the time of writing the original play, Venice had a reputation as a romantic city and a great maritime power. Jewish people were discriminated against in Venice but tolerated to the extent that they could practice their religion openly. However, they were forced to live in ghettos, wear prescribed clothing and were heavily taxed. In England during this time it was prohibited to openly practice the Jewish religion. Prior to the 1600s, Jews were forced to either convert to Christianity or face expulsion from England, resulting in a dramatic decline in numbers.  

Historically, critics have accused *The Merchant of Venice* as being anti-Semitic with the play causing speculation about Shakespeare’s attitudes towards Jews. Writers on Shakespeare note that Shylock was initially presented as both comic and villainous with later representations depicting him as evil. It was not until the 19th century that he was portrayed with dignity and intelligence thereby becoming a tragic figure rather than a comedic one in a unique performance by Edmund Kean in London. The play was produced in numerous ways in the 20th and 21st centuries with differing emphases on the themes. In some performances Shylock’s profession as usurer was emphasised alongside his immovable stance regarding the contract. In contrast, other productions emphasised Shylock’s Jewish identity with the associated issues of prejudice and racism. An interpretation of the play was used as propaganda to ridicule Jews during the Nazi era in Germany. World War II and the effects of the Holocaust forced directors of *The Merchant of Venice* to consider how it impacted on the staging of the play. In 1983 a stage production incorporated visuals of swastikas to challenge the victimisation of Shylock and emphasise issues of anti-Semitism. Director Jonathan Miller staged the play in 1970 and later directed a version filmed for television in 1973. He presented Shylock, played by Laurence Olivier, as a

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1207 Ibid., 1.
1208 Ibid., 65.
1209 Ibid., 75.
1210 Ibid., 77-78.
1211 Ibid., 81.
1212 Ibid., 1.
sympathetic figure. Miller had Shylock exit the stage after the Court sentence and give a howl of anguish. Some productions omit the final act (Act 5) that focuses on the romantic resolutions and instead conclude with the court scene and Shylock’s defeat. This reinforces the tragic element and makes a strong social commentary on issues of injustice and oppression.

The Merchant of Venice has been performed extensively but there are only a small number of adaptations to film and television. For example, television productions include a BBC production directed by Jack Gold (1980), a Channel 4 British production directed by Alan Horrox (1996), and a more recent film adaptation in 2004 directed by Michael Radford.

The Production of Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti

The idea for filming Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti emerged from Selwyn’s staging of Te Hurinui Jones’ te reo Māori adaption at the Holy Sepulchre Church during the 1990 Koanga (Spring) Festival in Auckland. Selwyn saw this as an opportunity to promote and advance te reo Māori in a theatrical setting, knowing that the script transferred well to the stage and the translation was of a high standard. The few reviews of the play were positive with Te Iwi o Aotearoa writing that it was well received by Māori and the theme of oppression was of direct relevance to a Māori audience. Following the stage production of Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti Selwyn began his search for funding to adapt the play into a feature length film.

Securing funding to make Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti into a feature film took approximately ten years. A Listener article by Veronica Schmidt proposes that Neil Roberts, then Head of Television New Zealand and an influential

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1214 MacDonald Jackson, "All Our Tribe," Landfall, no. 204 (2002).
1216 Auckland Anglican Church Mission also known as Tatai Hono or Holy Sepulchre. It is located in Khyber Pass Auckland. Tatai Hono is the marae and was a significant meeting point for Māori.
1217 "Selwyn, Don [Filmed Presentation]."
1218 Anon, "Te Koanga Resounding Success," Te Iwi o Aotearoa, November 1990, 1&5.
1219 New Zealand Film Commission, "Innovative Maori Feature," NZ Film May 2001, 19.
producer, was prepared to support and put money into the project.\textsuperscript{1220} Roberts was perceived to be a “friend” of the language by some Māori working in the industry.\textsuperscript{1221} Schmidt explains that Roberts wrote to NZOA asking them to partially fund the film but the application was rejected.\textsuperscript{1222} No further explanation was given in the article for the rejection. One reason may have been based on the view that high content te reo Māori productions were the responsibility of TMP, whose statutory obligations are primarily met by funding te reo Māori and tikanga Māori programmes. Furthermore, TVNZ and TV3 would not support \textit{Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti} despite Roberts’s advocacy and by mandate NZOA could not fund it because the film did not have broadcaster commitment.\textsuperscript{1223} Selwyn submitted a number of funding applications to TMP. In an unusual move, then Chief Executive, Trevor Moeke, generously allocated a $2.4 million budget at the end of 2000.\textsuperscript{1224} However, this is a small budget for a feature film of 158 minutes. TMP’s decision to fund \textit{Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti} was the result of a recent funding allocation to produce programming for the soon to be established Māori Television channel. TMP was not historically a funder of feature film and this signalled an adventurous move away from the funding of television programmes in te reo Māori. There was much debate at TMP as to whether \textit{Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti} should be funded because some thought priority should be given to stories written by Māori.\textsuperscript{1225} However, \textit{Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti} was eventually supported because it was: proficiently translated into te reo Māori, providing a formal style of language; ready for production and; Selwyn and the team had a good track record in filmmaking.\textsuperscript{1226} TMP’s decision was strategic, based on thinking that a feature length film in te reo Māori offered an immersion experience that lasted for a considerably longer time than anything available on television at that time.

The NZFC also declined numerous applications for funding and there can only be speculation as to why, given the confidentiality surrounding investment decisions.

\textsuperscript{1221} Trevor Moeke, Personal Interview, June 2010.
\textsuperscript{1222} Schmidt, “Te Bard,” 53.
\textsuperscript{1223} Moeke.
\textsuperscript{1225} Moeke.
\textsuperscript{1226} Ibid.
Mark Houlahan argues that Selwyn’s intentions to produce a local Shakespearian film would have been seen as “eccentric” within a New Zealand context because Shakespeare was more appropriately delivered in the ‘centres’ of Shakespeare such as a London or Stratford. However, historically there have been numerous local stage productions of Shakespeare with Selwyn’s early stage career as testament. Perceptions of Selwyn as “eccentric” are more likely to emerge from his passion to film a Shakespearean play entirely in te reo Māori rather than its Aotearoa location. Margo White suggests that the NZFC declined numerous applications on the grounds that the adaptation was outdated and The Merchant of Venice was a “lousy” play. The perceived lack of contemporary appeal raised by White resonates with Selwyn’s belief that the Commission rejected the play because of a perception that the translation was based on an archaic form of te reo Māori. Colonial notions that progress English as a superior, contemporary language with te reo Māori having little to offer a modern, global world may have also influenced the Commission’s decision. This raises a previous point associated with ‘hierarchies of language’ evident in the Hollywood cinematic context where English is the prevailing language. As a result, the global status of English is progressed as a superior language that invalidates indigenous languages and diminishes linguistic possibilities in cinematic contexts.

In a personal interview Selwyn felt that there was an underlying racist assumption that Māori were unable to responsibly manage major cinematic productions. Unlike Ngati, Mauri and Once Were Warriors, Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti did not have a Pākehā producer or co-producer and the production team were Māori and Pacific. Their combined inexperience in feature film production may have made funders wary, although TMP was reassured by their filmmaking experience, evident in Selwyn and Kaupua’s track records. More pragmatically, Horrocks suggests that one reason for the Commission’s rejection was the assumption that Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti would not meet their

1229 "Selwyn, Don [Filmed Presentation]."
1231 Shohat and Stam, Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media, 191-92.
1232 Selwyn.
1233 Moeke.
brief to achieve theatrical release unlike *Ngati, Mauri* and *Once Were Warriors*.\textsuperscript{1234} The NZFC eventually offered some marketing assistance.\textsuperscript{1235} Recognising the differences in genre, context and overall scale, their decision is reminiscent of the Commission’s decision not to invest in *Patu!* until the latter stages of production. *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* and *Patu!* are both politically motivated films which respectively challenge language assumptions and notions of a unified society. Their content may have been perceived to be too controversial and historically Pākehā institutions are averse to risk. In addition, the amounts invested in marketing were small in comparison to investment in film production.

Selwyn’s reasons for making *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* were not founded on commercial imperatives given that his decision to make a film in te reo Māori immediately reduced the potential size of an international and local audience. One of his driving motivations was to demonstrate the depth and beauty of te reo Māori to the world. Selwyn’s decision to adapt Te Hurinui Jones’ Māori translation was a very deliberate choice. He felt that the contemporary or colloquial way of speaking Māori had lost much of the beauty and poetry that is present in the language used by Te Hurinui Jones.\textsuperscript{1236} Selwyn refers to this as “te reo kōhatu”, a language that is ancient and enduring. Te reo kōhatu has many similarities with Shakespearian language because of its use of rhetoric, imagery and metaphor.\textsuperscript{1237} In addition, Te Hurinui was generous and keen to share his work, and Selwyn felt he had a responsibility to utilise these taonga rather than allowing the work to languish on a shelf.\textsuperscript{1238} This is consistent with Selwyn’s belief that knowledge should be passed on and shared otherwise it is “he maumau tāima” (a waste of time).\textsuperscript{1239}

Selwyn’s very first introduction to the possibilities of Shakespeare occurred when he was in the fifth form in Taumarunui and caddied for Te Hurinui Jones. At the time, Selwyn was struggling with English poets and playwrights, including

\begin{footnotes}
\item[1234] Horrocks.
\item[1235] "The Maori Merchant of Venice (2002) Media Kit."
\item[1238] "Selwyn, Don [Filmed Presentation]."
\item[1239] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
Shakespeare. He was surprised to discover that Te Hurinui Jones translated Shakespeare because of his love for its poetic nature and connections with classical Māori. In addition, Te Hurinui Jones believed that by translating the works into te reo Māori, Shakespeare would be better understood by Māori. This was evidenced when Māori approached Selwyn after watching Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti saying that for the first time they understood Shakespeare and the play. Te Hurinui Jones also translated two further Shakespearian plays, Julius Caesar (Huria Hiha), that Selwyn had hoped to stage, and Othello (Owhiro). Suggestions that Te Hurinui Jones translated A Midsummer Nights Dream appear to be unfounded and incorrectly recorded in the Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti Media Kit. The extensive translations of Te Hurinui Jones also include the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam and ancient Māori waiata (mōteatea) into English.

Selwyn’s love of Shakespeare that emerged from his acting experiences did not mask his understandings of the hegemonic role of Shakespeare’s works. As a tool of colonisation Shakespeare is promoted as a status symbol and example of British superiority and excellence in the arts and language. In Aotearoa the Collected Works of Shakespeare arrived on the Endeavour with Captain James Cook. Houlahan suggests that this was a “symbolic beginning of the enveloping of New Zealand inside British culture.” Shakespeare was increasingly incorporated into New Zealand education curriculums. During the 20th century Shakespeare was regularly taught in New Zealand schools with courses dedicated to Shakespeare in Universities before New Zealand Literature Courses were introduced.

1240 Walker, "The Bard in Te Reo."
1242 Ibid.
1244 Kathryn Parsons, Librarian of New Zealand Collection: University of Waikato: Personal Email Correspondence, 27 April 2009.
The adaption of a Shakespearian text that represents a form of cultural and linguistic colonialism raises the problematic nature of a Māori production of Shakespeare. Selwyn’s adaptation of *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Weniti* was politically motivated so he utilised a cinematic site to raise issues of colonisation and racism as well as promote tikanga and the eloquence of *te reo* Māori to the world. However, it can be argued that although the themes are relevant and the play promotes *te reo* Māori and tikanga, Shakespeare remains a powerful symbol of colonial hegemony and an ongoing colonising agenda.

There is a contradiction inherent in Selwyn’s choice of Shakespeare to promote Māori language. These contradictions were raised by several critics. Catherine Silverstone viewed it as ironic that an emblem of British linguistic superiority was used as a vehicle to promote *te reo* Māori. Valerie Wayne references Houlahan who argues that it was a “scandal” that it took Shakespeare to provide the first feature length film in *te reo* Māori. However, after viewing the film Wayne’s concerns regarding the utilisation of Shakespeare for a Māori language film were lessened because of the integrity of Māori representations. Although these criticisms are valid, they become subordinate to the more pressing intention of promoting the language. Māori are constantly required to negotiate these types of tensions in the enduring realities of the lived colonial experience. Additionally, while ambiguity may not be comfortable it is not always a liability. Although Shakespeare is symptomatic of colonial hegemony, its appropriation in this context is a deliberate and strategic move that maintains Māori agency. This is supported in a personal interview with Selwyn who revealed his intention to indigenise Shakespeare through cinematic representations. He explains:

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1248 “Selwyn, Don [Filmed Presentation].”
1251 Wayne, “Te Tangata Whai Rawa O Weniti, the Māori Merchant of Venice,” 428.
1253 Selwyn.
You still kept the integrity and the concept of what Shakespeare was about. So in a way what we did was indigenise Shakespeare.\textsuperscript{1254}

As a result Selwyn cinematically centres a politics of indigenous realities through conscious intent and action.\textsuperscript{1255}

In her thesis exploring the transcultural elements of \textit{Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti}, Claudia Stehr proposes that it is not unusual for indigenous and non European cultures to appropriate Shakespeare for their own purposes.\textsuperscript{1256} Appropriation of Shakespeare is a world wide phenomenon including stage adaptations that locate the play within specific ethnic politics.\textsuperscript{1257} One example is 	extit{The Merchant of Venice} staged in New Mexico by a bilingual troupe who radically adapted the play naming it \textit{The Merchant of Santé Fe} (1993). The play expands on the Jewish experience, raising related American ethnic politics by setting the production in colonial New Spain in 1670 where Shylock is a secretly practicing Jew (crypto-Jew) passing as a Christian (New Christian).\textsuperscript{1258} Shylock’s identity is relevant to individuals in contemporary New Mexico who can trace their heritage back to ‘crypto-Jews’ during colonialism. \textit{The Merchant of Santé Fe} examines the effects of early American ethnic politics including policies prohibiting Christians with any trace of Jewish or Islamic ancestry from entering the country.\textsuperscript{1259}

Appropriating Shakespeare for specific intentions, including challenge and resistance, occurred in Aotearoa prior to \textit{Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti}. Silverstone argues that local theatrical productions of Shakespeare drew attention to race relations and colonisation. This is seen in a rendition of \textit{Othello} as part of a colonial fable, and another production by the Court Theatre which relocated

\textsuperscript{1254} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1255} Smith, \textit{Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples}, 146.
\textsuperscript{1256} Claudia Stehr, “Shakespeare as Transcultural Narrative: Te Tangata Whai Rawa O Weniti – the Maori Merchant of Venice” (M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 2006), 7.
\textsuperscript{1257} Sonia Massai, ed. \textit{World-Wide Shakespeares} (London: Routledge, 2005), 9-10.
\textsuperscript{1259} Ibid.
Othello to the land wars of the 1860’s. The indigenising of Shakespeare also occurred at the Sixth Biennial Conference of the Australia and New Zealand Shakespeare Association held in Auckland in July 2000, with the theme, “Te Whakapōio a Wi” or “Dislocating Shakespeare.” The Conference advertising was designed by Cushla Parekowhai and Te Herenga Matauranga (Librarians for Social Change), where they presented an image of Shakespeare with a moko on the right hand side of his face, wearing a hei tiki and pounamu earring. Shakespeare’s portrait is surrounded by Māori designs and images of adorned Māori chiefs. Poet Merimeri Penfold translated nine Shakespearian love sonnets into te reo Māori for the Conference which were published in the same year. The indigenised image of Shakespeare reminds viewers about the enduring nature of colonial hegemony and simultaneously, Māori agency that powerfully indigenises and transforms the image while challenging underlying colonial assumptions. A recent stage production of Othello renamed Othello Polynesia (2009) by the Black Friars Theatre Company is reminiscent of Mita and Selwyn’s intent to indigenise the screen. With a Pacific cast, the play is located in a Pacific community incorporating Samoan drums, dance and the drinking of kava. A cinematic adaptation of Shakespeare by Māori occurred a year prior to the release of Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti with Toby Mills’ short film Te Po Uriuri/The Enveloping Night (2001). Mills based the short film on Shakespeare’s Sonnet 147, translated into te reo Māori and set in pre colonial times. The film tells the story of a young warrior who seeks vengeance because of the arranged marriage of his lover.

Criticism about Pākehā appropriation and interpretation of Māori narratives was raised in Chapter Three. It is therefore relevant to briefly address Pākehā criticisms of appropriation aimed at Māori and in particular Selwyn’s adaptation of Shakespeare’s Merchant of Venice. This occurred through a series of published letters that debated issues of appropriation and borrowing. Responding to

1261 Front Page, Shakespeare Quarterly 52, no. 4 (Winter 2001).
challenges to Pākehā who tell Māori stories on screen, Whale Rider producer John Barnett argued that all cultural forms evolve and are then “built on by others.” He proposes that to ignore this is an “apartheid” view of culture. Objecting to Barnett’s argument, Barclay examined existing power inequities and the inadequacies of western law to protect indigenous intellectual and spiritual treasures. In response writer/producer Alan Brash asks: “Should English-descended people the world over get up in arms that Māori have ‘borrowed’ Shakespeare in order to reinterpret his work in a different culture?” Brash’s argument assumes the existence of equitable and reciprocal relationships where cultures unproblematically borrow from each other. Rather than offering the reader a thoughtful analysis, Barnett and Brash conceal the wider issues of Pākehā/western privilege and power. These systemic and structural inequities have adversely affected Māori participation in cultural arenas such as film. Any discussion of appropriation must take these issues into account.

Casting and Crew

Selwyn’s desire to promote te reo Māori and offer speakers of te reo Māori a site where they can hear the language spoken competently, led him to seek out proficient speakers of the language. He purposefully chose a predominantly young Māori cast hoping to inspire other young Māori to speak te reo Māori. In this respect Selwyn resisted the idea of finding ‘stars’, or well-known actors to fill the roles, although this would also have been difficult given the level of language competency required. Many of the actors had attended Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa including Waihoroi Shortland (Hairoka/ Shylock) and Ngarimu Daniels (Pōhia/Portia) who were brought up immersed in te reo Māori. Andy Sarich (Tupara/ Tubal) was from the generation of Māori who were punished for

1267 Schmidt, "Te Bard," 53.
1268 "Selwyn, Don [Filmed Presentation]."
1269 Walker, "The Bard in Te Reo."
speaking Māori at school. Selwyn’s strategy was successful with actors expressing the language fluently.

Selwyn’s commitment to indigenise the screen led him to cast predominantly Māori in the film, with over two hundred extras employed and a core cast of approximately twenty-one. Ramai Hayward makes a guest appearance in the court crowd scene, paying tribute to her contribution to film in Aotearoa. The casting of Māori in main, and supporting roles in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* and in particular the lead characters - Anatōnio/Antonio, Patānio/Bassanio and Pōhia/Portia inverts dominant discriminatory casting practices that is particularly relevant to historical productions of Shakespeare. Theorised by Shohat and Stam in an American setting they argue that casting Black Americans in *Hamlet* militates “against a traditional discrimination that denied Blacks any role, literally and metaphorically” and in doing so bypassed Black talent. *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* offers Māori actors a range of significant development opportunities and nurturing of their talent.

Actors who were not Māori came from a range of ethnicities and Selwyn deliberately attempted to cast minor parts within the ethnicity that Shakespeare stipulated. He says:

> So therefore there are…Italians, there’s Moroccans, there’s Greeks. And I kept each of those characters in their own perspective. So I went and looked for Moroccans in Auckland. I looked for the Spaniard, I looked for the Greeks, I looked for the Scotsman and then all the other characters.

Dominant cinema has a history of turning the Other into what Shohat and Stam describe as “interchangeable units who can ‘stand in’ for one another.” They argue that this inequity in representational power has “generated intense

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1271 Informal Conversations with Kaiako (Teacher), December 2010.
1272 Schmidt, "Te Bard,” 53.
1274 Selwyn.
1275 Shohat and Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, 189.
resentment among minoritarian communities." This implies that the ethnicity being represented is incapable of representing themselves; they are unworthy of self-representation and; the producers remain unconcerned as they have the power to make decisions. Selwyn’s principled approach to casting arose from his wider concern for the empowerment and development of all marginalised groups in stage, television and cinema and in particular indigenous peoples. This resonates with Spivak’s notion of strategic essentialism where essentialist formulations can be engaged in liberatory struggles.

Selwyn was able to include a number of people involved with He Taonga Films as crew and many of his trainees worked as the heads of departments in the production. Selwyn’s Production Designer Guy Moana attended his training course, He Taonga i Tawhiti in 1984. Moana had worked on Moko Toa (1999), an animated series in te reo Māori aimed at a youth audience and crewed with Costume Designer Gavin McLean on Once were Warriors. McLean had previously worked on the E Tipu e Rea series with Selwyn. The Director of Photography was Pākehā, Davorin Fahn. Fahn worked in Croatia on feature films prior to coming to Aotearoa where he worked with Selwyn on Small Town Blues, a drama in the Nga Puna series, Tohunga and Maui Pōtiki. The original orchestral score is composed by Clive Cockburn and played by the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra with vocals by Kui Wano and the St Joseph’s Māori Girls Choir. Hirini Melbourne, who also worked on Mauri and Te Po Uriuri, is credited as the “Māori Music Composer.”

First Assistant Director Tony Forster commented on the production of Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti saying that it was the most “exciting and harmonious shoot” in his experience in film. This reflects Selwyn’s philosophy of maintaining a

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1276 Ibid., 189-90.
1277 Ibid.
1278 Selwyn.
1281 Ibid.
1282 Ibid.
1283 Ibid.
clear Māori intention grounded in Māori understandings when working on Māori driven and centred productions. In a personal interview Selwyn observed that this approach positively affected the mauri and ihi (unique quality that everything has, including plants and animals) of the project from the processes of production through to the film itself, which he had become aware of when working on The Governor. Selwyn’s philosophy acknowledges and gives voice to the existence of ‘interiority’, or an inner spiritual essence raised by Barclay and Kahurangi Waititi.

The cast were put through an intensive rehearsal schedule prior to the shoot. This contributed to what was described by Forster as a smooth shoot because the actors were confident and knew their lines. The main cast members were a mixture of experienced and inexperienced actors. At times this inexperience manifests in stilted movement and delivery of lines but does not substantially detract from the overall performances. Contributing to these static moments is the distinctly theatrical staging of the film. Reviewers generally criticised the film for the unevenness of the performances but there was overwhelming praise for Waihoroi Shortland’s rendition of Hairoka/Shylock. Shortland is the only actor from the original 1990 stage production. Actors Sonny Kirikiri (Karatiāno/Gratanio) and Daniels (Pōhia/Portia) had previously worked with Selwyn on The Feathers of Peace and the Aroha television series respectively. Te Arepa Kahi (Roreneto/Lorenzo) went on to direct short films and is currently working on a feature film mentioned in Chapter Three.

Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti was filmed in a variety of Auckland locations including Herald Island, Massey University Campus, the District Court and the University of Auckland. The courtroom scenes were shot inside the polished timber and stained glass splendour of the Holy Sepulchre Church in Khyber Pass.
where the play was staged in 1990.\footnote{Anon, “The Bard of Aotearoa,” 15.} Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti was shot in seven weeks rather than the estimated eight weeks; a major achievement given the epic nature of the production.\footnote{Schmidt, “Te Bard,” 53.} It was filmed on digital beta video, a less expensive format than film stock, and blown up to 35mm film for theatrical release, the same process used for The Feathers of Peace.\footnote{Anon, “Pound for Pound in Te Reo,” Pu Kaea, February 2001, 10; ———, “The Bard of Aotearoa,” 15.}

**Exhibition and Reception**

The first theatrical screening of Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti was formally launched by Te Arikinui Dame te Atairangikaahu at the Rialto Cinema in Hamilton in 2002. The choice of location paid respect to the iwi connections of Te Hurinui Jones. The premiere marked the beginning of the film’s tour of Aotearoa. The next screening was held in Taumarunui where both Te Hurinui Jones and Selwyn maintained strong connections. The film was welcomed by the iwi of each area it visited. At the screenings a koha was collected and went to the Pei Te Hurinui Reo Trust set up to financially assist creative writers in te reo Māori.\footnote{Vercoe, “Don Selwyn Veteran of the Arts,” 68-69; “Selwyn, Don [Filmed Presentation].”} This is consistent with Selwyn’s commitment to revitalise and promote te reo Māori.

Apart from reviews there is a paucity of information to guide me on the film’s reception. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to attend a premiere screening of Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti in Auckland. Prior to the screening people gathered in the foyer and Māori protocols were followed. The theatres at the Rialto in Newmarket were booked out for the occasion and the audience was predominantly Māori. It was not a quiet screening, with people openly and warmly acknowledging their friends and whānau as they appeared on screen. Selwyn was aware of the celebratory aspects of Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti and by taking the film to Māori communities he both validated and celebrated being Māori.\footnote{Calder, “Footy to Fairies - and Way Beyond.”}
Selwyn intended to promote indigenous languages locally and globally. His decision to tour the film locally was driven by his desire for *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* to be seen, for te reo Māori to be heard by as many Māori as possible, and in particular to inspire young Māori to learn the language. The tour of the film included cheaper priced matinee screenings to encourage schools to attend. There are limited te reo Māori teaching resources and in Whāngārei teachers took a whole school, children from new entrants (five years) to seniors (sixteen to seventeen years), to the film. *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* offered students a unique cinematic experience of total immersion in te reo Māori.

After touring the film locally, Selwyn took it to indigenous communities overseas as a way to support their struggles and inspire their work. The first international screening of *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* was in Honolulu, Hawai’i in 2002. It is here that Selwyn encouraged Kanaka Ma’oli to make films in their own language. The film also screened at the Denver Indigenous Film Festival. Moeke recalls Selwyn once again playing a mentoring role to the young indigenous filmmakers who attended the festival.

*Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* was promoted internationally as contributing to the “modern Shakespeare revival” that included *Romeo and Juliet, Midsummer Night’s Dream, Much Ado About Nothing* and *Shakespeare in Love*. The film screened at a Shakespearean Festival in Canada in 2003 to over two-thousand people and Selwyn recalls some incredulity that te reo Māori still existed and was fluently spoken. Houlanan suggests that Selwyn was astute in using Shakespeare to promote the language because there is an established international audience. Although *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* gained a niche in the international academic and film festival markets, Selwyn firstly made the film for

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1296 Informal Conversations with Kaiaako (Teacher).
1297 “Selwyn, Don [Filmed Presentation].”
1298 Wayne, "Te Tangata Whai Rawa O Weniti, the Māori Merchant of Venice," 429.
1299 Ibid.
1300 Moeke.
1302 “Selwyn, Don [Filmed Presentation].”
a Māori audience consisting of fluent and non-fluent speakers of te reo Māori, where the interest of others was secondary.\textsuperscript{1304}

Selwyn’s pedagogic and transformative intentions to promote te reo Māori meant that Selwyn hoped that the film would be used as a resource in schools.\textsuperscript{1305} To date a secondary school journal has been written showcasing Selwyn and the film, but there is no evidence of it currently being used as an educational resource.\textsuperscript{1306} I accessed a kit that contained a video of \textit{Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti}, subtitled in te reo Māori and educational material in te reo Māori produced by the Ministry of Education. Clearly, these resources are aimed at teaching the Māori language. The film’s limited international release, combined with the yet to be released multi-language subtitled DVD means that Selwyn’s dream of promoting tikanga and the eloquence of te reo Māori to the world has not been fully realised. However, in a conversation with Moeke he explained that others are continuing to work towards the release of a multi-language subtitled DVD.\textsuperscript{1307}

Overseas reviews of \textit{Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti} are difficult to source and apart from a few published articles, references to the film were predominantly written when it was in production.\textsuperscript{1308} One reviewer, Ken Eisner, praised the film in \textit{Variety} and the intriguing “cultural reworking” that positioned the European characters as the Other.\textsuperscript{1309} Reviews in Aotearoa, ranging from national to local newspapers including magazines, generally responded positively to \textit{Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti}, regarding the film as a successful and unique adaptation of Shakespeare’s \textit{Merchant of Venice}.\textsuperscript{1310} The beauty and lyrical qualities of te reo Māori were commented on by reviewers, including those not fluent in the

\textsuperscript{1305} Walker, "The Bard in Te Reo."; Birch, "The Bard Speaks Te Reo in Daring Film."
\textsuperscript{1307} Moeke.
\textsuperscript{1310} Philip Matthews, "A Wretch for All Cultures," \textit{Listener}, 9 February 2002, 52-53; Calder, "Hugely Triumphant Cultural Collusion."; Real Groove, "Maori Merchant of Venice."
language. In contrast Lana Simmons-Donaldson praised the film but suggested that te reo Māori subtitles should have been used as she found the English subtitles distracting. Te reo Māori subtitles are available in the resource kit mentioned above. However, Selwyn deliberately included English subtitles to make the film accessible to non-speakers of Māori. Simmons-Donaldson’s response stood out amongst the reviewers who generally commented positively on the usefulness of the English subtitles. Only a few reviewers mentioned the cinematography about which opinions were varied. Positive comments described the photography as seamless and sensual whereas the *Sunday Star Times* saw it as leaden and uninspired. The cinematography in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* achieves a difficult balance that enhances the film making it easy and interesting to watch while not detracting from the complex narrative and the centrality of dialogue. It is unfortunate that despite the film being in te reo Māori, with a Māori title, many of the reviewers cited only used the English title, *Māori Merchant of Venice*. This is synonymous with the media kit that positions the English title above the Māori title, suggesting an attempt to promote an accessible name for an English speaking audience and in particular the established international audience raised by Houlahan.

Selwyn’s determination to promote te reo Māori and tikanga, combined with his love of Shakespeare was realised in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*. Selwyn’s extraordinary role as mentor and trainer of Māori in theatre, film and television led him to cast significant numbers of Māori and employ Māori as production crew. He Taonga i Tawhiti provided an important training ground for the latter. At the time of writing, the film and soundtrack CD could not be purchased and were difficult to access. Also, Te Hurinui Jones’ translations are out of publication but his family are keen to make his works accessible and are exploring publishing

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1311 Calder, "Hugely Triumphant Cultural Collusion."; Simmons-Donaldson, "Te Tangata Whai Rawa O Wēniti," 2; Darling, "Don Selwyn and Te Maori Merchant of Venice."; White, "Shakespeare Korero," 114.
opportunities. Unfortunately the circumstances mean that these unique and exemplary works are not readily available for the benefit of current and future generations.

**Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti: Textual Analysis**

The following textual analysis of *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* privileges *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework*.

**Māori Voices**

*Te Reo Māori*

Selwyn recognised the transformative potential of cinema to promote te reo Māori. By adopting the translation of Te Hurinui Jones, a formal style of te reo Māori is preserved for posterity. This is supported by the skilled delivery of te reo Māori by the actors which maintains the mana of the language and reveals its lyrical quality.

Underpinning the film and in keeping with the findings of the Waitangi Tribunal’s *Te Reo Māori Report* (1987) is the assertion that te reo Māori is a taonga and must be actively protected and nurtured. This reflects Māori aspirations of self-determination and resistance to successive attempts to assimilate Māori and suppress the language. The Tribunal’s more recent report, Wai 262, identifies the urgent need to advance the language because of a dramatic decline in young speakers as well as a concerning drop in attendance at Kōhanga Reo. There is a thirst to hear te reo Māori spoken in public places given the dominance of the English language in our society. To have the opportunity to listen to te reo Māori for the duration of a feature length dramatic film is, to date, a unique experience.

Primarily made for an audience versed in te reo Māori, rather than Shakespearean English, Selwyn subtitled *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* into brief and easy to read English that is a mix of Shakespearean language and modern English. They do not detract from the film and allow the audience to become involved in the

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1316 Parsons.
1317 Waitangi Tribunal, "Te Reo Māori Report, Wai 262 [Pre-Publication]."
narrative with little effort. This ensures the privileging of te reo Māori. Pragmatically a full translation of the play would have taken up too much space on the screen. Reviewing the subtitles would be advantageous as they occasionally contain spelling and grammatical errors such as “wonderous” for “wondrous” and “Anatōnio/Antonio you most welcome here” that should read “Anatōnio/Antonio you are most welcome here.” Requests were made to dub the film into other languages when Selwyn exhibited *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* in Canada but he refused because privileging the language and allowing space where the beauty of the words could be heard was his main intent.\textsuperscript{1318}

One positive outcome was the application of the formal style of language used in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* to a contemporary setting. Shortland noted that at a wedding one of the younger actors used Pōhia’s/Portia’s well-known speech that includes the line “the quality of mercy is not strained”.\textsuperscript{1319} The result was that this formal style of language was effectively and inspirationally transferred to a contemporary and quotidian context. Shortland observed that the younger generation were “bringing back the beauty and passion of the language.”\textsuperscript{1320}

Improving the depth and quality of te reo Māori is not Selwyn’s passion alone. This is evidenced in a course set up to train second language speakers in the art of whaikōrero, given the loss of native speakers.\textsuperscript{1321} Teachers include Pou te Hemara, Timoti Karetu and Wharehuia Milroy who are based at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa.

The centring of te reo Māori in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* raises an earlier point associated with hierarchies of language where the promotion and prevalence of English, evident in a Hollywood cinematic context, indirectly invalidates indigenous languages and linguistic possibilities in film.\textsuperscript{1322} *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* challenges Eurocentric hierarchies of language, establishing te reo Māori as a cinematic language of complexity and beauty. As importantly, the film

\textsuperscript{1318} “Selwyn, Don [Filmed Presentation].”
\textsuperscript{1319} Aroha means mercy and love.
\textsuperscript{1320} White, "Shakespeare Korero," 115.
\textsuperscript{1321} The course is run at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa in Hastings.
\textsuperscript{1322} Shohat and Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, 191-92.
confronts colonial hegemony that promotes te reo Māori as an inferior language incapable of doing justice to the great English poets and writers. Te Hurinui Jones’ translation captures the poetics, imagery and metaphor in the Shakespearian language, while the fluency and oratory ability of the actors results in a commanding and lyrical delivery of lines.

*Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* may be challenged on the grounds that many Māori are not fluent in te reo Māori thereby creating a site of cultural exclusion. However, the English subtitles promote inclusivity while retaining the centring of te reo Māori. Selwyn uses film for a greater purpose; as a vehicle to promote the language. As Emma Cox argues, what is important is the film’s nurturing of te reo Māori and educative aims.1323 Gayatri Spivak proposes that language is one element that allows us to make sense of things, of ourselves, contributing to identity construction.1324 The Māori language provides sustenance, a way to conceptualise and affirm our place and experiences in the world regardless of individual fluency. *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* also introduces other elements of Māori culture that will be discussed later in this chapter such as tikanga as well as offering counter hegemonic representations. These elements, including the simple fact of the film’s existence, contribute to conceptualising *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* as a taonga that privileges and celebrates te reo Māori and by implication, being Māori.

**Identity**

*Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* is set in Venice in the 17th century. In this unfamiliar setting, a strong Māori presence is nevertheless maintained. Māori dominate the screen visually and audibly, challenging expectations as to how Māori identity is constructed, pushing the boundaries of more conventional Māori representations. An early scene in the film located in a Venetian market is populated by Māori and reminiscent of early coastal trading posts such as Russell/Kororāreka in the 19th century. This is reinforced by previous shots of a sailing vessel traversing an inlet with land covered in bush that combined with the

light and colour, establishes a landscape that is recognisable as Aotearoa but is not. The main characters, who are Māori, are dressed lavishly in Renaissance costumes with ruffles and lace reflecting their wealth and status - a significant departure from dominant constructions of Māori. The only exception is Hairoka/Shylock who dresses modestly. This is in direct contrast to the previous two case studies, Ngati and Mauri that locate Māori within a rural, working class environment that is unmistakably a Māori community in Aotearoa. In Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti Māori are wealthy, thriving masters over their world. The representations are supported by the elegant set designs and combined with McLean’s lavish costuming result in a visually stunning production. The film complicates more conventional and ‘realistic’ representations of Māori as a colonised people yet remains liberatory in purpose, arguing for a range of representations of marginalised groups that do not preclude more experimental alternatives.1325

Selwyn’s decision to retain the Venetian location and populate the screen with ‘Māori Venetians’ indirectly enacts Bhabha’s mimicry where the colonised assume the habits of the coloniser.1326 In Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti, Māori mimic the symbols of European/white sophistication and power, through cultural habits of dress, values and institutions, thereby performing superiority and unsettling the hierarchies that assume white privilege in the first place. However, the ‘Māori Venetians’ in Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti do not unproblematically reflect these qualities. The result is an imprecise reproduction conveying both familiarity and difference where the Other (Māori) is “almost the same but not quite.”1327 Mimesis in Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti indirectly undermines Shakespeare as a symbol of British/white superiority, but is complicated by the rejection of the coloniser’s language with the use of te reo Māori.1328

1326 Bhabha, The Location of Culture, 86.
1327 Ibid.
1328 Ibid.
Mana Tāne and Mana Wahine

*Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* offers representations of Māori men and women that challenge dominant discourses and stereotypes. Selwyn wanted to offer a range of stories including alternative constructions of Māori men as ‘warriors’ previously discussed in relation to films such as *Once Were Warriors* and *Utu*. His intentions are manifest in the male characters in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* who are represented as urbane, articulate and confident of their place in the world. In combination with the poetic aspects of te reo Māori and Māori culture, *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* affirms representations of Māori men as mana tāne by presenting alternative representations to dominant constructions of Māori hypermasculinity and its associated elements of physicality and violence described by Hokowhitu. In particular, *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* provides a stunning contrast to the ‘warrior’ image in *Once Were Warriors*, represented by Jake Heke, the abusive husband of Beth Heke, who solves his problems by resorting to extreme physical violence.

*Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* affirms the strength and dignity of Māori men by reducing the focus on the comedic elements of particular characters, thereby establishing a complex male camaraderie. For example, an early scene in the film establishes the relationship between the three Venetian characters, Hararino/Salarino, Harānio/Salernio and Anatōnio/Antonio. In this scene Anatōnio/Antonio expresses feelings of melancholy for which he can find no reason. In response Harānio/Salernio jocularly suggests that he must be lovesick. The comedic elements of Harānio/Salernio’s speech are underplayed through his sympathetic delivery of lines and camera shots that frame the three men in a tableau that reinforces their ease and familiarity with each other. The bond is further emphasised with the arrival of Patānio/Bassanio and Roreneto/Lorenzo, and together the men express a strong kinship that is represented through their affectionate gestures and general camaraderie. These types of representations maintain individual dignity and establish inter male relationships that are not machismo and far removed from the Māori male ‘warrior’ construction.

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1329 Anon, "The Bard of Aotearoa," 16.
1331 Shakespeare’s Act 1.1
Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti provides representations that challenge stereotypical depictions of Māori women as the hypersexualised and savage female. Pōhia/Portia is a woman of status who is intelligent and articulate. Her sense of agency gives a powerful voice to Māori women. This is represented in the Court scene where Pōhia/Portia cleverly negotiates the legal ramifications of the contract made between Hairoka/Shylock and Anatōnio/Antonio. Pōhia/Portia calmly addresses not only Hairoka/Shylock but the entire courtroom. Cutaways to the audience indicate that she is respected by those present in the court. As importantly, Selwyn introduces the role of kai karanga in Pōhia’s/Portia’s realm of Peremona/Belmont, giving voice to the strength and prestige of Māori women.

Māori Worldviews and Concepts

As discussed, Selwyn did not radically alter Shakespeare’s text and retained the Venetian location. He did however transform Belmont into the Māori world of Peremona. In this distinctly indigenously imagined world, Māori protocols, practices and culture are introduced, validated and legitimated.

The film’s unique opening sequence establishes the importance of Peremona/Belmont as a Māori site. The Piriniha o Morako/Prince of Morocco leads a procession through the bush on the outskirts of Peremona/Belmont, attended by a woman singing a haunting waiata. Lit by the moon, patupaiarehe or tūrehu flit through the trees, altering the earlier mood from one of potential danger to one of enchantment and wonder. They appear to be shadowing the interlopers, guarding their domain that is governed by Tāne Mahuta, God of nature and forests, ancestor of the trees and birds. This scene is not in Shakespeare’s play or Te Hurinui Jones’ translation and serves to expand on the world of Peremona/Belmont, emphasising the elements of this Māori world by placing it at the forefront of the film. This is an inspired interpretation of Shakespeare’s magical world and immediately situates Peremona/Belmont within a Māori context.

1332 The singer is Ardre Broughton-Foote.
1333 Patupaiarehe and tūrehu are frequently referred to as supernatural beings with an air of mystery. Described as fairy-like people with pale complexions, they can be either malign or beneficent.
The residence at Peremona/Belmont is established with shots of native ferns, the sound of birds, formal gardens and a magical waterfall that creates a dramatic backdrop, eliciting an atmosphere of serenity and power. There is the sense that Peremona/Belmont is far removed from the commercially driven and male dominated world of Wēniti/Venice.

*Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* creates a Māori world by introducing elements of Māori culture, tikanga and worldviews, through image and sound. The exterior of Pōhia/Portia’s lavish residence represents a Māori space or marae ātea with carvings, open ground in front of the house, and a large entranceway. Its function is reinforced by the formal welcome, drawn from pōwhiri, given to the Piriniha o Morako/Prince of Morocco who arrives at night to seek Pōhia/Portia’s hand in marriage. The scene does not occur in Shakespeare or Te Hurinui Jones’ work. Selwyn’s unique incorporation of Māori processes of encounter transforms previous versions of the Prince’s arrival and aspects of marae tikanga are creatively incorporated into a uniquely indigenous setting. The sound combines percussion associated with the Moroccan visitors and Māori instruments such as pūtātara (shell trumpet). Flaming poi and wero (challenge) are skilfully and dramatically utilised. Māori encounter processes are foregrounded and centred by the powerful karanga. This is given due space where the role of the kai karanga, the only woman with a moko, is respected and honoured. The karanga is not presented as a one-off event as a later scene reveals that all visitors receive this welcome. This is clearly demonstrated by a close shot as the kai karanga carefully places her mere (short flat club) on a table as she leads another hopeful suitor, Piriniha o Arakona/Prince of Arragon, into the residence. The introduction and centring of the role of kai karanga in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* celebrates and affirms the status and strength of Māori women. Selwyn has not subtitled this scene but this has no direct impact on the audience’s understanding of the plot. The imagined world of Peremona/Belmont makes visible Māori practices and worldviews grounded in Māori understandings.

The creation of a Māori space is sustained inside Pōhia/Portia’s house that combines Māori and western decorations. This includes an eclectic mix of antique books, ornaments, vases, korowai (woven cloak), mere, taiaha (long club),
tukutuku (panel work), whakairo (carvings) and kete (flax kit). Although the men and women in Wēniti/Venice wear Venetian dress, clothing in Peremona/Belmont combines Māori and European elements. Pōhia’s/Portia’s costumes are inspired by 17th century Venice and combined with korowai, feathers, flax detail and jewellery that incorporate Māori designs. The attention to detail creates an environment that contains western influences but remains distinctly Māori, reinforcing Peremona/Belmont as a Māori world. Houlahan likens Pōhia’s/Portia’s European clothing to that adopted by Māori in formal 19th century portraits and is reminiscent of colonial photographic images of Māori women described earlier.\footnote{Sturma, \textit{South Sea Maidens: Western Fantasy and Sexual Politics in the South Pacific}, 95.} Sturma, referred to previously, argues that women in the South Pacific, through actively engaging a photographer and masterfully choosing the setting and attire, asserted status and power. \textit{Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti} cleverly combines Māori and European dress in a distinctly indigenous setting attributing a sense of agency to the Māori subject that asserts Pōhia’s/Portia’s status and power.\footnote{Sturma, \textit{South Sea Maidens: Western Fantasy and Sexual Politics in the South Pacific}, 95.}

Music that incorporates Māori wind instruments reinforces Peremona/Belmont as a Māori realm. Melbourne is seen playing Māori wind instruments in Pōhia’s/Portia’s residence and operatically inspired waiata accompany Pōhia’s/Portia’s suitors as they choose a chest. Mere Boynton and William Winitana deliver powerful singing performances that become focal points in these scenes. Wēniti’s/Venice’s separation from Peremona/Belmont is underscored by the different soundtracks; an orchestral score accompanies scenes located in Wēniti/Venice.

Aspects of the dramatic visual and audio elements in Peremona/Belmont are referred to by McDonald Jackson and reviewer Philip Mathews as reminiscent of the exotic ‘Māoriland’ of earlier films.\footnote{Jackson, \textit{"All Our Tribe,"} 158-59; Matthews, \textit{"A Wretch for All Cultures,"} 53.} Houlahan suggests that the opening scene with the fairy-like creatures may be understood by a global audience as adding an “exotic gloss”, yet known to a local audience as patupaiarehe or
tūrehu. However, a local audience unversed in Māori worldviews would not understand the meanings underlying the representation of patupaiarehe and potentially reach a similar conclusion. Cox argues that observations like Jackson’s raise issues related to the colonial constructions of Māori but “may ultimately end up circumscribing Māori creative expression.” Although problematic, given the nuances in readings, those with knowledge of Māori traditions will recognise these beings, their ancient origins and stories and immediately understand their significance. In this respect *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* speaks directly to a Māori audience – the film “talks in.” Selwyn understood the creative possibilities of film in relation to theatre saying that film goes “beyond the proscenium” allowing variant forms of imagination to be expressed. He deliberately created an opportunity to represent tikanga and Māori worldviews to the world and has done so with integrity and to great dramatic effect.

In 2001, prior to the release of *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*, two items covering the film’s production, BBC News and Mark Birch in *The Daily News*, warned future audiences of the absence of expected Māori cultural icons such as piupiu (flax skirt), “tattoos” and “fierce dances”. The media release in 2002 appeared to pick up on this angle by writing that, “contrary to what some might expect, there are no piupius and no mokos” in Selwyn’s interpretation. However, *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* successfully incorporates recognised facets of Māori identity including piupiu, moko and karanga, described above. This suggests that the authors held preconceptions as to how Shakespeare, a symbol of British cultural heritage, could be conceived by a Māori director. Without having seen the film they could not imagine how the play could be reinterpreted within an indigenised frame.

Selwyn incorporates spatial elements grounded in Māori practices and worldviews that make *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* quite distinct. This is evident in the conceptualisation of the pōwhiri or encounter processes on the marae ātea.

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1337 Houlahan, ”Hekepia? The Mana of the Maori Merchant,” 143.
1338 Cox, ”Te Reo Shakespeare: Te Tangata Whai Rawa O Weniti/the Maori Merchant of Venice,” 82.
1339 Anon, ”The Bard of Aotearoa,” 15.
1340 Birch, ”The Bard Speaks Te Reo in Daring Film.”; BBC News, ”Shakespeare Goes Maori.”
1341 ”The Maori Merchant of Venice (2002) Media Kit.”
described above as well as the Court scene where Hairoka/Shylock demands his pound of flesh. The Court scene provides a further example of Selwyn’s utilisation of space that reflects Māori processes of encounter and the associated physical negotiations that take place. For example, during a pōwhiri the hosts and visitors follow a pre-determined path that usually maintains their physical separation until the proceedings are completed. In the Court scene, the crowd are made up of the two religious factions, are physically divided by the aisle and never attempt to cross this line, even when interjecting. The main characters have defined physical areas and seldom encroach on one another. Both genders have a voice that draws on aspects of whaikōreoro where lines are delivered in a formal and commanding manner. This establishes the similarity that Selwyn and others identified between Māori oratory and Shakespearian language. Although the scene represents aspects of a western courtroom, Selwyn’s interpretation of the scene distinctly draws on pōwhiri practices where divisions are physically and symbolically drawn. In contrast, Gold’s BBC television production only includes Christian supporters who are silent throughout the proceedings and the Channel 4 production directed by Horrox has the essential characters only and a few court officials. Conceptualising scenes in Shakespeare as Māori spaces gives them a power and distinctly Māori presence.

Collectivity and Relationships

Notions of collectivity are evidenced in Peremona/Belmont where there is a sense of community, whānau and whanaungatanga. Here children and adults, predominantly women, work and live together. As members of a community they have roles that extend beyond the distinctive social differentiations between nobility and servants, superiors and inferiors, of historical English society. For example, the karanga carries with it particular responsibilities and the kai karanga does not play a subordinate or acquiescent role to Pōhia/Portia. Manakitanga is extended to all the guests by the community who feed and entertain them.

1343 Alan Horrox, "Merchant of Venice," (United Kingdom: Channel 4, 1996); Jack Gold, "Merchant of Venice," (United Kingdom: BBC Production, 1980).
Children are visible in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* and are an accepted part of the community, assisting with caring for the visitors.

To a lesser extent notions of whānau are present in Wēniti/Venice. Remaining faithful to the spirit of the Shakespearian text, Selwyn interprets these relationships to better reflect Māori concepts of whānau. One example occurs when Ranaharoto Kopo /Launcelot (Hairoka’s/Shylock’s servant and comic relief) unexpectedly comes across his elderly father, Kopo Kaumātua/Gobbo, in the street. Kopo Kaumātua/Gobbo who is blind does not recognise his son and asks for directions.1345 Ranaharoto Kopo/Launcelot uses the opportunity to confuse his father. Substantial pieces of dialogue that are present in Shakespeare’s original are absent in this scene and as a result lessen what could be perceived as Ranaharoto Kopo’s/Launcelot’s disrespect for his father. In Shakespeare’s original version Launcelot cruelly informs Gobbo, who remains unaware of Lancelot’s true identity, that his son (Launcelot) is dead. However, the dialogue in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* closely follows Te Hurinui Jones’ translation where this particular exchange is absent. The reasons why Te Hurinui Jones edited dialogue in this scene can only be speculative and could be related to concepts of whānau and respect for elders. Selwyn may have followed Te Hurinui Jones’ script for pragmatic reasons but in doing so he capitalises on a friendlier and more respectful exchange between father and son.

*Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* also represents the relationship between Hairoka/Shylock and his daughter Tiehika/Jessica in a generally positive manner. In the only scene where they interact, Hairoka/Shylock is preparing to leave the house and instructs his daughter to lock the doors and stay inside. Hairoka/Shylock shows concern for his daughter’s safety and his voice conveys feelings of tenderness and love when he addresses her. This not only presents a softer side to Hairoka’s/Shylock’s character but also reinforces the concept of whānau connections and responsibilities. While he may pursue vengeance, he is committed to his family and by extension his nation/iwi. Hairoka/Shylock frequently refers to the Jewish community as iwi that is subtitled in English as

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1345 Shakespeare’s Act 2.2
“nation” or “tribe.” Hairoka’s/Shylock’s notion of belonging, the associated responsibilities and the shared experience of oppression are likely to resonate with Māori viewers, creating further empathy for him.

Further supporting Hairoka’s/Shylock’s sense of connection and kinship is Selwyn’s omission of his harsh reaction to his daughter’s elopement (with his jewels) during an exchange with friend Tupara/Tubal.1346 In the original play he says:

I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear!
Would she were hearsed at my foot and the ducats in her coffin!1347

Hairoka/Shylock is saying that he would rather Tiehika/Jessica were dead at his feet with the money in her coffin and the jewels in her ear than elope with a Christian. The dialogue is present in Te Hurinui Jones’ translation. This is a defining moment in the original play where audience sympathies garnered during his speech of “If you prick us, do we not bleed?” may easily turn to revulsion with his cruel response. The deliberate omission of these lines in Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti maintains the values associated with notions of whānau and supports an empathetic reading of Hairoka/Shylock and his intentions. The representation of Tiehika/Jessica in Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti also establishes values associated with whānau. Although she dislikes her father’s behaviour Tiehika/Jessica shows aroha for him; despite his shortcomings she speaks of him with compassion and sadness. It is these ellipses, for example the deletion of lines, and small moments such as an emphasis on non-verbal responses, that are important in understanding Selwyn’s distinctive indigenous interpretation of the play.

**Challenge and Resistance**

The theme of oppression in Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti has resonance with Māori experiences of colonisation. Shohat and Stam suggest that “epidermically

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1346 Shakespeare’s Act 3.1
incorrect” casting can posit “analogical links between communities.” They give the example of an ethnically diverse cast taking on shifting roles in a play about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. An African-American actor plays both a Jewish-American and a Palestinian-American, hinting at common histories of oppression between the three ethnic groups. In *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*, Māori cast in the role of the oppressed, epitomised by Hairoka/Shylock, implies analogical links that suggest a shared, albeit different, history of oppression. Importantly, Jewish oppression becomes a symbol of Māori oppression, although this is not without tensions and complexities, particularly given the casting of Māori in roles as oppressor. If the role of Hairoka/Shylock was Māori amidst a Pākehā cast then a less complicated commentary on racism and oppression could occur. Minton argues that despite these tensions “the racial implications of this play cannot be erased, nor does the film attempt to do so.”

Through allegory and more literal devices employed through Selwyn’s indigenisation of the screen, including the use of te reo Māori and Māori actors, *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* is not only understood within Jewish historical and contemporary experiences of anti-Semitism but crucially, Māori experiences of oppression. The following discussion analyses key examples in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* that are individually pertinent and collectively build to make a powerful comment about Māori experiences of colonisation and racism.

Selwyn’s desire to indigenise the screen creates a range of Māori representations that works against the temptation to only read power relationships through Hairoka/Shylock. Although there is an obvious relationship between Venetian/Māori nobility and oppression, there are three key representational elements at play: Māori men as Venetian nobility that are dramatically different from more conventional and expected representations exemplified by Anatōnio/Antonio and Patānio/Bassanio; Māori women as Venetian/Māori nobility situated within the distinctly Māori world of Peremona/Belmont, reinforced by Māori practices and hybridity of dress and; Māori as a distinctly oppressed group evidenced by Hairoka/Shylock. The layering of Māori

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1349 Ibid.
1350 Ibid.
1351 Minton, “A Polynesian Shakespeare Film: The Maori Merchant of Venice,” 51.
representations in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Weniti*, reinforced by the centrality of te reo Māori, argues for a complex reading of oppression mapped onto colonial settings yet also imagines Māori in ways that are liberatory.

Although the oppressor/oppressed dynamic remains at play, a further example that supports Selwyn’s representation of Māori characters as honourable Venetian nobles is the strategic underplaying of anti-Semitic characteristics evident in the character of Roreneto/Lorenzo. In her thesis, Stehr reveals that in some adaptations Roreneto/Lorenzo is depicted as having dishonourable intentions towards his future wife, Tiehika/Jessica, daughter of Hairoka/Shylock, where his primary motivation is monetary gain. In contrast, Selwyn represents Roreneto/Lorenzo as having noble intentions that are not connected to a desire for Tiehika’s/Jessica’s wealth. Selwyn also reduces expressions of religious prejudice. For example, Selwyn omits Roreneto’s/Lorenzo’s line referring to Tiehika/Jessica as “issue to a faithless Jew” that occurs in the original play and Te Hurinui Jones’ translation. Roreneto’s/Lorenzo’s noble intentions are reinforced in the final scene when Tiehika/Jessica receives word that her father’s will bequeaths his wealth to the couple on his death. Unlike the production by Horrox for Channel 4, Roreneto/Lorenzo does not express an excessive interest in this promise of wealth. Instead he is represented as visibly concerned about his wife’s sadness at her estrangement from her father. As discussed earlier, it is these ellipses that are important in understanding Selwyn’s distinctive indigenous interpretation of the play.

The oppressor/oppressed dynamic is established in Selwyn’s unique opening sequence. It begins with visuals of stairs strewn with dead leaves as feet laboriously ascend steep stone steps. The camera slowly tracks upwards to reveal Hairoka/Shylock and stormy skies. The visuals are accompanied with his voice-over in te reo Māori and subtitles:

Kāore koia he ringaringa o te Hūrai, he manawa, he tinana, he whakaaro, he aroha, he hiahia?

1352 Stehr, "Shakespeare as Transcultural Narrative: Te Tangata Whai Rawa O Weniti – the Maori Merchant of Venice", 70.
1353 Horrox, "Merchant of Venice."
This is an extract taken from a later and well-known speech that occurs in the original play (Act 3.1) and also in Te Hurinui Jones’ translation where Hairoka/Shylock questions the lack of humanity shown to the Jewish people by the Christians. Deliberately moved by Selwyn to be placed at the beginning of the film, these are the first words the audience hear which are spoken in te reo Māori. As a result, this powerful speech immediately puts emphasis on and creates a sympathetic context of oppression within which the following events and actions of the film will be interpreted. This is made additionally forceful and relevant to the Māori experience by the use of te reo Māori and its powerful delivery by a well-known Māori actor.

Selwyn’s interpretation of Hairoka/Shylock reveals an individual who is a member of an oppressed group at the outset. He is represented with dignity throughout the film as a figure that must be understood in the context of wider issues of racism and injustice. To support this interpretation Selwyn omitted dialogue that overtly exhibits Hairoka/Shylock’s callousness and desire for revenge. An earlier example was given regarding the deletion of his harsh reaction to his daughter’s elopement with Christian, Roreneto/Lorenzo. A further example is the omission of Hairoka/Shylock’s callous response to Hararino/Salarino that occurs in the original play (Act 3.1) and the Māori translation. When asked what good would come from his desire to get a pound of Anatōnio’s/Antonio’s flesh Hairoka/Shylock replies: “To bait fish withal. If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge.” Selwyn does not eliminate all dialogue that represents Hairoka/Shylock as vengeful and callous but strategically reduces the amount and in particular some of his more extreme responses. This supports a more empathetic reading of Hairoka/Shylock’s character and intentions.

Further supporting an empathetic and indigenous reading of Hairoka/Shylock occurs in the well-known scene where Anatōnio/Antonio agrees to contract a pound of his flesh to Hairoka/Shylock if he fails to meet the terms of the bond.1354

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1354 Shakespeare’s Act 1.3. Shakespeare does not specify a location apart from it taking place in Venice. The scene is reasonably long lasting for approximately twelve minutes.
This scene is crucial to Selwyn’s interpretation and indigenising of *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*. Set in an art gallery in the Venetian markets, Hairoka/Shylock agrees to lend Anatōnio/Antonio three thousand ducats that must be repaid within three months or he will forfeit a pound of his flesh. While the dialogue is edited, it remains faithful to Shakespeare and Te Hurinui Jones’ text, but the environment is dramatically reinterpreted to represent a distinctly Māori experience of colonial oppression.

The scene opens with Anatōnio/Antonio entering the art gallery as the camera pans across an artist working on a large canvas; the content of which is revealed later. The artist is an additional character that Selwyn introduces and is played by Selwyn Muru who is a prominent painter in his own right. The artist, who is silent, is never acknowledged by the characters but maintains a strong presence throughout the scene. As the scene progresses, the range of artwork covering the walls and much of the floor space is revealed. The work belongs to Muru’s series on the occupation and destruction of the pacifist Māori settlement of Parihaka in Taranaki by colonial troops in 1881. The Māori settlement farmed land previously confiscated by the Crown and staged non violent actions that were viewed as a threat by the Crown. In response, the government sent in 1,500 armed men and jailed over four hundred Māori including Te Whiti and Tohu. The abundance and placement of the paintings that record this event metaphorically and visually transforms the gallery space into the threatened world of Parihaka.

Hairoka/Shylock moves comfortably amongst these paintings, walking with ease and familiarity in the Māori world of Parihaka. Near the beginning of the scene he paces the floor between two paintings resting on easels giving them height and a lifelike presence. Only one of these paintings, a ruru or owl is revealed at this point. As Hairoka/Shylock expresses his hatred for Anatōnio/Antonio he addresses this painting as if speaking to an empathetic listener. The ruru is associated with the spirit world and viewed by some as a kaitiaki or guardian. During this aside Hairoka/Shylock says:
He [Anatōnio/Antonio] hates our nation. He abuses my work with our merchants. My money, my well-won profit which he calls interest. Cursed by my tribe if I forgive him. (subtitles in English)

Hairoka’s/Shylock’s experience of oppression is clearly articulated here and he seeks not only personal retribution but collective retribution on behalf of his tribe, his iwi, reinforced by employing “tribe” in the English subtitles. As the camera tracks with him, further paintings are revealed to the audience that simultaneously make a statement about the devastating effects of colonisation in Aotearoa and reinforce Hairoka’s/Shylock’s allegiance and belonging to an oppressed nation/iwi.

One painting becomes increasingly prominent during this scene. It is the previously hidden canvas that sits on an easel in the centre of the room. The painting is of Māori pacifist Te Whiti o Rongomai, leader at Parihaka and symbolic of Māori struggles against Crown injustices. The face of Te Whiti dominates the canvas with prominent eyes that are powerful and watchful, bearing witness to the proceedings. In turn the audience must bear witness, not only to the immediate proceedings, but the sacking of Parihaka and by implication, the traumatic effects of colonisation. The division between the two factions, Christian and Jewish, oppressor and oppressed, is highlighted by spatial separation that draws on pōwhiri processes of encounter and reinforced by slow moving shots. As Patānio/Bassanio is Anatōnio’s/Antonio’s ally, Te Whiti stands alongside Hairoka/Shylock in solidarity against the oppressor. A collective memory and experience of Māori oppression is suggested later in the scene when a Jewish couple, patrons of the gallery and identifiable by their clothing, carefully study and inaudibly discuss the paintings. Their presence encourages the viewer to “pay more attention to the art and consider its connection to the scene.”

The paintings in this scene are not named or readily identifiable by an audience unless they have knowledge of either Muru’s work or the colonial history and landscape of Taranaki. However, the gallery patrons combined with the

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1356 Minton, “A Polynesian Shakespeare Film: The Maori Merchant of Venice,” 51.
prominence given to the paintings in this scene and their ominous presence convey something of their significance to an unfamiliar audience. By combining spatial divisions and strong visual elements Selwyn transforms Shakespeare’s Venice into the world of Parihaka where the oppressed and oppressor are pitted against each other. This cleverly conveys the theme of oppression and firmly establishes it within a historical Māori context of colonisation.

If this association is not made, Selwyn inserts a powerful closing shot that leaves no doubt as to his intentions. Towards the end of the scene the audience has a tantalising glimpse of Muru’s painting in progress and the camera reveals two letters, “s” and “t”. All is revealed as the scene comes to a powerful close with the departure of Anatônio/Antonio and Patânio/Bassanio. The camera tracks across a stone sculpture to the artist and slowly pans up the painting to finally reveal the capitalised word “HOLOCAUST” painted horizontally across the top of the canvas. In a site where te reo Māori is privileged, the very deliberate inclusion of an English word increases its impact and ensures immediate understandings. The implications of this will be recognised by a global and local audience compelling them to associate the scene and by implication, Hairoka’s/Shylock’s role, alongside the effects of racism and oppression. However, this has multiple meanings that directly relate to both Jewish and Māori experiences of oppression and has resonance for indigenous and marginalised peoples globally. The understandings gained from this will vary depending on an audience’s contextual knowledge.

The dominant meaning of Holocaust stands for the persecution of millions of Jews in Nazi Germany during World War II. This reminds the audience that the play must always be understood within this context as well as the historical oppression of Jews by Christians. Further understandings include the wider implications of colonisation in Aotearoa in a historical and contemporary context. Houston Ward writes that the scene draws historical “parallels between how Jews and Māori have been treated by white Christians.”135

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missionaries signalled the beginning of a cultural invasion. It is also relevant to add that historically Māori messianic movements such as the Papahurihia and later Kenana’s followers recognised commonalities between the Israelites and Māori, calling themselves Hūrai (Jew) and Iharaira (Israelites).

There are also contemporary references. Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti was filmed shortly after Tariana Turia, Associate Minister of Māori Affairs for the Labour Party, gave a speech to the New Zealand Psychological Society. It covered the effects of colonisation on Māori whānau, hapū and iwi. Turia referred to the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder experienced by Jewish survivors of the Holocaust and Vietnam veterans arguing that Māori had not received equal consideration saying that “what seems to not have received similar attention is the holocaust suffered by indigenous people including Māori as a result of colonial contact and behaviour.

She was publicly vilified for aligning the word “holocaust” to Māori experiences of colonisation. The Labour Prime Minister, Helen Clark, spoke out about Turia’s use of the word, arguing that the term has a “specific and very tragic meaning.” She directed Turia to apologise and agree to never use the word again in this context. Selwyn is reported as saying that they could not resist referencing this incident. In addition, the word “holocaust” appears in The Taranaki Report: Kaupapa Tuatahi, a Waitangi Tribunal report released in 1996, adding further meaning to Muru’s artwork. The report examines a range of issues that include the government led wars on Taranaki, land confiscation, the imprisonment of Māori without trial and the appalling conditions prisoners endured. The Tribunal named this “the holocaust of Taranaki history” that began in 1840 and continues today.

1358 Walker, Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle without End, 78-85.
1359 Ibid., 130; Webster, Rua and the Maori Millennium, 161.
1361 Ibid.
Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti overtly challenges Turia’s critics, the Labour Government’s response and denials that the Māori experience of colonisation can be likened to a holocaust.\textsuperscript{1365} The imaginative use of images of Parihaka combined with the textual “Holocaust” reference creates a unique interpretation of Shakespeare’s play that represents and uncovers Māori experiences of colonisation. This establishes a context for the reading of the Court scene that occurs later in the play.

The Court scene is the longest scene in Shakespeare’s play (Act 4.1). Anatōnio/Antonio fails to meet the terms of the contract he made with Hairoka/Shylock. In response, Hairoka/Shylock insists on a pound of Anatōnio’s/Antonio’s flesh and debates this in a Venetian Court of law. Pōhia/Portia finds a loophole in the law and Hairoka/Shylock, who is confident of winning, loses his wealth and is forced to renounce his Jewish religion and convert to Christianity. Selwyn only makes minor changes to the original, resulting in the scene running for forty minutes. A detailed reading is required because of the length of the scene and its relevance to the theme of oppression.

The church setting, for the Court scene, is a visually appealing and imposing environment with high ceilings, stained glass windows, and carved wooden supports. From the outset Selwyn reinforces the unequal power dynamics between the Christians and Jews by locating the scene in an overtly Christian setting. He explains his intentions:

\begin{quote}
Being able to do the court scene in a place like this [Anglican Holy Sepulchre Church] just reinforces the influence of Christianity as opposed to the Jewish element…We see the vulnerability of Shylock here…I wrote it into the script.\textsuperscript{1366}
\end{quote}

The cinematography also reinforces the unequal relationships between the Jews and Christians. For example Anatōnio/Antonio, Tiuka o Wēniti/Duke of Venice

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{1365} Holocaust (upper case H) is defined as the persecution of groups under the German Nazi regime and holocaust (lower case ‘h’) as large-scale destruction especially by fire or nuclear war. In \textit{The New Zealand Oxford Dictionary}, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2005).
\textsuperscript{1366} Anon, "The Bard of Aotearoa," 15.
\end{footnotes}
and Pōhia/Portia are predominantly filmed from low angles making them appear larger. They are physically positioned above the assembly, establishing them as powerful individuals and members of the dominant Christian group. Anatōnio/Antonio surveys the proceedings from the highest point, looming over Hairoka/Shylock who is filmed from high angles that increase in frequency as the scene progresses. This makes his figure appear more diminutive establishing Hairoka/Shylock as less powerful and therefore less threatening. These elements indicate that this is a place of Christian power and authority. In contrast Hairoka/Shylock appears out of place despite his initial confidence that he will receive a favourable legal judgement.

As raised earlier, Selwyn carefully choreographed the scene where an equal number of Jewish and Christian supporters are physically and symbolically divided. Houlahan writes that this is strikingly different from most stage versions where Jewish extras are outnumbered by Christians.\footnote{Houlahan, "Hekepia? The Mana of the Maori Merchant," 147.} The inclusion of two numerically equal factions implies that there is support for both parties, although they are situated within wider unequal power relationships. Hairoka/Shylock is a member of a collective and does not stand alone. Words of support from both groups are interspersed throughout the earlier part of the scene. For example, a man from the Jewish group cries out in response to Karātiano’s/Gratiano’s reprobation of Hairoka/Shylock saying “Sit! Sit down!! Finish this small talk here!” (subtitles). Immediately a woman from the Christian group responds vehemently with “Sir!! Enough of your arrogance!! For this day is for you to see the power of Christ! Therefore eat yourself!!” (subtitles). This dialogue does not appear in Shakespeare’s original play or Te Hurinui Jones’ translation. The scripted interjections, read alongside Selwyn’s intention to indigenise the screen and the film’s representation of Māori oppression, reminds the audience that there are wider issues at stake. Hairoka/Shylock’s individual experience of oppression and racism becomes a shared experience of a nation/iwi represented by the Jewish supporters. The power struggle played out between the two factions in the crowd echoes the wider struggles of oppression.
As the scene draws to a close Anatônio/Antonio delivers his judgement with vengeance and malice, dominating the frame as both he and the camera circle Hairoka/Shylock. Hairoka/Shylock speaks directly to camera, appealing to the audience, as he quietly asks the court for permission to leave. A crane shot captures Hairoka’s/Shylock’s slow and resigned walk down the aisle as he is jeered at mercilessly by Karâtiano/Gratiano. This is combined with shots of dismayed Jews and satisfied Christians, creating further sympathy for Hairoka’s/Shylock’s predicament. Selwyn introduces new dialogue that challenges the court and by implication the oppressor when an elderly Jewish man who follows Hairoka/Shylock as he leaves the courtroom cries out, “Eaten by fire! All thieves, rogues!”(subtitles). The powerful position of an unjust oppressor is then reinforced by Hairoka/Shylock’s words as he leaves the courtroom. The audience hears him thinking:

If a Jew wrong a Christian what is his humility? Revenge! If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why revenge!

The extract is taken from the last lines of Hairoka’s/Shylock’s speech “hath not a Jew hands…” that Selwyn placed at the opening of the film. The unique placement of these lines in the Court scene are significant because it returns the audience to the theme of oppression, rather than signalling that Hairoka/Shylock has got what he deserves as a usurer. Hairoka’s/Shylock’s sad and understated delivery of these lines creates further empathy for his plight.

The closing sequence also reminds us of Christian power that directs Hairoka/Shylock to forgo who he is, his beliefs and practices to become a Christian. Assimilative in intent, Hairoka/Shylock’s plight resonates with Māori experiences of colonisation; in particular the requirement to live in two worlds in order to survive. As a result of Hairoka’s/Shylock’s strong sense of identity it is unlikely that he can deny his essence and must forever practice a mask of deceit where he is outwardly Christian and inwardly Jewish.

1368 This speech occurs in Shakespeare’s Act 3.1.
This powerful scene has analogical links to the numerous struggles Māori have experienced with the Crown and the contestation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, land, resources, te reo Māori and ironically the recent Foreshore and Seabed Act (2004) where the right to a legal process was denied to Māori wanting to establish customary title. Also, the struggles related to religion and spiritual beliefs and practices cannot be overlooked.

Exploring links between oppression and Māori experiences of colonisation in *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* is not without tensions. Dieter Riemenschneider draws parallels between Venetian law and the execution of British law that denied justice to Māori, but points out that such a reading “must not overlook the fact that it puts Pohia into a paradoxical role, since we claim her both as culturally rooted in Māoriness and as a representative of Weniti law.” Through her powerful position and interpretive trickery, Pōhia/Portia triumphs over Hairoka/Shylock, stripping him of his wealth and identity. The Court scene highlights the complex aspects of the film that problematises audience identification with the characters and works against uncomplicated political positions.

At the close of the film Selwyn returns to the theme of oppression. The final scene of Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice* and the translation by Te Hurinui Jones ends on the romantic theme, with the couples happily reunited at Peremona/Belmont. Selwyn chose to follow this structure and returns to Peremona/Belmont, reflecting his intention to remain faithful to the spirit of the Shakespearian text. However, unlike Shakespeare’s original and the Māori translation the final words, taken from an earlier speech, are given to Hairoka’s/Shylock’s daughter Tiehika/Jessica. On reading a letter informing her of her father’s will, we hear Tiehika/Jessica sadly and regretfully thinking: “If my fortunes/ be not crossed I have…/a father left…/You…/a daughter lost” (subtitles). In order to marry Christian, Roreneto/Lorenzo, Tiehika/Jessica is required to reject her Jewish faith. Like her father she must deny her identity as decreed by the dominant group. The closing words and compassionate delivery end the film on the theme of oppression but delivered in a personal and poignant way.

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Summary

Selwyn transformed the cinematic landscape and demonstrated the capacity of Māori to the world by making, to date, the only dramatic feature length film entirely in te reo Māori. His commitment to promoting the language, in particular the formal style produced by Te Hurinui Jones, led him to choose and indigenise a text that is viewed as a canonic example of British literature. In doing so Selwyn challenges thinking that te reo Māori is an inferior language and unable to incorporate abstract thought, demonstrating it is as complex and poetical. *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* challenges hierarchies of language and promotes and validates not only te reo Māori but indigenous languages globally as eminently capable of contemporary cinematic expression. Selwyn had both local and global aspirations for showcasing te reo Māori and tikanga, achieving this through the creative and unique use of a cinematic site.

The funding of the film by a Māori agency signals the importance of Māori specific funding avenues. In addition, the nature of the funding meant that the production team was not under the usual commercial pressures associated with Ngāti and Mauri to appeal to a Pākehā audience. Selwyn’s desire for *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* to be accessible to as many Māori as possible, led him to exhibit the film in a considered way. Selwyn’s hope to bring about change by encouraging Māori youth to speak te reo Māori meant that *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* had a strong educational aim. Research reveals that the film was used as a resource in schools but not to the extent Selwyn had hoped. It is regrettable that at the time of writing the film and the music score were difficult to access.

*Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* is a beautiful and elegant production. The opulent settings and formal presentational style do not conform to stereotyped notions of how Māori should be represented on film. The luxurious feel does not however, overwhelm the wider issues where Shakespeare’s themes of oppression, racism and justice are reinterpreted. As a result, *The Merchant of Venice* is transformed into a powerful counter hegemonic site that unmasks power, racism and the effects of colonisation within a Māori context but has resonance for
indigenous peoples globally. This is most evident in the art gallery scene with its strong visual cues that refer to past and present Māori experiences of colonisation. However, the appropriation of Shakespeare’s narrative and the casting of Māori in the roles of both oppressed and oppressor result in complex representations and politics. Alternatively, the liberatory aspects of Selwyn’s casting normalises Māori, enabling them to play a wide range of characters without particular concern to more conventional and ‘realistic’ representations of Māori.

*Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* is the result of Selwyn’s courage, determination and belief that it was a film that needed to be made. His political motivations combined with his experiences as a Shakespearian actor and director of plays made him the ideal person to progress this vision. The production created further opportunities for Māori working in film and reflected Selwyn’s lifelong commitment to training and mentoring. In a personal interview, actor Rena Owen expressed a feeling of gratitude towards Selwyn as both a mentor and kaumātua saying, “you’re forever grateful for those that came before you and laid the path down that enabled you to walk through the door.”

*Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* does not simply replicate Shakespeare’s play but transforms it by populating the play with Māori actors, centring te reo Māori, revealing Māori histories and creating the imagined Māori world of Peremona/Belmont. As a result, *The Merchant of Venice* is placed in a context in which it has never operated before; contributing to both local and global expressions of Shakespeare. Unfortunately, the inaccessibility of *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*, its limited use locally as an educational tool and restricted release to international audiences meant that Selwyn’s aims have not been realised. However, the film significantly contributes to a distinctly Māori cinematic expression that uplifts and positively reveals Māori to a local and global audience. *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* is a taonga that enriches our lives.

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1370 Owen.
Chapter Eight

Conclusion

Whakataukī
Kua tae ki te tōnga ē te ra
*We have arrived at the setting of the sun*
Kia tae atu ki te awatea ē apopo
*In order to see the rising of the sun tomorrow*

The whakataukī above refers to endings and new beginnings, reflecting an understanding that the work undertaken in this thesis is not an ending but a beginning; opening up new horizons for exploration.

Key Findings

This thesis explored Māori filmmaking and in particular Māori filmmaking pioneers, who cleared the path and shaped the future of filmmaking in Aotearoa. Despite nuances and differences in interpretations of the films, the application of *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework*, developed as part of this study, enabled strong themes to emerge. The films challenge and create alternative and transformative images that nourish the spirit and mind. Multiple expressions of Māori realities convey shared histories of colonisation, collective aspirations, te reo Māori and features of mātauranga, such as tikanga, are normalised. This offers us glimpses of Māori realities that are not only relevant to Māori but, in a just society, salient to all. The filmmakers progress the politics of these representations; Mita, Barclay and Selwyn clearly and fearlessly articulated a Māori cinematic vision establishing our place in film. *Ngati, Mauri* and *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* are taonga that enrich our lives.
Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework also offered a number of more detailed discoveries when applied to the textual analysis. The three films engage in diverse and unique ways with all the categories: (1) Māori voices; (2) Māori worldviews and concepts; (3) collectivity and relationships; (4) responsibility and accountability; (5) challenge and resistance and; (6) transformation. After multiple viewings, I discovered richness in the films’ details and in particular Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti, where Selwyn cleverly introduces a Māori sub strata to the Shakespearian text. The following provides a summary of the key points revealed under these categories.

Māori Voices

Multiple expressions of identity were evident in the three case studies. This became apparent through the three filmmakers’ careful interpretation and application of aesthetics of narrative, character, visuality, sound, and symbolism. Through these devices complex and varied understandings of Māori identity were presented and validated, where being Māori was ‘taken for granted’.

All three films deal directly or symbolically with issues of dual identities; a consequence of colonisation. Given the politics of Māori identity and the requirement to exist in two worlds, it was unsurprising that the device of ‘outsider’ identity was employed in both Ngati and Mauri. In Ngati, Greg, an apparent outsider, discovers his whakapapa and embraces this unproblematically, keen to learn more. Mauri explores Māori identities grounded in knowing one’s connections and place as well as those that are conflicted and fragmented. Rewi, for example, an outsider posing as an insider, symbolises the internal conflict that results from living in two worlds and the need to be true to oneself. In contrast, Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti explores Māori identity predominantly through implied analogical links with Jewish oppression. Parallels can be drawn between Hairoka’s/Shylock’s forced rejection of his Jewish identity and Māori experiences of assimilation and duality. Māori in Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti signal a dramatic representational shift that challenges expectations and assumptions as to how Māori identity should be constructed on screen.
I was interested to discover that te reo Māori is not always subtitled in *Ngati*, and *Mauri* has no English subtitles. These linguistic spaces frequently convey deeper meanings that privilege a Māori speaking audience but do not detract or omit vital information that informs the narrative. As important, the absence of subtitling privileges te reo Māori and provides a cinematic space where the language can be fully appreciated. *Mauri* in particular has substantial pieces of dialogue in te reo Māori. In comparison, *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* is in te reo Māori with English subtitles. By normalising te reo Māori the films challenge notions of the language as inferior and undeserving of a place in a modern, global world. This establishes te reo Māori as a cinematic language of beauty; the characters bring the vitality and complexity of the language to the screen. *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* in its entirety supports the revitalisation and survival of the language, capturing and preserving a formal style of te reo Māori for posterity.

**Māori Worldviews and Concepts**

*Ngati, Mauri* and *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* reflect and validate Māori worldviews and culture. *Ngati* and *Mauri* present these elements overtly whereas *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* operates at a subtler but no less powerful level through the worlds of Parihaka and Peremona/Belmont.

Barclay, Mita and Selwyn incorporated Māori practices and concepts into their work wherever possible. Barclay applied his innovative filmmaking practices to *Ngati* where he included Māori practices in the day to day filming and filmmaking techniques that embraced notions of community. Barclay in particular advocated for the necessity to honour the tikanga of the mana whenua on whose land stories are told. Much of Mita’s cinematic work including *Mauri* reflects the practice of oral traditions incorporating whakapapa, whaikōrero and storytelling. Selwyn transposes concepts of Māori models of engagement and whaikōrero to *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*, with the use of language delivery and spatial elements.

The notion of tikanga as evolving, yet holding on to certain values and concepts, is pertinent to cinematic expressions of tikanga in Māori authored and controlled
films. Ngati and Mauri paved the way in dramatic feature film with their representations of Māori knowledge and practices, evident in tangi and pōwhiri. Although representing these occasions, Barclay and Mita did not locate the tangi scenes on marae and while this may reflect the script, it may be due to local iwi or more personal considerations related to representations of death. Future Māori directors would also struggle with these issues and in particular representations of death and mourning. Dramatic feature films Once Were Warriors, The Strength of Water and BOY, are examples of stories that built on and learnt from the groundbreaking practices in both Ngati and Mauri regarding the cinematic application of tikanga. However, what knowledge is imparted on screen and how this is executed is one of the responsibilities Māori filmmakers carry.

Collectivity and Relationships

Concepts of community and collectivity are central to Ngati and Mauri. Ngati focuses on a collective identity that embraces whānau, hapū and iwi. This involves the concept that the individual is a part of a collective or community and with this comes certain roles and responsibilities. In contrast, the community in Mauri is more fractious but held together by Kara as the repository of knowledge and wisdom. Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti creates layered notions of collectivity most evident in Hairoka’s/Shylock’s allegiance to and membership of an oppressed group or “tribe” that aligns to Māori concepts of iwi as well as the introduced worlds of Peremona/Belmont and Parihaka.

Responsibility and Accountability

The motivations of the three directors in the case studies were similar. These can be broadly summed up as a feeling of responsibility firstly to speak to a Māori audience, reflect Māori realities and provide uplifting representations of Māori on screen. This notion of responsibility, driven by a sense of Māori collectivity, shaped the production processes, texts and exhibition. In addition, a determined and successful attempt to maintain creative control and upskill a Māori workforce resulted. Mauri and Ngati broke new ground with predominantly Māori casts and crew. Selwyn employed a number of people involved with He Taonga Films as
crew and many of his trainees worked as the heads of departments in the production of *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*.

A strong sense of responsibility was also evident in the relationships with communities and iwi the filmmakers associated with. These responsibilities and obligations resulted in unique and ground breaking exhibition practices.

**Challenge and Resistance**

The filmmakers consciously employed cinema as a site to challenge the colonial gaze and move creatively beyond limiting representations and discourses. The three films in the case studies provided alternative representations of Māori that were optimistic and redemptive, capturing the complexities of an indigenous culture, experiences and worldviews. Constructions of mana wahine and mana tāne are evident in all three films. *Mauri* in particular offers powerful constructions of mana wahine represented by three generations of Māori women. The very nature of the representations and issues raised in the films provide a site that resists the packaging and commodification of the indigenous image.

The filmmakers depicted the implications of colonisation and racism and included Māori aspirations of self-determination. *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* represents the theme of racism through the character of Hairoka/Shylock. The theme is emphasised by the deliberate placement of his speech related to oppression at the beginning of the film. Racism in *Ngati* is covert whereas *Mauri* explores racism predominantly through the outrageous character, Mr Semmens. All three films challenge the effects of colonisation by uncovering inequitable power relations and issues of injustice. Both *Ngati* and *Mauri* make deliberate reference to the tension between western and Māori medicine. In *Ngati* neither prevails whereas in *Mauri*, the status of western medicine is challenged and Māori practices prevail. As a result, the stories provide a powerful form of resistance that challenges and disrupts dominant hegemonic discourses.\(^{1371}\)

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\(^{1371}\) Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 150-51.
Transformation

The three films transformed the cinematic landscape on a number of levels and profoundly changed the outlook on how to make films. They contributed to Māori cinematic expressions that positively and complexly reveal Māori to a local and global audience. Ngati in particular was groundbreaking in the practical application of Māori practices and worldviews to the filmmaking process. The commitment to employ and train Māori on the shoots transformed Māori expertise in feature film production.

Cinema offers a site where Māori can construct, subvert and invent, where the telling of stories centred in Māori worldviews and realities can be a creative, sustaining and political act. The films tell us something about ourselves, offering alternative possibilities that inspire us. Here Māori are visible; they indigenise the screen, offering the audience a glimpse of Māori imagined worlds. This achievement proved that the making of Māori films, grounded in a Māori kaupapa, was possible.

The theme of struggle that reverberates throughout is a reminder of the additional barriers that Māori filmmakers must overcome. The history of filmmaking in Aotearoa uncovers a lack of Māori driven and authored programmes and, in particular, dramatic feature length films. The inequity is raised by Pitts who reveals that of the 109 dramatic feature films funded by the NZFC since its establishment in 1977 to 2007, only four were directed by Māori expressing significant Māori realities: Ngati, Mauri, Te Rua and Once Were Warriors.1372 More recently, BOY, directed by Waititi, increases that number to five. This highlights the lost opportunities and unfulfilled potential experienced by Māori filmmakers and Māori audiences. Securing funding for the three films in the case studies was an extraordinary achievement. Formal policy that supports Māori dramatic feature film, reflecting Te Tiriti, Māori status as tāngata whenua and cinematic aspirations has only recently come about with Te Paepae Ataata. For Māori, access to limited funding and the high costs of production requires

1372 Pitts, "Cross-Cultural Filmmaking in New Zealand National Cinema", 169.
sustained and committed Crown and institutional support; this is an ongoing struggle with infinite possibilities.

**Analytical Theoretical Framework**

Kaupapa Māori theory, media and indigenous studies informed the analytical approach in this study. However, in the absence of a strong body of Kaupapa Māori film theory I drew on what little was available from writers such as Pihama, Cruickshank, Moewaka Barnes, Barclay, Tuhiwai Smith and Hingangaroa Smith to develop an initial Kaupapa Māori film theoretical framework. By applying the framework in an iterative process through analysis of the films, reflecting, and revising the framework, I arrived at *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework*.

The theoretical framework presented here was tested and revised throughout the study and in particular during the textual readings of *Ngati, Mauri* and *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*. I began with the six categories: 1) Māori identity; (2) Māori worldviews and concepts; (3) collectivity and relationships; (4) responsibility and accountability; (5) challenge and resistance and; (6) transformation. Although the categories and associated elements sat neatly on the page I frequently moved elements from one category to another. For example, te reo and tikanga sit in separate categories but some theorists situate them together in Kaupapa Māori theory. Also, the category of Māori identity easily related to all of the categories in the framework. For the purposes of this study, I refined and reordered them during the analyses. Early on, it became obvious that the first category of ‘Māori identity’ was too narrow and better described as ‘Māori voices’ as this encompassed te reo Māori and voice as an expression of diverse forms of Māori identity and experiences. As I progressed with the case studies I realised that the third and fourth categories were closely linked and considered conflating them into one category. However, it became apparent that retaining two categories allowed the opportunity to have a separate and focused analysis on the filmmakers’ standpoint (responsibility and accountability) and a more textually focused analysis under the third category of ‘collectivity and relationships’. Mana
tāne and mana wahine as expressions of Māori identity although assigned to the category of “Māori voices” did not neatly fit as it also offers counter hegemonic and transformational constructions of Māori. The final theoretical framework utilised in this study and outlined earlier is: (1) Māori voices; (2) Māori worldviews and concepts; (3) collectivity and relationships; (4) responsibility and accountability; (5) challenge and resistance and; (6) transformation.

*Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework* was applied to: filmmaking environments; the filmmakers’ intentions; production processes and; textual analyses of films. This incorporated a breadth of analysis in cinematic theory. I intended to explore the production processes for the three case studies in-depth, to illuminate the factors involved in their conception, funding, production and screening. Unfortunately, the application of the theory to these areas was limited. In 2007 we saw the untimely passing of Don Selwyn, and 2008 dealt another blow to Māori with the loss of Barry Barclay. I relied on earlier personal interviews with Barclay and Selwyn, written material (*Our Own Image* was invaluable for the Ngati case study), radio and television interviews and documentaries made about the filmmakers. Selwyn’s whānau generously gave additional information. Merata Mita was unavailable for an interview and her death in 2010 was a further and significant loss for Māori.

**Reflections**

I developed *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework* to provide new understandings in cinema studies centred in a Māori cinematic gaze. As a result, Kaupapa Māori film theory proposes a radically distinctive approach in the primarily Eurocentric field of cinema studies. I was highly selective in my theoretical referencing in the textual analyses of the three films in order to privilege and test *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework*. This is also the result of not wanting to force other theories to fit when Kaupapa Māori works perfectly well as it articulates Māori understandings and experiences, offering both richness and complexity of analyses. The study clarified my own approach to film studies and the requirement that it examines
power and dominant hegemonic discourses and representations. Future applications of this theory can inform other media sites such as television and in particular serve indigenous and marginalised groups globally.

During the writing of this thesis I adapted my theoretical framework to compare news coverage of Waitangi Day on mass media and Māori Television. The categories and selected elements provided an analytical framework that illuminated the differences in approach between mass and Māori news television. In particular, it illustrated how Māori news represented Māori worldviews and experiences of colonisation while mass television focused on ‘protestor’ violence, or more correctly the absence of it. This assisted me in the further refinement of this theory.1373

It is my intention to build on this theoretical work and contribute to published and academic work. I offer my study as a theoretical and practical addition in the hope that it will be a valuable contribution for understanding and analysing Māori filmmaking and films that utilise Māori as subjects or themes. I am reminded of Langton’s criticism that many critics encounter difficulties assessing Aboriginal works because of their “lack of critical theory, knowledge of, and sensibility towards Aboriginal film and video production.”1374 My study also intends to contribute to Māori knowledge and theoretical understandings, breaking new ground with the development of *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework*. I hope to expand the scope of work in this area and challenge assumptions by providing a Māori centred theory for reading and understanding film within this area of scholarship.

In addition this thesis set out to explore and document Māori filmmaking and in particular the pioneers, those who cleared the path and shaped the future of Māori cinema in Aotearoa. I felt it was important to document the filmmakers who made an important contribution not only in the area of film and television but to Māori and society in general. Their stories are rarely told in-depth and while valued, are

1373 I presented my findings using data from the Kupu Taea studies at a University of Auckland seminar (2010) and MASS Conference (2010).
not privileged in the same way as filmmakers who belong to the dominant group and in particular Hollywood filmmakers. I was privileged to speak to filmmakers, listen to their kōrero and tell some of their stories. This honours their work and struggles. The first thing I intend to do is offer the stories back to their whānau.

The three case studies and historical overview provide the reader with a sense of what has gone before and the struggles associated with Māori filmmaking. Through greater understandings and analysis, I hope this study will support and encourage the production and distribution of films made by Māori.

Because of the small number of Māori dramatic feature films, I was saddened to find out how difficult it was to get copies of these three films let alone copies of a high quality. I accessed the films through the library during my studies and was pleased to discover that Ngati is now available to the public at a reasonable cost.

*Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework* is a starting point which is positive, but over time I hope it will undergo further iterations and applications. The framework has the potential to be applied to a range of visual and written texts. During the development of this theory, I was aware of the problematic nature of defining and prescribing in a manner that may limit us. Pertinent to this was my general concern that as tāngata whenua we are required yet again to explain and defend our knowledge and the legitimacy of our theories. I also became increasingly concerned about speaking for Māori and the danger of essentialising our diverse identities and experiences. However, with the imperatives of survival Māori have limited opportunities to explore theory and as Moewaka Barnes demonstrates, our theory is one way of making sense of the world.¹³⁷⁵

Returning to the beginning - I wish to conclude with the saying “Ngā kai para i te kahikātoa.” Barclay, Mita and Selwyn were Māori pioneers of film who forged ahead with their vision despite the obstacles. This study and *Kia Manawanui: Kaupapa Māori Film Theoretical Framework* also clears a path by providing

insights that will assist with current and future examinations of Māori cinema and add to an understanding of the unique challenges facing Māori and by extension indigenous peoples globally working in film. I want to acknowledge the hard work and celebrate the contributions of these filmmakers. I feel privileged to have been able to make a contribution in this field.
Film, Television and Video Productions


*Came a Hot Friday.* Film. Directed by Ian Mune and produced by Larry Parr, Mirage Film Productions, 1984.


*Glorious New Zealand.* Film. Directed and produced under the supervision of Arthur H. Messenger, New Zealand Government Publicity Office, 1925.


*Hinemoa.* Film. Directed and produced by Gaston Melies, 1913.

*Hinemoa.* Film. Directed and produced by George Tarr, 1914.


*How Chief Te Ponga Won His Bride.* Film. Directed and produced by Gaston Melies, 1913.


*James McDonald Films.* Directed by James McDonald, New Zealand Government for the Tourist Department, 1919-1923.


*Keskidee–Aroha.* Film. Directed by Merata Mita and produced by Merata Mita and Martyn Sanderson, Scratch Films, 1981.


*Loved by a Maori Chieftess.* Film. Directed and produced by Gaston Melies, 1913.


*Maori Village.* Film. Directed by Stanhope Andrews, National Film Unit, 1945.

*Marae.* Television current affairs series, 1992 to the present.


*Mauri.* Film. Directed by Merata Mita and produced by Merata Mita and Geoff Murphy, 1988.
Merchant of Venice. BBC Production, directed by Jack Gold, 1980.

Merchant of Venice. Channel 4 Production, directed by Alan Horrox, 1996.


Mortimer's Patch. Television drama series, 1980-84.


Off The Edge. Film. Directed and produced by Mike Firth, Pentacle Films Production, 1977.


*Pukemanu.* Television drama series, 1971-72.


*Rewi’s Last Stand.* Film. Directed and produced by Rudall Hayward, Maori War Films, 1925.


*Te Karere.* Māori television news (TV One), 1983 to the present.
Te Mana Motuhake ō Tūhoe: credit reads “by arerowhero”

www.youtube.com/watch?v=3De2YM56KC-Q4


*Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti.* Film. Directed by Don Selwyn and produced by Ruth Kaupua, He Taonga Films, 2002.


The Maori As He Was (Part 4). Film. New Zealand Government Publicity Office, 1928.


The Quiet Earth. Film. Directed by Geoff Murphy and produced by Sam Pillsbury and Don Reynolds, 1985.


To Love A Maori. Film. Directed and produced by Rudall and Ramai Hayward, 1972.


Utu. Film. Directed and produced by Geoff Murphy, Utu Productions, 1983.
*Under the Southern Cross.* Film. Directed by Gustav Pauli, 1927.

*Valley of Enchantments.* Film. New Zealand Government Publicity Office, 1930.


*Waka Huia.* Television documentary series, 1987 to the present.


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