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**EXPLORING PERSONAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES OF  
IDENTITY FOR WHITE MAORI WOMEN**

**WHAKATORO TE TORANGAPU ME TE AKE O NGA  
KAUPAPA TUAKIRI MO NGA WAHINE MAORI MA**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
degree of Master of Philosophy in Social Policy and Social Work at  
Massey University

Kelly Bevan

2000

## KARAKIA TIMATANGA

TENEI KA WHAKARORANGI KA NOHO,  
KATI RA TE WHAKAKEKE NOA!  
E RUA AKU RINGA TE TUKI, TE TAHEKE,  
TE KAUNGA TE MATA ARIKI O WAI  
TE AKI KAU ANA MAI TENA  
TE WHARE WHANAUNGA TANGATA

TUTURU WHAKAMAUA KIA TINA, TINA, HAUMI E HUI E  
TAIKI E



Breastfeeding

For many Maori women the artistry of Robyn Kahukiwa is symbolic of the traditional and historical struggle of Maori women within Maori society. Although this piece of her work was not originally created for use in this thesis, it depicts for me a contemporary vision of nga matatini or Maori diversity which are central to issues of Mana Wahine and Maori development.

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to explore the personal and political issues of identity for white Maori women in Aotearoa. This was inspired by recognition that the lives of white Maori women are not accounted for in our present society. The life stories of eight women from multi-tribal backgrounds were gathered in semi-structured, in-depth interviews. My life story was written and incorporated both as a reason for conducting this research and as data.

The focus of the study is on Maori women, which reflects my gender and cultural identity. Hence my Mana Wahine and Kaupapa Maori values influenced the methodology and theoretical concepts used to add meaning to the narratives. A desire to produce research which would empower and not further colonise those I was researching led me to utilise a structural analysis framework for the structure and analysis of the research. The strategy of 'researching back' was used to locate colonising aspects in the theoretical and historical literature. The design is qualitative, the method is kaupapa Maori and a strategy of multiple triangulation is used. I utilised storytelling in gathering data and content analysis to locate the narrative themes.

The participants identify as tangata whenua. The findings support this chosen position and highlight the influential social, political and legislative factors which have shaped their identification processes.

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Ko Tararua te maunga  
Ko Waikawa te awa  
Te Rangitawhia te hapu  
Ko Ngati Tukorehe raua ko Ngati Raukawa nga iwi  
Tainui te waka

He mihi nunui tenei ki taku kuia, ki taku whanau kei Wanganui. Ko nga iwi o Tukorehe, Wehiwehi, a ko Ngati Raukawa hoki, tena koutou katoa.

I would like to thank my mother for her love and support, also my friends and other family members who have listened to and encouraged me.

I am grateful to all the women, particularly nga kuia who bravely agreed to share their personal stories with me and allowed them to be incorporated in this thesis in the hope that this action would create change for others.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

KARAKIA TIMATANGA	2
NGA MATATINI BY ROBYN KAHUKIWA	3
Korero associated with artistry	4
ABSTRACT	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	6
TABLE OF CONTENTS	7
INTRODUCTION	10
NGA WAHINE	11
CHAPTER ORIENTATION	11
STRUCTURE OF THESIS	14

### CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION TO RESEARCH

REASONS FOR CHOICE OF TOPIC	16
THE RESEARCH JOURNEY	18
WHAT INFLUENCED THE PROCESS	19
Colonisation of Research	19
Mana Wahine	22
SUMMARY	24

### CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

THE RESEARCH METHOD	25
RESEARCH DESIGN	25
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	25
KAUPAPA Maori RESEARCH	27
Research by and for Maori	28
Aroha ki te tangata	29

Kanohi kitea	29
Titiro, whakarongo, korero	29
Manaaki ki te tangata	30
Kia tupato	30
Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata	30
Kaua e mahaki	31
Whakapapa	31
Rangatiratanga	31
STORYTELLING	32
MULTIPLE TRIANGULATION	33
SUMMARY	34

## **CHAPTER THREE: GETTING STARTED**

INTRODUCTION	36
ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	37
Role of the Researcher	37
Confidentiality	37
Participant protection	37
Participant selection	38
Participant safety	39
Access to Participants	39
THE INTERVIEWS	40
ANALYSIS	42
SUMMARY	42

## **CHAPTER FOUR: THEORETICAL REVIEW**

Ethnicity based Theory	45
Postmodernism	45
Cultural Studies	46
Critical Theory	47

SUMMARY	48
---------	----

## **CHAPTER FIVE: HISTORICAL REVIEW**

BRITISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE	49
DEFINING TE IWI MAORI	54
SELF IDENTIFICATION	56
THE TREATY OF WAITANGI	58
DIFFERENCE	59
SUMMARY	60

## **CHAPTER SIX: IDENTIFYING AS MAORI**

IDENTITY	63
IDENTIFICATION	66
SUMMARY	69

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: HE KORERO O NGA WAHINE**

INTRODUCING THE PARTICIPANTS	71
CHARACTERISTICS OF IDENTITY	74
Whanau	74
Awareness of Maori whakapapa	75
Cultural knowledge	79
Involvement in Maori activities	80
Te reo	81
SUMMARY	86

## **CHAPTER EIGHT: STRUCTURAL BARRIERS TO IDENTIFYING AS MAORI**

IDENTIFYING AS MAORI	89
IDENTIFYING DIFFERENTLY FROM WHANAU	91
TWO CULTURAL IDENTITIES	92
DECLARING YOUR IDENTITY	94

## **CHAPTER NINE: VISIBILITY**

PARTICIPANTS' FEELINGS ABOUT APPEARANCE	100
ACCEPTANCE OF WHITE MAORI BY MAORI	101

## **CHAPTER TEN: WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?**

AWARENESS/EDUCATION/ACCEPTANCE	104
SUMMARY	106

## **CHAPTER ELEVEN: CONCLUSION**

POWER ANALYSIS	109
DISCUSSION	110
NOTE FROM THE RESEARCHER	113
A MODEL FOR CHANGE	113
APPENDIX I	115
APPENDIX II	117
APPENDIX III	119
BIBLIOGRAPHY	120

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis began with a desire to investigate the lives and experiences of women who, like myself, are fair-skinned or white Maori women living in Aotearoa at the end of the twentieth century. During a period when identity is increasingly highlighted and identifying as Maori has become more positive, the opportunity to research with women like myself held considerable attraction.

The words in common usage in New Zealand to describe Maori who are not obviously "brown" or "dark" skinned range from white, pale, Pakeha to fair-skinned. In the past, terms such as quarter-cast, half-caste and, Pakeha-Maori have been used to describe people who have Maori ancestry but are white skinned, fair or Pakeha-looking. There is no universally accepted term either neutral, derogatory, or complimentary to describe white, fair, pakeha-looking Maori women and I found that fair-skinned was a confusing description requiring further explanation. Therefore, I will use the term "white Maori" as a neutral and clear way to describe the participants in this project.

The issues raised by the personal stories of eight white Maori women reflected in the international literature. These accounts were combined to produce this account which explored the personal and political issues of identity for the participants.

The thesis is presented in three parts: In order to clarify the process the first section is the methodology. The second segment is a theoretical review which seeks to locate an appropriate theoretical approach to research on white Maori.

Followed by an historical review of the literature which highlights structural barriers in relation to the participants identifying as Maori. The third part presents the women's stories and reveals issues and some of the social barriers they faced when identifying as Maori. This is followed by some recommendations for change and a model for change. In conclusion an

analysis of power is conducted and the barriers presented by the literature and the participants are discussed.

## **NGA WAHINE**

Eight white Maori women were selected and interviewed for this study: Ephra, Anne, Jill, Kathryn, Kelly, Christine, Heni and Kathie. They talk about their whanau, schooling, when they identified as Maori and how they have been perceived by society both as children and as adults.

The participants are from multi-tribal backgrounds although most are either Ngati Raukawa or grew up within the Ngati Raukawa area. Two are contacts made through Massey University although one did not attend this university. Five were raised in urban areas and one was raised in the country. Five grew up with minimal contact or knowledge of themselves as Maori.

Two of the women were raised in small towns that were located near their marae. They grew up with regular contact with marae and cultural knowledge. All of the participants are white Maori who identify as Maori. In this research they share their stories and personal issues of identity, whilst taking us on a journey which navigates the uncharted seas between the two peoples of Aotearoa, Maori and Pakeha.

## **CHAPTER ORIENTATION**

### Chapter one: Orientation to Research

This chapter refers to the method or process of research. My research journey is discussed and my personal values which have influenced the research. I am a Maori woman with values which encompass mana wahine and include a desire to research in a non-colonising way by using kaupapa Maori methods of research.

## Chapter two: Research Design

This chapter discusses the qualitative research design, the kaupapa Maori research method and the strategy of multiple triangulation is used to add strength to the research by using a combination of methods. For Maori, the natural method of passing on knowledge is through oral traditions. Hence the oral narrative of storytelling is a central strategy for this research.

## Chapter three: Getting Started

This chapter discusses the ethical concerns of the Massey University Ethics Committee. The insider role of the researcher is considered. The ethical issues of access to the participants and protection of them are examined along with issues of confidentiality. Finally, this chapter discusses the process of selecting participants, interviewing and analysis of the issues and themes.

## Chapter four: Theory

Theory relevant to people of mixed heritage is reviewed given that there is no theory relevant to white Maori. Such a theoretical perspective is supportive of the aims of this research and because the participants identify as Maori, Critical theory is also discussed as it compliments kaupapa Maori research.

## Chapter five: Historical Review

The intent of this chapter is to 'research back' or locate the colonising aspects of the literature reviewed. This historical review reveals social attitudes and statutory laws which represent barriers to people of mixed heritage identifying as Maori. The Treaty of Waitangi is discussed as

a symbol of: the relationship between Maori and Pakeha, the two aspects of white Maori and the imbalance in power between the two.

#### Chapter six: Identifying as Maori

This chapter reviews the developmental process of identity formation and the social and environmental influences on that process.

#### Chapter seven: He Korero o nga Wahine

This chapter gives a general introduction to the participants, their upbringing and awareness of Maori cultural knowledge.

#### Chapter eight: Personal Issues of Identification

The participants discuss their experiences of identifying as Maori and the impact of this on themselves and their whanau. The participants talk about factors which have influenced them to identify as Maori. Barriers to white Maori identifying as Maori are also discussed.

#### Chapter nine: Visibility

This chapter discusses the issues of passing as part of the majority group, as a consequence of not being visibly Maori. The issue of colour is also explored as a determinant of how one is perceived and of one's access to power. As people who are perceived as Pakeha who identify as Maori, being accepted by the tangata whenua group that they identify with is essential. They also discuss how they feel about their appearance.

### Chapter ten: What needs to Change?

The women talk about their desires to create change or increased acceptance of white Maori and their identity choice. This is considered in relation to change through increased awareness and education of the world view of white Maori.

### Chapter eleven: Conclusion

To locate the power position of white Maori women, a power analysis is undertaken by discussing the issues arising from the participants' interviews and the themes revealed by the historical review. This is followed by recommendations for change, and concluding thoughts from the researcher.

## **STRUCTURE OF THESIS**

As a community worker I work with communities in a way that encourages them to develop their lives. By developing an understanding of the structures which disempower them people can begin to have control over their lives. For Maori the processes of colonisation and assimilation have created structural barriers, which have redefined, and reworked their identity and prevented their progress. Consequently, I have used 'structural analysis' as a framework to shape and organise this thesis. That this tool may assist white Maori to locate themselves, define and determine their own identity.

Structural analysis offers a commitment to evaluating past actions to stimulate future change and attempts to understand the multiple positions in which individuals and groups are located in terms of class, ethnicity, gender, age and geography (Munford & Walsh-Tapiata 1999).

Structural analysis is informed by the principles of 'tino

rangatiratanga', also referred to as 'naming the moment' (Barndt, 1989:8). For Maori tino rangatiratanga is a form of self-determination consisting of three principles. The first recognises Maori diversity (nga matatini). The second acknowledges that despite differences, Maori can come together as a community of Maori (kotahitanga). Thirdly that Maori wish to have control over their own lives and determine their own futures (mana Maori motuhake) (Durie 1995:47). Reclaiming one's tino rangatiratanga has strong links to my practice as a community worker, of self determination. Therefore, by utilising this framework I intend to offer the participants an opportunity to advance their lives by clarifying their social position and make recommendations for change.

The four phases of structural analysis that have been used to shape and organise this thesis are:

Locating ourselves: This is achieved at two levels. Firstly, by locating and representing the voices of the participants; secondly, by locating my insider role as researcher and participant and discussing the themes which have influenced the research because of my personal values.

Naming/defining the issue/situation: This is attained through a discussion of the literature which reveals some of the historical and contemporary issues for white Maori.

Analysing the issues/situation: This is realised through an analysis of power by further discussing the themes and issues which arise from both the literature review and the participants' korero.

Developing strategies for change: Based on the outcome of the analysis of power, potential areas for future research and areas of change are recommended.

## CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH

### REASONS FOR CHOICE OF TOPIC

My name is Kelly Bevan. I am a Maori descendant of Ngati Tukorehe, Ngati Wehiwehi and Ngati Raukawa ki te tonga. Pride in being Maori was an important part of my early life. I grew up with one side of my family who were clearly Maori to look at and with kaumatua who spoke Maori fluently. There was, therefore, a certain amount of access to Maori cultural knowledge.

However, as children we were not taken to marae or to many hui, partly because we grew up in the city. Additionally, my father's parents genuinely believed that we would benefit from being classed as Pakeha. Although Maori children who look obviously Maori may have faced similar pressures, being white enabled us white Maori to cross over to being Pakeha.

Although my father's parents were largely educated on marae, they were punished for speaking Maori at school. Hence, they believed that a Pakeha education would make their children and mokopuna's lives easier than their own had been. Despite this, my father often passed on stories that he had been told about how things used to be for Maori. He told us these stories from the past and instilled in me a strong pride in my whakapapa. I therefore grew up hearing and listening to the stories of how my grandparents lived and in particular of how the kuia of their time lived. As well as our Maori side, much of our lifestyle was Pakeha influenced by my mother who is of Danish descent. The customary Danish hot lunches were regularly prepared by my mother's mother but issues of identity were never discussed.

While attending mainstream education I was confronted with racism, and learnt that by declaring myself to be Maori when I did not look Maori was to invite conflict. As a result, I learnt to choose my battles wisely. The messages I received were unclear: while the romantic memories of a traditional Maori life style were talked about, identification as Maori was not.

I was told to follow the Pakeha path as this was said to be paved with opportunity. As a white looking person I would have access to the power and privilege of white people and was, therefore, encouraged to seek this path when I was growing up.

Differences were highlighted at the wider social level so that as I grew up I became aware of certain labels such as 'half caste'- a term used to describe a person who is of both Maori and Pakeha heritage. At the time I did not fully understand the implications of what was meant by this term, but I knew it was derogatory.

Within the dominant culture my Maori identity was not visible unless I promoted it. This meant that I was often party to hearing accounts of racism by non-Maori. I appeared to be Pakeha, felt a strong sense of being Maori but there was no outward way of expressing this. It was when I went to university at the age of twenty five that I learnt of changes in the 1974 Maori Affairs Amendment Act which redefined the definition of 'Maori'. The new Act was inclusive of people of Maori descent who identified as Maori (Pool 1991:14-19). Although I was already involved in Maori kaupapa and aware of some of my whakapapa, the realisation that I was legally allowed to identify as Maori was a huge relief.

Now as an adult, at a professional level, and as a perceived white who identifies as Maori, I am constantly approached by others who are

either in a similar position or have children or grandchildren who are white Maori. The questions I am asked centre around identity, about belonging and having to make an identity choice. Therefore, personal curiosity around issues of identity and an awareness of this being an issue for others like myself, have provided the drive and purpose for conducting this research.

## **THE RESEARCH JOURNEY**

I am aware that as a white Maori women I occupy the subjective and insider positions of participant and researcher. This approach is also referred to as participant observation which generally assumes that the researcher shares similarities to those studied (Denzin 1970:187).

I felt that it was important that my story be a part of this research. Jones (1992), Mead (1996) and Selby (1996) refer to the importance of writing themselves into the text and of using their own voices/stories. Hence, putting my own story forward in the introduction and in section three was critical to providing an understanding of why I am researching in this area.

I, therefore, started the research from my own experience in order to state my own position (Smith & Noble-Spruell 1986:143). By including myself in the text I do not wish to be viewed by Maori as *whakahihi* (Smith 1994 cited in Walsh-Tapiata 1998)), but do, however, wish to offer my story as a means of support and encouragement to the other participants.

As a qualitative researcher I recognise that I cannot adopt the stance of being "objective" or neutral in relation to the political process (Finch 1986:210). As there is no such thing as value free social or political research, I acknowledge my personal beliefs and values have influenced

this research process (Te Awekotuku 1991:66). I will therefore name and discuss key values which I have brought to this research and which have influenced the research process. I refer to this as "Whakawatea" or clarifying the process through affirmation of my values. Within the research framework this is referred to as "locating yourself".

## **WHAT INFLUENCED THE PROCESS?**

I will now discuss some of the values and beliefs that I have brought to this research and that have influenced the research process.

### Colonisation by Research

Firstly, I was mindful that Western research when used to study indigenous people, operates from a different cultural and value orientation which is supported by Western theory, knowledge, language and power structures (Smith 1999:42). This influenced my desire to utilise methods that would not perpetuate this form of oppression. Colonisation is a process which strips away mana: "To be colonised is to be `defined by someone else and to believe it even though you are confronted daily by evidence to the contrary" (Freire cited by Smith L. 1972:51).

An analysis of the history of research in Aotearoa confirms the impact of colonisation on Maori. `Researching back' assists with locating the history of colonisation and serves to help avoid the colonising processes of the past (Smith 1999:7).

At the time of contact Pakeha used many tools of colonisation and research or observation probably seemed the least harmful. However, the effects of early written accounts by non-Maori have had devastating

results when offered in explanation of the lifestyle and behaviour of the tangata whenua (Salmond 1983:38).

One interpretation of Maori life in Aotearoa (Salmond 1983:32) is scientific and offers accounts about 'traditional Maori society' by Europeans during the first 150 years of contact. These observations thought Maori society in its 'authentic' form had ceased shortly after contact and thought surviving customs were dying out or contaminated by European influence. 'Inauthentic' behaviours were deemed not worth retaining. The contemporary Maori experience was believed to be no longer "Maori". Tribal life was presented as something which stopped in the 1840's (Salmond 1983:32-39).

European descriptions of past Maori practices were considered reliable explanations. These were validated by 'scientific method' and did not value 'tribal scholarship'. Tribal accounts were rendered as 'myths', 'legends' and 'traditions'. These were to be dismissed from serious comparison with Western forms of thought (Smith 1991:32-47). Maori conceptions of past and future are linked by whakapapa and Tauwiwi tended to subject the past to the rigours of science and inappropriately disregard that which is about Maori and their tupuna (O'Regan 1987:54).

The other interpretation is 'matauranga Maori' (Maori knowledge) which refers to traditional or cultural knowledge. It is Polynesian in its origin and is approximately 1,000 years old. It is part of tribal discourse, through whaikorero 'oratory' and wananga 'schools of tribal learning'. It is marae based and is where elderly experts choose the inheritors for specific forms of knowledge (Salmond 1983:32). These particular forms of knowledge are highly valued by Maori. They are considered to be tapu and protected by oral transmission to specific

people who nurture a tradition or specific cultural practise (Smith 1986:3-4). This is an example of how Maori see the world.

The differences between western and Maori forms of knowledge are further reflected in the story of the first Maori researcher acclaimed that Tane-nui-a-rangi journeyed to the twelfth universe to gain knowledge (wananga) from the sacred kete, on behalf of his people (Smith 1999:172-173). He was also mindful of the different types of knowledge contained in each kete: the kete uruuru matua, of peace, goodness, and love. The kete uruuru rangi, of prayers, incantations and ritual. The kete uruuru tau (or tawhito), of war, agriculture, woodwork, stone-work, and earth-work (Buck P. 1974:449).

Today research is a method of acquiring knowledge in contemporary society. This information is entrusted to the qualified researcher rather than to someone specifically chosen by kaumatua. The researcher is given knowledge and as a consequence is placed in a position of power.

Pakeha dominance has made it difficult for Maori forms of knowledge to be accepted as legitimate. Maori as the researched have been disadvantaged as their knowledge was not extended by these forms of research (Smith 1986:8). This left a foundation of knowledge which formed a distorted picture of Maori society and of what it means to be Maori. As a result, Maori people have been entrapped within a cultural definition which does not connect with either oral traditions or a lived reality (ibid). Pakeha research has misrepresented Maori in the past and this has eroded and altered the perceived Maori identity. For example, Best observed and misinterpreted the position of Maori women in the following way: "As in most other barbaric lands, we find that women were looked upon here as being inferior to man" (Best 1934:93). Observations such as these have left Maori women caught between the written accounts of Pakeha male writers and the assertions of those

Maori women who are contesting these early writers (Smith 1991:47-48).

Since early contact Maori society has rapidly shifted from one of subsistence to one of trading and then on through to modern day society (Salmond 1975:18). Throughout these periods the role of men and women have changed considerably. Traditional accounts from kaumatua recall men, women and children working together alongside each other (Smith 1999:170).

The changes have left Maori women facing double colonisation (Taki 1998:61). What has been written about Maori, has become, the body of accepted common knowledge, when much of this is ideal or false (Smith 1999:170). For Maori women the reconstruction of their traditional roles is hindered by the repositioning of themselves in relation to Maori men (Taki 1998:61). The marginalisation of Maori women has even become the subject of a Waitangi claim. Maori women by using historical texts, research and oral testimonies are reclaiming their rangatiratanga or chiefly and sovereign status (Smith 1999:46). Maori women who find themselves in this role as reclaimers and redefiners are said to be operating from a 'mana wahine' foundation.

### Mana Wahine

Current interest by Maori women in women's knowledge is therefore designed to reclaim knowledge and mana particularly related to women's views of the world (Smith 1990:17).

Therefore, 'Mana wahine' is the acknowledgement of the mana of women through validating their knowledge and enabling that knowledge to be reproduced or passed on to other Maori women. Mana wahine

discourses utilise feminist analyses to better understand and transform their lived realities as tangata whenua and Maori women within patriarchal and racist oppression. Hence Tauwiwi analyses of power relations has been useful in informing our different struggles (Taki 1998:64).

Feminist research notes that the research should be for women and aim to improve their daily lives and be committed to changing the oppression of women (Smith and Noble-Spruell 1986). Mana wahine research also aims to validate the korero of Maori women by reproducing it so it may then be passed on to other women (Kupenga 1989). I hoped to reflect this in the non exploitative relationship between myself as the researcher and the participants. A relationship based on collaboration, co-operation and mutual respect (Finch 1984:43). In addition because the women agreed to participate and to share their stories, I will gain a university qualification. I am humbled by their various contributions.

While I am looking at the stories of modern day women there are definite parallels between these and the stories of Maori women in history. For instance the struggle of Maori women is said to have begun with Papatuanuku when she was wrenched apart from Ranginui and then turned over so that her sights and thoughts would look forever downwards (Mita 1990). Like Papatuanuku, the voices of the Maori women who participated in this research have not been heard before. They are also seeking to change their situation and to begin defining themselves as the women of Maori cosmology have done before them.

Maori cosmology is strongly linked to storytelling for Maori and the art of passing knowledge from one generation to another. Many of these wonderful stories hold truths of our past and give hints of how they may be applied in today's world. For instance, the korero of Rona the

moon goddess is one of empowerment where a Maori woman takes control of her destiny and re-defines her identity by becoming Rona Te Whakarongotai - the controller of the tides. It is apparent that Rona was a woman who wanted change to occur in her life and sought the means for that to happen.

At different times of the year Rona appears to be higher in the sky and is more clearly visible. Acting as a shining guide through te po for fishermen and a calender for planting crops, Rona is an important part of the natural elements which are central to Maori. Cosmology indicates to us that research and redefining ourselves and our power as women has always been incorporated in the Maori way of thinking (Walker 1990:15-16).

Thus, in approaching this research I have been mindful of the two competing interpretations of research and the affects that colonisation has had on Maori. Utilising the 'researching back' technique has assisted with the location of historical acts of colonising and hopefully avoided the continuation of the same. By using Kaupapa Maori research methods, my hope is that this research will make a difference to the lives of the women who have shared their stories.

## **SUMMARY**

The thesis is presented in three segments which follow the format of the four phases of structural analysis: The position of the participants and my dual researcher/ participant role is located by discussing my reasons for choosing this topic and reflecting on my research journey. This reveals my desire to research in a non-colonising way and from a mana wahine perspective which influenced the research. The methods section is discussed next to clarify the process for the reader.

## **CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY**

### **THE RESEARCH METHOD**

Methodology is defined by Harding (1987:2) as a theory and analysis of how research should proceed. In this chapter the term "research process" also refers to the chosen research framework of 'Structural analysis'.

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

My desire is to research in a manner that does not continue to colonise those being researched and as a consequence advance their lives in a positive way. This led me to seek methodology, design and techniques which are supportive of this goal.

### **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

Indigenous criticisms of research are expressed within terms such as 'white research', 'academic research', and 'outsider research'. From an indigenous perspective, Western research is located in the scientific paradigm of positivism. This seeks to understand the natural world, by measuring and creating definitions of phenomena which can then be considered reliable and valid. This form of research brings to bear a set of values and a different conceptualisation of cultural orientation, difference, knowledge, language and power structures. When this is used in a study of tangata whenua it can serve to classify them according to the Western system of knowledge (Smith 1999:42-43).

As a consequence I have chosen a qualitative research design which is also referred to as 'Interpretivist'. This design considers that reality is socially constructed and negotiated. It is able to provide a depth of

understanding through open ended questions, to gain a vivid picture of the world of white Maori women (Babbie 1989).

Although qualitative research is not an indigenous method, it emphasises the importance of the participants by trying to understand the world from their view point by allowing them to freely express their ideas and experiences (Gluck & Patai 1991:19). This approach recognises that the researcher is visible and an active participant in the qualitative research (ibid). In recognition of my insider role the process required that I declare personal beliefs, values and experiences.

A critical issue with insider research is that insiders have to live with the consequences of their research and processes forever. There is, therefore, a need for the insider researcher to build research based support systems and relationships (Smith 1999:137). The Maori women within the School of Social Policy and Social Work were tribally linked to me and skilled researchers; their support provided guidance and focus for me.

Although neither myself nor the research process was formally guided by my whanau and iwi, conversations about the research topic were always met with encouragement, offers of support and the sharing of personal experiences. This signalled to me that my topic had the potential to be useful and to make a contribution to the growing body of kaupapa Maori research.

However, qualitative approaches are no better than the scientific/quantitative approaches if they are not partnered with techniques which are appropriate to Maori and the research situation (Durie 1996:9).

Historically, and from the position of having been researched by Pakeha, Maori are challenging research methods, techniques and the presuppositions about knowledge which underlie research (Smith 1991:47). The search for appropriate methods and practices of research for Maori is an exciting development. The diversity of models and approaches being put forward are a reflection of Maori diversity and the development of ideas in terms of Maori research. In support of these development I have used Kaupapa Maori Research.

### **KAUPAPA MAORI RESEARCH**

The information which has historically come from research has played a part in colonising and redefining Maori. As a result some Maori believe that all research is bad and research methods should be thrown out (Smith 1999:183). The task, faced by Maori researchers therefore, is to find a new and appropriate form of research for Maori reflecting Maori world views (Teariki 1992:81).

Kaupapa Maori is a local form of critical theory that focuses on emancipation. This offers the possibility that through emancipation Maori may take greater control of their lives (Smith 1999, Mead 1996:202).

Kaupapa Maori research focuses on culture and upon the effects of oppression on Maori through colonisation and looks towards the development of philosophy and practice that takes into account being and acting Maori. My intention in utilising this methodology is to further legitimise Maori knowledge and values (Bishop 1996, Walsh-Tapiata 1997:136-137).

The 1998 Maori Research Conference, Te Oru Rangahau, held at Massey University, Palmerston North provided an opportunity for Maori

researchers to debate Maori research issues. One of the key questions was about what constituted Maori Research. Views ranged from a belief that Kaupapa Maori research should only be conducted in te reo Maori by Maori for Maori, to those who proposed that it should directly benefit Maori. A four part continuum was proposed by Chris Cunningham which located Kaupapa Maori research at one end, with Maori-centred research next, then research involving Maori, and at the other end, research not involving Maori (Cunningham 1998:398). He identified Kaupapa Maori research characteristics as being where Maori "are significant participants...the research team is typically all Maori...a Maori analysis is undertaken...[it] produces Maori knowledge" (ibid). Willie Te Aho went further suggesting that Maori research "should be by Maori, with Maori reo, and a commitment by those researchers for life to those people" (Te Aho 1998:408). He was pleading for a greater commitment by researchers to those being researched.

This research is by Maori, for Maori, with Maori and identifies key concerns and issues for a group of Maori women whose stories are the core of this thesis.

#### Researching by and for Maori

Ngahuia Te Awekotuku's (1991) discussion document outlines a set of principles defining ethics from a Maori perspective. In one of these she argues that responsibility to those being researched is of the utmost importance. This principle is central to this research.

The following nine principles promoted by Mead (1996:221) offer signposts for the Maori researcher working with Maori. They have been used by Maori researchers as underlying principles to guide their research projects (Walsh-Tapiata, 1998:152), and other Maori researchers have supported these principles within the context of their

research (Te Awekotuku 1991, Durie 1994, 1995, 1996, Bishop 1996:210-218).

### Aroha ki te tangata

This principle reminds the researcher to have respect for the people you are working with. I was aware that the research I was conducting was part of a political process. I knew that it could empower those to whom the information is entrusted as it makes previously private information public (Teariki et al. 1992:82). I was, therefore, aware of the consequences for the participants of releasing their private information (Te Awekotuku 1991:65) and was careful to only use information that they had approved.

### Kanohi kitea

This means the seen face. It is considered respectful in Maori society to meet with people face to face. Therefore, all the interviews were conducted face to face. This allowed the participants to warm to me and to feel more comfortable with sharing their stories with me.

### Titiro, whakarongo, korero

This principle reminds the researcher to look, listen, and then speak as I am a student in a privileged learning situation. Given that the participants agreed to share their valuable knowledge with me and because traditionally chosen individual/s who had been trained within matauranga Maori were selected to receive such knowledge as opposed to obtaining degrees within Western schools of knowledge.

Manaaki ki te tangata (Share and host people, be generous). Each interview was conducted in the homes of the participants as this was more convenient for them. I attempted to manaaki each woman during the various stages of the research process (Bevan-Brown 1998:1-16). Each participant was given copies of their transcripts at every stage of the research so I was accountable to them and to ensure that they had the power to monitor, direct and veto the manner in which I reported their korero. I also shared with them my reasons for undertaking the research. This introduced them to the idea that this was a group process and that they were not alone on this journey. Some took the opportunity to alter and clarify points made during the interviews.

Kia tupato (Be cautious). This can be linked to confidentiality and the protection of the respondents. I needed to be aware of the tikanga surrounding the knowledge of tapu and to respect that some participants needed to withhold certain information to retain the mana of a whanau or hapu (Walsh-Tapiata 1997).

Given the intimate nature of Maori networks which can render confidentiality non-effective, I could not guarantee confidentiality and interviewed on the grounds that participants agreed to their names being used in this thesis and in any future reports that might be produced. It was agreed that sensitive information would be left out of the thesis. (Finch 1986:204).

Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (Do not trample over the mana of people). In order to ensure the needs of the participants were represented in the research, I focused on areas and issues of importance and concern that they identified (Bevan-Brown 1998). This was to ensure that the research was driven by their needs and thus able to offer

an opportunity for positive changes to occur rather than reiteration of their existing situations.

### Kaua e mahaki

I was careful not to flaunt my knowledge. Smith maintains that this could be interpreted as being whakahihi and if you are perceived in this way people are less likely to warm to you as a person and as a researcher.

However, as a white Maori woman who identifies as Maori I felt that I was able to conduct the research and relate to the women in a way that was appropriate to the participants cultural and subject needs (Bevan-Brown 1998). For instance most of the participants at some point during the interviews seemed to enjoy sharing with someone who understood from personal experience what they were talking about.

### Whakapapa

This is crucial for Maori to be able to link to one another and I was aware that my whakapapa assisted me to gain access to the participants, most of whom are tribally linked to me or live within my tribal area. These connections are critical when undertaking research in Maori communities. Whakapapa generates growth rather than deconstruction (Royal 1994). I was careful to allow for korero and whakapapa connecting prior to starting the interviews.

### Rangatiratanga

The principle of rangatiratanga is described by Smith, G. (cited in Mead 1996:217-218). as the "goal of control over one's life and cultural wellbeing". This relates to control over the research kaupapa, processes used, selection of researcher, ensuring that the outcomes are of benefit to Maori and finally

control over distribution of resources. This also relates to intellectual property rights and ownership of the research findings which "do not belong to me for my individual use, nor to any institution or employing authority, but to the whanau and the Maori community. The research should empower the community to develop strategies to survive and to flourish" (Smith L., 1992:9). I have chosen a methodology and framework which will enhance rangatiratanga and been accountable to the participants in that they had the power to withdraw their stories if they were not happy with the way they were used in the research.

These principles are prescribed for Maori researchers in cultural terms (Smith L 1999:119-120) and highlight a way of attaining positive outcomes along with empowerment for the Maori participants within a cultural context. What is clear is the need for the participants and their knowledge to be respected and valued. It is apparent that processes of accountability back to the people and the need for Maori to control the research are also important considerations.

## **STORYTELLING**

The phase of locating oneself or identifying oneself in a particular historical, social, economic and cultural position was undertaken through the medium of storytelling (Barndt, 1989). This technique empowers the storyteller as they identify that their struggles may not be of their own making (Munford & Walsh-Tapiata 1999:38). The aim of this research was to give a voice to the group of women through the research (Finch 1986:211-217).

Given the predominance of Western research about tangatawhenua I was aware of the importance of indigenous people telling and writing about their own stories for their own purposes (Smith 1999:28-29). The use of biography (Rees 1991) and story telling assists the participants to locate themselves in society (Munford & Walsh-Tapiata 1999:38). In this manner the women begin to make connections between themselves and others as well as with wider

social structures. Thompson and Tyagi (1995), also associate story telling with 'truth telling' as the action involved is that of remembering and then telling.

The traditional preservation of cultural knowledge through whakatipuranga or the passing on of knowledge from generation to generation was achieved through traditional forms of oratory. In a sense, voices from the past convey their experiences to affirm ties and connect with the present (Smith 1999:145). The act of telling a story can provide the teller with the means of "weaving personal experiences into their social fabric" (Graham 1994:119).

I was concerned and aware that by presenting 'their stories' there was the potential to do this in a way that damages the collective position of the researched group. For instance, the effect could reinforce popular prejudices about the group (Finch 1986:211-217). I was also aware that by choosing the narrative tradition of storytelling as a method of data collection that this could "counteract the exploitative tendencies of social research" (Graham 1994:119). In the telling of their stories the women marked out the territory in which they would tolerate intrusion, hence, they had the power to define the parameters (Graham 1994:107). This was made possible by using a semi-structured interview technique.

## **MULTIPLE TRIANGULATION**

The strategy of multiple triangulation involves a triangulation of theory, methodology and data. This is used to build interpretations of and to acknowledge the social world which is "shifting, conflictual, emergent and constructed" (Denzin; 1989:139, Kerr 1996:19). This is achieved by using between-method triangulation or two or more different research strategies in the study of the same empirical unit. The strategy of multiple triangulation of theory, methodology and data have been used to build interpretations by using in-between method triangulation or two or more research strategies in the study of the same unit. The strategy maintains that the flaws of one method are

often the strengths of another and combining methods bring the best of each to the research and while overcoming the deficiencies of others (Denzin 1989:244).

The triangulation strategies include: qualitative design techniques of participation in and observation of in-depth semi-structured interviews as a means of promoting story telling; document analysis of relevant statutory acts; and the review of the literature which uses the strategy of historically 'researching back'. The methodology is Kaupapa Maori and the research design is qualitative. The structure follows the frame work of structural analysis.

## **SUMMARY**

A qualitative design was used as it considers that reality is socially constructed and when accompanied with open ended questions reveals a depth of understanding of the worldview of others by allowing them to freely express their ideas and experiences. This approach also recognises the active participant, insider role of the researcher. However, qualitative research is similar to quantitative, scientific approaches if it is not partnered with techniques appropriate to Maori and the research situation. Hence, I have chosen Kaupapa Maori research as it is emancipatory and, thus, offers the possibility that Maori may take greater control of their lives while focusing on culture and the effects of oppression through colonisation. For instance the loss of te reo for Maori was ensured by the mainstream education structures which prohibited the speaking of Maori while attending school. White Maori and those of Maori descent were classified as Pakeha and hence identified in this way.

Kaupapa Maori methodology also looks towards developing philosophy and practice that takes in to account being and acting Maori. This research is

therefore by and for Maori and guided by ten cultural principles of practice for the Maori researcher when researching with Maori.

## CHAPTER THREE: GETTING STARTED

### INTRODUCTION

the choice of topic stems from a desire to explore issues of identity for women like myself who are white Maori women who identify as Maori. Another reason is that the voices of white Maori are not included in the academic literature. The method I have used is described as inductive: that is, beginning by collecting material and looking for patterns and relationships after the data has been collected (Spicker 1995:191).

The Kaupapa Maori research method is designed to be used by and for Maori thus, a Maori member of staff from the School of Social Policy and Social Work was appointed as kaitautoko to guide me through the research journey (Teariki et al. 1992:82-83). From the outset, my initial investigations around the issue of being white and Maori revealed very little in the way of written information on this specific topic. The international literature held substantial information on the subjects of identity, hybridity and identity formation. Hence, much of the information on identity in this research is drawn from overseas sources. Much of the local literature centred around laws and statutes which have impacted on white Maori.

From the literature I was able to draw out some common issues faced by people of mixed heritage. From this I formulated a theme suggestion sheet to guide the interviews. I also wished to avoid the content becoming large and unmanageable (See appendix I). I intended to try and match the information from interviews with themes from the literature to strengthen the research findings.

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The second phase was to conduct two pilot interviews, which required approval from the Massey Ethics Committee. The Massey Code (1999), is explicit in that it is intended to protect the "subjects of human research" as well as the researcher and the University. They suggested the following changes to my approach to the research:

### Role of the researcher

Firstly, the duality of my role as both researcher and participant was discussed. I was advised by the committee to withhold my participation in the research until the final research stage. There was a lot of support for this so I took their advice and left my story for the final interviewing stage.

### Confidentiality

Secondly, it was recommended that I not guarantee confidentiality, and interview on the grounds that participants agree to me using their names in future reports on the outcome of the research. I was aware that confidentiality issues are magnified in qualitative research because of the position of trust which the researcher develops and because the amount of information on each person makes them identifiable (Finch 1984:4). Consequently I did not guarantee confidentiality for the participants and all signed a participant consent form agreeing to this. This form was read through at each interview (Appendix II).

### Participant protection

Thirdly, the methodology needed clarification. That is, whether the topic is about people who are beginning to identify as Maori or those who have worked through and are on the other side. I did not intend to interview people who

were feeling confused about their identity as Maori women. I was clearly looking for people who had worked through their identity issues, and used the snow-ball method to identify my research participants.

### Participant selection

The Massey Ethics Committee also felt that by only interviewing people who are professionals it would bias the final document. I explained that it was felt that professionals may have had more exposure to the issues I was wanting to explore. This is described by Patton as "purposeful sampling" where the researcher selects information-rich cases for in-depth study" (Patton 1990:182).

There was a lot of interest in my research topic and interest from potential participants was high. Because of this, the Massey Ethics Committee expressed their concern about participant selection. For instance, how would I determine who would be eligible for interviewing? What constitutes a white Maori? How do you decline a volunteer who has heard of the research and wishes to participate?

I explained that I would be seeking information- rich individuals who were firstly white, secondly Maori and thirdly that self identify as Maori. I also required people who had explored their own identity issues. This provided a clear selection process.

Selecting the gender of the participants was also questioned by the ethics committee. I elaborated on my use of purposeful sampling and an additional strategy of intensity sampling. This consists of information rich cases that display the topic of interest intensely. Combining this with heuristic research which uses intensity sampling by drawing on the personal experiences of the researcher who then seeks a sample of sufficient intensity to interpret the area

of interest (Patton 1990:26-28). I, therefore, chose participants who like myself are white Maori women who identify as Maori.

### Safety of Participants

A further concern of the ethics committee was in relation to the safety of the participants mental health. They asked what arrangements I had to refer distressed participants on to an appropriate professional who is experienced in dealing with possible distress over issues of identity. I informed them that my networks are inclusive of a therapist who is appropriately qualified and assured them that I would be able to do that.

I also sought a cross-section in terms of ages to attract intergenerational data. Given that I was working with data that involved cross referencing statutes with peoples lives, I wanted to link these with a variety of age groups.

The Ethics Committee provided some sound advice which enabled me to define the methods and processes more clearly. Although the process of going before the Ethics committee was gruelling, it allowed me to adjust my research accordingly and to become more focused on key issues relevant to the research.

### Access to Participants

Another purposeful sampling strategy was employed to access participants for this research. This is referred to as snow-ball or chain sampling which assists with the location of individual rich cases.

I began by asking my supervisor, along with other Maori women from the university, who I should talk to first. Two names were put forward and I began my pilot study in 1997 by interviewing them. However, the snow-ball method continued to progress through word of mouth and five other key names emerged for the second stage of interviewing which took place in 1998. The

names which were repeated by one or more of my advisors I considered to be key names because the chain or snow-ball had converged to make them stand out (Patton 1990:33). The snow-ball technique of gaining access to participants in all cases involved a link to whakapapa or iwi area, and as a consequence to either myself, my supervisor, my iwi or the School and staff. I feel that this helped volunteers to trust in the research process as there was an acquaintance that they could connect with.

As a white Maori woman I was regarded by participants as an 'insider'. For instance, I shared gender and identity with the participants. These factors assisted with access and the women were also comfortable with me as an interviewer, freely sharing their stories. I did encounter the 'moral dilemma' of women feeling so comfortable that they revealed very personal information about themselves. I knew that publishing this information would leave them open to political exploitation when the findings were published (Finch 1984:43). I therefore edited very carefully and felt confident that the narrative method of storytelling would counteract the exploitative tendencies of this piece of social research. The participants also had final power to veto their own korero (Graham 1984:119).

Additionally, personal contact allowed the women to ask questions about the purpose and intent of the research. This was true of the Maori women as most wanted to know what the information would be used for given the processes of the past and the detrimental effects research has had on Maori (Teariki et al.1992:82).

## **THE INTERVIEWS**

Following my initial investigations of the literature, combined with my personal experiences of identifying as Maori, some areas of potential importance emerged. One was the area of self identification in relation to statutory definitions of Maori and the other the identification process. I then drew up

a suggestion sheet which would encourage conversation on these areas. I conducted my first and pilot interviews in 1997 with the intention of creating a base line of information for my research. In 1998, I interviewed an additional five women, thus completing the interviewing for the research. In 1999, I used the material from all the interviews and then included my own story. I found that by this time my personal awareness of the subject had grown and I was able to contribute a lot better than I would have been able to in 1997.

An interview is one of the many ways in which two people talk to one another (Benney and Hughes 1970:191., Oakley 1981:32). This was how I approached the interviews which were assisted by the technique described as "the in-depth open-ended interview" (Patton 1990:10).

I asked women to be prepared to set aside one hour of their time for their interviews but not to feel limited by this. The interviews averaged one hour in duration. Although I would not have stopped an interview, I was aware that one hour of tape-recording takes about four hours to transcribe (Patton 1990:349). The data was reported through direct quotations from the participants.

The oral narratives were gathered with the use of a tape recorder (Gluck and Patai 1991). The participants experiences, feelings and development of their beliefs were recorded (Middleton 1988:127). Once the interviewing was completed I transcribed the interviews, as a bi-lingual Maori woman with keyboard skills. Although the interviews were conducted in English, the introductions and some descriptive words were in Maori.

I accepted that the adult memories and interpretations of the events of the women's lives were "valid" (Middleton 1988:130). I had no reason to doubt the validity and truth of their interpretation of their lives. After transcribing the interviews, each participant was sent a copy of her transcript. They were free

to edit information from the transcripts that they did not want to be public. Three of the participants made changes to the detail contained in their transcripts. This is referred to as a "formative evaluation" which does not seek to generalise beyond the specific intervention being studied (Patton 1990:182). I also felt that it was important for them to see their words as a means of validating their stories.

## **ANALYSIS**

The stories, reflections and knowledge of the women provided data for analysis and from that data, themes emerged. Patton refers to this as "content analysis" where patterns are identified from the data (Patton 1990:192). Qualitative content analysis is a strategy of documentary research which involves reading the text and looking for symbols. I therefore picked out what was relevant and then pieced it together again to create patterns and sequences. This is a flexible method which enabled me to consider the ways in which meaning is constructed for white Maori women (May 1993:69-70). The final stage of analysis involved comparing the issues introduced by the participants' korero with the themes arising from the literature review.

## **SUMMARY**

My reason for conducting this research was based on a personal desire to explore the world of women who, like myself, were white Maori who identify as Maori. As a Maori woman my values have influenced the research. They encompass mana wahine, storytelling and concerns around perpetuating colonisation. In seeking to understand the social and political position of white Maori women I have used structural analysis, informed by the principles of tino rangatiratanga, as a framework to shape the structure of this thesis.

I have used Kaupapa Maori research principles as they legitimise Maori knowledge and values by providing a method which is appropriate to be used

by and for Maori. The research is guided by a set of ethical principles from a Maori perspective. The qualitative research design offered an approach capable of providing an indepth understanding of the world of white Maori women when partnered with Kaupapa Maori research techniques and open ended questions.

A strategy of multiple triangulation was used consisting of a documentary review of relevant statutory acts, interviewing and a review of the literature. I used an inductive method of gathering my data; that is, I chose the topic first and began to look for patterns from the data after the material was collected. Using heuristic research, I drew on my own experience and using snow-ball techniques selected eight white Maori women who identify as Maori. The data was transcribed and content analysis was used to locate the main themes. The women were given opportunities to comment and amend the transcripts before completion.

Since the late 1960's, sociologists have tended to see the problems suffered by people of mixed heritage as similar to those suffered by black children, that is, being black in a white controlled society. However, the few studies conducted in this area show that in Britain people of mixed heritage have a positive view of their racial position and tend to think of themselves as belonging to a separate, mixed race group.

There is a variety of opinion expressed in the literature regarding people of mixed heritage. Statements about their identity problems have been made with confidence for decades, if not centuries and are said to have no sound empirical basis. They appear to have been drawn from a mixture of observation, popular myth and a theoretical analysis of race and racism in Britain (Wilson 1987:16). I will now examine potential theoretical positions appropriate for use when conducting research with Maori and white Maori.

### Ethnicity-based Theory

In relation to identity and theory, the issue of race and race relations becomes prominent. For instance, in the 1960's and 1970's the way that "race relations" was analyzed changed and "ethnicity" or "ethnic identity" became the terms used by sociologists and others to acknowledge the positive feelings of belonging to a cultural group (Spoonley 1988:40). However, ethnicity-based theory does attempt to move beyond race as a biological category and presents racial and ethnic identity as unfixed and open to change (Ferber 1995:159). This theory is not appropriate for use with white Maori who self identify as Maori rather than allow themselves to be defined by biological categorising systems.

### Postmodernism

Postmodernism, in understanding racial identity considers that race is constructed and re-constructed. As a result the boundaries are re-drawn each

time creating new racialised identities (Ferber 1995:166-167). For Maori, it is difficult to discuss postmodernism in relation to identity when the colonial experience still traps Maori within modernity. Given that Maori continue to be colonised and still seek justice there can be no postmodern until the unfinished business of the modern is settled (Smith 1999:34).

### Cultural Studies

Within cultural studies the investigation of the politics of identity lies between two arguments and models of the production of identities (Hall 1990). The first model supports 'essentialism' and assumes that there is an essential part of any identity which is defined by common origin or a common structure of experience or both. The pursuer of this model tries to discover the 'authentic' and 'original' content of the identity (Grossberg 1996:89). For Maori, the concept of an authentic identity links to the past, prior to colonisation. In research the term "authentic" has been used by the West as a criteria to determine who is indigenous. There is a further tendency to take this back to the biological race argument rather than the culture based one where white Maori are positioned (Smith 1999:73-74).

Model two defines work around identity in cultural studies and disagrees with the first model denying the existence of original and authentic identities which are based on a universally shared origin or experience. This model claims that identity is temporary and defined by differences. The notion of difference is derived from structuralist theory and states that identity depends entirely on its relation to its difference from the other and that "difference as much as identity is an effect of power" (Grossberg 1996:91-92). This relates to my research given that the participants are white Maori who are identified by their difference in colour in relation to their identity choice. The denial of a universally shared origin or experience is in opposition to Maori belief which centres around traditional practices of whakapapa and tikanga which is handed from one generation to another.

The model further argues that a multiplicity of identities and of positions exist within identities which may be assembled and reassembled (Harraway, 1991:174). The emphasis is on the multiplicity of situational identities and differences rather than on a singular identity (Grossberg 1996:89). The participants in this research identify as Maori and with a singular identity which they do not abandon because of situational differences.

Additionally, for people who identify as indigenous the position of hybridity does not clearly deal with the positions of power held by the various identities. For instance, the participants are perceived whites, who have majority group status and power, but they identify as Maori who do not have power. It is difficult at a theoretical level to deal with the imbalance of power imposed by the participants choosing an identity which does not match their appearance.

### Critical Theory

Critical theory emerges from Marxist thought and purports that the social world is characterised by differences arising out of conflict between the powerful and the powerless (Fay 1987). This theory has found favour amongst indigenous movements including Maori (Tomlins-Jahnke 1996) as it aims at the emancipation of oppressed groups. Critical theory offers Maori a localised theory aimed at giving them greater control over their lives (Smith 1999:186).

The method used for this research is kaupapa Maori which offers an analysis of existing power structures and societal inequalities. When kaupapa Maori as a local theory, is aligned with the goals and practise of critical theory, they are able to expose assumptions which conceal power relations in society and the ways that dominant groups provide justification for the maintenance of inequalities and continued oppression of Maori (Smith 1999:185-186).

Although the participants' colour would lead one to believe that they are not in need of empowerment, they have chosen to be Maori and will be located

in the powerless position with Maori. In addition, within society their world view is not widely known and their voices are not heard from their unique perspective.

Although Western theory has the potential to continue oppressing Maori I have included this theoretical section because theory offers a way of making sense of the indigenous persons reality. Thus I sought an appropriate theory for Maori and I have attempted to theorise in a way that offers a sense of and sensitivity towards what it means to be an indigenous person and in a way that explains our existence in society (Smith 1999:38-39). The understanding of ones oppression can occur with the assistance of an appropriate theory to explain ones social reality. It is Critical theory which offers an emancipatory goal which supports in part the aims of this research in relation to white Maori women. In addition critical theory compliments the chosen method of this research which is kaupapa Maori.

## **SUMMARY**

People of mixed heritage and consequently white Maori have historically been represented by theory which is not specific to them and based on an analysis of race and racism. In the search for an appropriate theory, a review of a number of theoretical approaches located critical theory as being suitable for research from an indigenous position when aligned with kaupapa Maori research. This is because it reveals underlying assumptions which perpetuate structures of inequality and power. It also attempts to explain the indigenous world whilst offering empowerment to them.

## **CHAPTER FIVE - HISTORICAL REVIEW**

A historical view of literature is referred to by Smith as "talking back". This involves an analysis of the colonialism contained within history (Smith 1999:8). Given the nature of my research I had difficulty locating literature central to my topic. Additionally white Maori are the result of mixed Pakeha and Maori relationships and may therefore be considered to be of mixed heritage. Consequently I have concentrated on British and American historical literature which focuses on people of mixed heritage. I then linked these historical views with New Zealand literature. This enabled me to trace the colonial attitudes towards people of colour and of mixed heritage. These attitudes were transferred to New Zealand in the form of political structures and policies which maintain the power of the white majority and have defined Maori identity.

### **BRITISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE**

In Britain a combination of colonial power, sexual repression and an accepted theory of evolution produced an extreme reaction to people of mixed heritage (Dover 1937). They were considered to be a social problem, biologically inferior and a symbol of impurity to white races. As a result the terminology used to describe people of mixed heritage is based on biologically determined measurements and categories (Wilson 1987:8).

Many of the existing terms refer to animals such as 'mutt' or 'mongrel'. Classified as 'half-castes', people of mixed heritage were considered a threat to the British Empire (Dover 1937) as they did not fit into the existing racial categories. The term half caste is defined as a fixed social category which people are born into (Banks 1996:19-20). The belief persisted that children from mixed marriages would always have problems adjusting as they would never truly belong to either side. Disapproval of mixed marriages also existed

because they had the potential to produce children of mixed heritage (Wilson 1987:3-8).

The second half of the twentieth century brought changes in white British attitudes to intermarriage. For instance, the idea that black/white unions produced genetically inferior children was abandoned by the scientific community. This was, however, replaced by the "commonsense" view where disapproval of intermarriage was based on concern for the children given the different backgrounds of the parents. The children of such unions were said to be destined to face an inner struggle with the "two different nationalities to neither of which they belong" (Wilson 1987). The reasons given for disapproval of people of mixed heritage are derived from early problem theories. They deduced that people of mixed heritage would never belong to either side of their heritage and hence go through life in a confused state (ibid).

In the 1950's, the British continued to view miscegenation as "harmful to the race" and children of mixed heritage a "great problem" (Benson 1981). However, some whites began to see mixed heritage children as the key to racial harmony. If black and white could mix into one there would be no more racial conflict (Wilson 1987:5). These reasons changed slightly in the 1950s when people of mixed heritage were seen as the answer to racial conflict. This concept was fused with physical assimilationist notions and the "melting pot" era emerged.

In the early 1960's, those who publicly spoke out in favour of mixed marriages were shunned by society. By the late 1960s in both Britain and the United States of America there was a shift towards more liberal attitudes to intermarriage and theories of racial purity became more confined to extreme right-wing groups (Wilson 1987:4).

In the 1960s and 1970s black people in Britain and the United States began to speak out against black/white relationships. The black consciousness

movement of this period stressed black pride and the rediscovery of the cultural value of blackness; attraction to white people was seen as disloyal. The more radical sections of the black community saw these relationships as an impediment to the development of a strong cohesive black community. Intermarriage was not viewed positively by either white or black communities and yet colonisation processes of assimilation and integration required it.

The black pride movement was as disapproving of people of mixed heritage and the relationships which had the potential to produce them. Internationally people of mixed heritage were viewed by white communities as a threat to the power structure. The black population viewed them as disloyal and a weak/white link amidst the black renaissance.

Attitudes towards people of mixed heritage have shifted over the years but when the British arrived to colonise New Zealand they brought with them their views, values and attitudes towards people of mixed heritage.

Once again there is no literature which focuses specifically on white Maori. Therefore I will discuss historical literature in New Zealand which explores the area of identity for people of mixed heritage. Again, the historical approach is taken as a means of 'researching back' and of comparing local trends with overseas ones.

A primary aim of the Settler Government in the late 19th century, and early 20th century was to Europeanise Maori in order to facilitate access to Maori land (Stewart-Harawira 1993:27). To assist with the integration of Maori in to New Zealand society assimilation policies were implemented. As a result, by the 1880's Maori had come to believe that assimilation was the only option for surviving. At this time it was predicted that Maori would be wiped out by the year 1900 (Stewart-Harawira 1993:29).

This belief is reflected in a comment by Sir Maui Pomare: "There is no alternative but to become Pakeha... There is no hope for the Maori but in ultimate absorption by the Pakeha. This is the only hope if hope it be" (Stewart-Harawira 1993:29). Assimilation required Maori to relinquish their identity and replace it with a foreign one. Those born before the second world war were led to believe that 'racial harmony' existed in this country. Hence there was no need for Maori to consider themselves separate from or in conflict with Pakeha. This idea was very strong well in to the 1940s and 1950s (Spoonley 1988:1).

In the 1950s, assimilation policies supported the "melting pot" notion that we are all "one people". This encouraged non-differences or a period of non-identification. Post-war urbanisation began in 1945 and a policy of assimilation which broke up whanau ties and transformed the Maori world. The first generation of urban Maori were born speaking either English or Maori and with little notion of identity (Bradley 1994:184). There are, some Maori who participate comfortably in mainstream society but others have become alienated both from their tribe and from society generally (Durie 1994:167).

By the 1960s it was apparent that assimilation was working and the 1945 Maori Economic Advancement Act was replaced by pan-Maori-focused legislation. The Maori Community Development Act promoted cross-tribal committee systems. Maori were once again defined, this time in a non-tribal fashion. The generation born at this time had little to no sense of identity (Bradley 1994:184).

Urbanisation was welcomed by the 1961 Hunn Report as an opportunity for integration. The report further predicted that assimilation would be the destiny for 'the two races' in the future (Durie 1994:99). This report also referred to 'pepper potting' as a method of dispersing Maori housing amongst European housing to promote inter-marriage and closer integration (Durie 1994:49). Harre (1966) confirms that half the recorded marriages in 1960 were of Maori

with Pakeha. Figures taken in the 1981 census by Pool and Pole, suggest that the high rate of intermarriage continued and further increased (Sharp 1997:46-59).

Assimilation and integration processes directly encouraged intermarriage between Maori and Pakeha. Urbanisation moved Maori away from traditional tribal affiliations and cultural knowledge. Between the 1960s and 1980s Maori were well entrenched in urban culture. There was a high tendency toward cross-cultural marriages and by the 1980s Maori were notably detached from their heritage (Bradley 1994:184).

Notwithstanding, there was a strong revival during the 1960s to 1980s which saw the development and growth of organisations such as the Maori Council and Maori Organisation on Human Rights, followed by Nga Tamatoa which acted as an important nurturing ground for the leadership of Maori activists in the 1970's. The 1970s consisted of Maori land occupations, land marches and positive legislative changes such as the Treaty of Waitangi Act. Many of these activities included requests for redress of the Treaty of Waitangi (Spoonley 1988:46-47) as they further provided a vehicle for kotahitanga of Maori hopes and visions. This period of Maori activism saw Maori beginning to assert their rights in a high profile and political way (Bradley 1994:185) which coincided with the international black pride era.

People of mixed heritage are the products of processes of assimilation which encouraged urbanisation and inter-marriage. Once established generations of Maori were affected and as a consequence some Maori were no longer visibly Maori to look at (Durie 1994:127).

Attitudes of disapproval ranged from the "commonsense" view to the "melting pot" era as the answer to racial conflict. The black movement viewed intermarriage as disloyal indicating that people of mixed heritage were not viewed positively on either side. As a result, traditional cultural processes were

lost to some Maori. The process of assimilation resulted in Maori identity being redefined and the whitening of Maori. Despite this the release of the Hunn report in the sixties heightened general awareness about Maori needs and policy-makers began to reflect the changing attitudes. New Zealanders began to recognise the injustices evident at places such as Bastion Point, highlighted by the 1975 land march. The raising of New Zealand's social conscience about the needs of Maori were also mirrored in the Labour Government's Policies between 1972 - 1975 one of these was the 1975 Waitangi Act. Further evidence of this was the 1974 Maori Affairs Amendment Act which broadened the definition of "Maori" to include those of Maori descent who self identify as Maori.

### **DEFINING TE IWI MAORI**

Historically, Maori have been defined using methods based on biologically determined categories. Questions regarding who is a Maori have been asked since the beginning of the 19th Century and have determined ownership of land, entitlement to education and cultural heritage. Until 1986, the question of who is a Maori had been for legal and statistical purposes defined by Acts of a Parliament composed of Non-Maori members (Stewart-Harawira 1993:27-34).

Prior to 1840, Maori regarded themselves as 'normal' and other races were seen as different, the term Pakeha being used to define Europeans. From 1860 Maori became a minority and were regarded by Pakeha as different and consequently categorised as either full-blooded or half-caste Maori (Durie 1994:125-126).

Maori men over the age of twenty one, and of full or half-caste descent were in 1867 defined by the Maori Representation Bill as "aboriginal Native inhabitants of New Zealand". From 1885 until 1951 Maori were listed in a separate census from European (Stewart-Harawira 1993:27-34). This is an

example of the way in which structures impact upon the personal identification of Maori. From this period Maori men are identified by imposed state definitions.

In 1904, Maori were defined as: "any person of the aboriginal race of New Zealand and every person whose parents were deemed to be an active member of such race. But no half caste shall be deemed to be a Maori within the interpretation of this Act unless he be living as a member of some tribe or community" (1904 Session II:96).

The 1906 Native schools Report to Parliament, distinguishes between children attending as Maori, or nearly Maori, half-castes or nearly half-castes living as Europeans. Those attending public schools were defined as Maori, mixed race living as Maori, others, of mixed race living as Europeans (Stewart-Harawira 1993:27-34).

In 1912 the Native Land Amendment Act gave the Governor of New Zealand the right to declare any Native or Maori to "be a European, and to be deemed no longer to be a Native or Maori" (Pool 1991:23). Maori who were less than half-caste were deemed to be Pakeha, their land classed as European and sold (Stewart-Harawira 1993:28).

From the above, it is clear that the position of the then defined half caste was subject to manipulation through Government legislation. For instance from 1926 until 1986 persons who identified as half-caste were allocated to either the Maori or European population on the basis of their mode of living (Sorrenson 1977:13), rather than by how they defined themselves culturally.

The Maori Affairs Act 1953, defined a Maori as "a person belonging to the aboriginal race of N.Z including a half-caste and a person intermediate between half caste and a person of pure descent from the race" (Metge 1976:41). People defined as half-caste are recognised as Maori from 1953.

This was a departure from the biological inheritance method of determining ethnicity and a move towards cultural identification which did not require an estimation of racial percentages and allowed white Maori to identify as Maori (Stewart-Harawira 1993:28). However, as indicated in the Hunn report in 1961, ten different statutory definitions of "what is a Maori" existed (Pool 1991:17). Thus white Maori who were classed as less than half-caste were still not legally classed as Maori.

Biological inheritance as the sole determinant of ethnicity was finally replaced by the concept of cultural identification in the 1974 Maori Affairs Amendment Act. The Act described a Maori as "a person of the Maori race of N.Z, and includes any descendent of such a person". This was a forerunner for "self identification" which allows for people who are less than half Maori and those people who identify socially and culturally as Maori to do so. The decisive factors in determining this form of identification are family background, upbringing, and personal commitment, rather than degree of ancestry (Pool 1991:14-19).

Prior to 1974, white Maori, half-caste Maori, or descendants of Maori were not legally able to be Maori. White Maori who are less than half caste or people of mixed heritage were defined by an Act of law as Pakeha regardless of upbringing and cultural knowledge. This was a forced choice of identity as opposed to self identification which is a selected choice.

## **SELF IDENTIFICATION**

Self identification as Maori is a term that arose from changes to the census questionnaire (Pool 1991:14). The process of Census-taking is a form of racial classification which enforces definitions on people (Root 1996:5). These rigid racial categories are required for racism to thrive and the common classifications are those of black and white. It is also assumed that each person will fall into one category (Satris 1995:54-55).

From 1926 to 1981 statisticians classified the population according to "degree of Maori blood", full and half. Those who were a quarter were considered to be non-Maori (Pool 1991:14-19). The 1976 and 1981 census questionnaire provided both for the "Maori half or more" category and those of "Maori descent" or less than half. Statistical definitions prior to 1986 then employed a biological base determined by blood quantity (ibid).

In the 1986 census, self-identification was the method used to determine ethnic identity, by then the term 'race' had all but been dropped because of its discriminatory associations. Self-identification recognises that the amount of 'Maori blood' one has does not determine the extent to which one is Maori nor does blood quantity define Maori identity (Carter 1998:259-261).

In addition, it is considered that when a person who is one-quarter Maori and who knows little of Maori culture says she/he is a Maori then to Maori people she/he is acceptable as a Maori. When one considers the social disadvantages of minority-group status, people who make such a choice seldom do so lightly (Walker 1987:214-215).

To feel a cultural affiliation and to self-identify as Maori has little to do with any particular traits such as skin colour, or patterns of behaviour but more to do with a sense of reciprocal belonging to a known cultural tradition which is considered central to one's identity (Benton 1991).

When Maori cultural identity is linked to self identification it can encompass whakapapa, marae participation, whanau, whenua tipu (ancestral land) contact with Maori and Maori language (Durie 1996:7).

Some factors determining this form of identification are family background and upbringing, as well as personal commitment, rather than degree of ancestry (Benton 1981:79-80). Additionally awareness of social policies which have

unjustly defined Maori and a desire to create political change by defining oneself.

After the 1974 definition of "Maori" was introduced, the Crown Law Office considered that "a Maori was either a person of pure Maori blood or a person of less than pure blood who elected to be considered as a Maori for the purpose of the Electoral Act 1975" (Durie M, 1994:126). The notion of pure blood can still be linked to the argument of blood quantification.

In addition, a statute which draws directly from the Treaty of Waitangi is the State-Owned Enterprises Act of 1986. This accepts the 1974 Maori Affairs Amendment act definition: "Maori means a person of the Maori race of New Zealand: and includes any descendant of that person". This covers most statutory situations and is considered to be legally binding (Pool 1991:17). By 1991, the process had been further refined and contained choices regarding ethnic group affiliation, the Maori option and a question regarding Maori ancestry and tribal affiliation. (Durie M, 1994:126-127).

The 1974 Maori Affairs Amendment Act broadens the definition of "Maori" to allow for self-identification. This definition is adopted by the State Owned Enterprises Act in 1986 making that definition legally binding. The 1986 census begins offering self identification as an option. This means that people who are less than half Maori and who identify as Maori can do so. A structural barrier to white Maori identifying as Maori is removed. Having the power to define another person is an indication of where the power lies in this relationship. The Treaty could be said to be symbolic of this.

## **TREATY OF WAITANGI**

The Treaty of Waitangi was signed on the 6th February 1840 between the British Crown and Maori of Aotearoa. The Treaty was an act of agreement between two peoples and a reflection of what could be said to be the

foundation of the relationship between Maori and Pakeha in New Zealand (Ruwhiu 1994:131). The Treaty was an acknowledgement of Maori existence and prior occupation of the land. Furthermore it acknowledges that two people reside in this country and of the intent that the Maori presence would remain and be respected. (Waitangi Tribunal:130).

The Commissioner for the Environment summarises the Treaty principle of protection as "active protection". This means ensuring that Maori have opportunities for development, not just to preserve what was theirs in 1840 but to move beyond this point (1995 No 87:18). In New Zealand, following the signing of the Treaty, the development of European institutions gave European legal and political control of New Zealand (Stewart-Harawira 1993:27).

Maori did not receive citizenship or access to resources so that they could progress their lives. For a person who is of both Maori and Pakeha ancestry the Treaty is then a living example of their dual heritage and represents the imbalance of power between the two peoples which they descend from. This imbalance of power can be said to be maintained by difference. This determines who is eligible for entry in to the dominant group.

## **DIFFERENCE**

"Identity, when constructed within the politics of difference, refers to the reintegration of aspects of a self that have been historically made invisible or oppressed" (Gergen 1976). When difference is repressed, expression of the self is not possible and the sense of self becomes subject to the will of a dominant majority that does not understand the difference as it is perceived as failure to meet the standards of the majority (Kich 1996:226). Difference is then an effect of power (Grossberg 1996:91-92). As a consequence of the way difference is perceived Maori cultural identity has been repressed and marginalised. An example of this was the statutory repression of the Maori identity, either because the law defined them as Pakeha up to the 1974 Maori Affairs

Amendment Act or because of the effects of social and political barriers such as urbanisation and assimilation.

Choosing one identity rather than another is problematic for people of Maori descent and is partly dependent on the identity formation process one has been subjected to.

## **SUMMARY**

The historical literature revealed that people of mixed heritage were viewed by the black and white communities as representative of dilution or pollution of the respective races. In New Zealand legislation aimed to assimilate Maori and by the 1880s Maori believed in assimilation. The assimilation policies encouraged people to believe there was racial harmony in the 1940-1950s. The "melting pot" notion that we were all one people, urbanisation and the "pepper potting" of housing to promote inter-marriage all assisted this belief system. By 1980 Maori were detached from their heritage, identity and some Maori were no longer visibly Maori to look at.

The period from Pakeha first contact to the 1950's encompassed attitudes which promoted a non-race or identity-based way of viewing Maori and Pakeha. This period promoted the "we are all one people" attitude. This way of thinking stopped people from defining their own identity.

At a wider societal level the 1960s, through to the 1980s were significant years of advancement for Maori and show a change from denial and shame of Maori identity to a pride in identifying as Maori. The renaissance encouraged Maori to identify as a political means of achieving change through increased numbers to alter the balance of power.

Prior to 1974, white Maori, half caste Maori or descendants of Maori were not legally able to be Maori. They were legally defined by acts of law as Pakeha

regardless of upbringing and cultural knowledge. The legally imposed identities were based on blood quantum categories.

Increased social awareness of Maori needs during the 1960s and 1970s and the Labour Government replaces blood quantum categories with self identification with the introduction of the 1974 Maori Affairs Amendment Act. The definition of Maori is broadened by this Act to include those who are less than half cast Maori or of Maori descent who self-identify as Maori.

Self identification occurs because of feelings of belonging. Influential factors are, family background, upbringing and social and political awareness of one's position in society. The Treaty defines the relationship between Maori and Pakeha and is symbolic of the imbalance in power between the two peoples from whom white Maori descend. The imbalance in power occurs and is maintained by difference which is defined as historical oppression of others because they fail to meet the standards of the majority.

To self identify is to want to link one self to whakapapa, marae participation, whanau, whenua and contact with Maori and Maori language. Determinants of self identity are family background, upbringing and personal commitment rather than degree of ancestry.

Having the power to define another person indicates where the power lies in the relationship between Maori and Pakeha. The Treaty of Waitangi also represents this relationship and is a symbol of the dual heritage of the person who is of Maori and Pakeha ancestry. The balance of power between the two peoples is maintained by difference which is perceived by the majority as failure to meet the standard of the majority and an effect of power consequently Maori cultural identity has been repressed and marginalised through statutory repression of their identity. Defined as Pakeha or because of social and political barriers such as urbanisation and assimilation. For Maori

and white Maori social, political and legislative structural barriers have combined to constantly redefine their identity.

## CHAPTER SIX: IDENTIFYING AS MAORI

### IDENTITY

For Maori people, the term ethnicity or ethnic identity is rarely used in normal conversation and does not relate to cultural concepts of Iwitanga and Maori culture generally. As a concept, ethnicity may be a relatively new development in Western European knowledge, but it does not compare with Maori interpretations of iwi development and cultural identity (Ruwhiu 1993:3). Hence, I will refer to Maori cultural identity.

According to Erickson (1968), "identity" is achieved both at the individual (personal) and group (communal) level. The individual level of "identity" focuses on a sense of sameness, a unity of personality which is felt by the individual and recognised by others. This process begins with the family and is added to by peers (Bowles 1993:418).

In traditional/pre European Maori society Identity for Maori developed as a result of history, traditions and being raised in a Maori community to value those authentic ways of being Maori (Rangihau 1981:165). The hapu and iwi supported the group level of identity which was linked to traditional cultural concepts such as whakapapa, marae, language, whenua, and wairua. Identity was reinforced within the whanau and the role of grandparents bore the responsibility for teaching children about whakapapa: who they are, and how they are related to particular relatives (Metge 1995:187).

This is reflected in Harre's report on mixed Maori and Pakeha marriages in New Zealand. This indicated that parents both Maori and Pakeha went out of their way to point out to their children that being Maori was a matter of pride rather than shame. In many cases the identity was with grandparents (past), not with cousins (present), with culture (tradition) and not with society (contemporary) (Harre 1966:134-142). The indication is that Maori identity is

associated with a traditional past rather than the contemporary present. There was probably little incentive to identify with the image of the dispossessed Maori. It is attitudes such as these that reflect the success of assimilationist policies in this instance creating a romantic picture of the strong and proud Maori people of the past. These are difficult images for contemporary Maori to live up to. Whether they be urban dwelling or marae based, realising these images is fraught with social barriers such as high unemployment, poor health and near loss of language.

It is apparent that Maori cultural identity is nurtured at two levels - the whanau and the wider societal level. The previous chapter has highlighted some of the social, political and legislative structural barriers that society used to determine the identity of white Maori. On the other hand the whanau was traditionally responsible for passing on cultural knowledge. Because contemporary urbanised Maori will have varying degrees of access to cultural knowledge, the degree to which members identify as Maori or not, will probably depend upon the extent of that knowledge. I do agree with Durie (1996:23), that cultural identity should not to be regarded as an optional extra or as something from a mythical past but as something central to the well-being of contemporary Maori, which adds value to other dimensions.

A model of cultural identity which encompasses traditional concepts of cultural knowledge is referred to as "Nga Pou Mana". There are four pillars to this model: "whanaungatanga" (Family Cohesion), taonga tuku iho (cultural inheritance), te ao turoa (the environment), turangawaewae (security) (Durie et. al. 1995:3). I will explore some of these in Section three when looking at personal issues of identification.

It is evident that today Maori live in diverse cultural worlds, with not one reality or single definition encompassing the range of Maori life-styles. Some Maori are closely linked to marae, hapu, iwi. Others are involved in new institutions, strongly Maori, but not in any traditional sense. Thus a Maori

identity cannot be presumed to mean a conventional Maori lifestyle (Durie M. 1994:214).

When people are colonised they and their identities are subject to assimilation processes. Assimilation is referred to as a one-way street along which indigenous peoples "give up" one identity and "take on" another one (Root 1996).

Maori were defined by processes of colonisation and the social policies which ensued. These processes attempted to take away practices which were inherently important to Maori identity (Durie 1994:167-168). From birth onwards, identity formation proceeds through internalising one's relationships with others. As one grows older, one identifies with those from increasingly wider social circles and extends the membership from community to society (Hershel 1995). In this way influential social and political factors affect identity. For instance, the Maori renaissance was an "expression of political consciousness" (Walker 1990:210) born out of the frustrations of urbanisation with the assistance of the urban and grass roots people (Smith 1999:108).

However, the journey was marked by significant events such as the Land March of 1974, Waitangi Day protests from 1971, occupation of Bastion Point and of the Raglan golf course 1978, disruption of the Springbok Rugby Tour 1981, Te Kohanga Reo 1982, the Maori Education Development Conference 1984, the Maori Economic Development Conference 1985, and Kura Kaupapa Maori 1986. Whilst political protest progressed, alongside this was the development of cultural projects which focused on traditional cultural concepts such as te reo, tikanga and tino rangatiratanga (Smith 1999:109).

These events signalled the revitalisation of Maori cultural identity in Aotearoa. Exposure to the renaissance of the 1960s through to the 1980s could have a profoundly positive affect on identity formation for Maori. This time period indicates to white Maori there is no shame in identifying as Maori. Identifying

as Maori is promoted as a means of achieving political change for Maori through increased numbers on the electoral roll. The aim is to alter the balance of power in favour of Maori, particularly for those who were encouraged to identify and slot into mainstream Pakeha society. This was done because parents and grandparents did not want their children and grandchildren to experience the racism and affects of assimilation that they had. In addition, because white Maori are white it would have been easier for them to be accepted by Pakeha society as Pakeha.

## **IDENTIFICATION**

The process of forming an identity is said to be a critical facet of selfhood. This process continues throughout one's life through personal and public relationships and is simultaneously influenced by broader social, cultural, and racial attitudes (Hershel 1995).

The process of identity formation begins with "belonging" which is a fundamental human need, because belonging to a family implies physical similarities and shared characteristics such as race and appearance. Thus, belonging does not become an issue until exclusion is communicated. Being told you don't belong sets up a desire to belong and is further frustrated by rejection (Hershel 1995:169-170). Similarly, many people of Maori descent have been historically excluded from their Maori identity. This may have influenced their desire to explore their Maori cultural identity more thoroughly. As a part of the development process a child may adopt the race of one parent and reject the race of the other or go back and forth. Some studies suggest that trying on each parental racial identity in turn is an important part of making one's own decisions about identity (Hershel 1995:171).

An additional complication to the process of identity formation is that society does not present all racial identities as equally desirable. Being white is presented as guaranteeing status, value and material reward (Wilson 1987:22),

because each racial identification confers a different set of advantages or disadvantages. Added to this, is the census requirement that one identity option be chosen. White Maori experience conflict over these issues and feel the need to protect themselves from social and racial discord (Hershel 1995:173).

Maintaining a consistent sense of identity is difficult when people identify as bi or multi cultural with rigid racial categories or sometimes as black and others as white or they are not identified as belonging to any group. The continual lack of social validation creates difficulty in maintaining a consistent sense of self and can produce intense anxiety and self-doubt (ibid).

In order to step out of the social and political conflict and avoid having to choose one identity, white Maori may need to identify with both identities. Bearing in mind, the difference in power between the two identities and that extra support is needed for the minority identity, dual heritage identification can occur comfortably. This is possible where a child is raised with acceptance by the minority community in particular and encouraged in that by both parents. The majority identity will be nurtured naturally by its own societal structures. This avoids disidentification or disowning a part of the self which causes unhealthy identity formation (Bowles 1993:417-428). A person of mixed heritage may also see themselves more positively if they see others of mixed heritage taking pride in their dual heritage. (ibid).

Closely related to these positions of hybridity are the borderlands which lie between two worlds where identity is achieved through taking on and shedding the roles required. The act of border crossing is described as negotiating and reconstructing the borders between races. Border crossing can also be described as struggles over meaning and different modes of being, of different identities (Anzaldua 1987).

This marks an image of "between-ness" or mobility. People who inhabit both realities live in the interface between the two identities (Grossberg 1996:91-92).

This provides options other than singular identity selection. However, crossings disrupt a society that depends on racist categories to maintain the imbalance of power within its structure.

In addition to this, the bi/multiple identity options can be linked to the bi-cultural and multi-cultural debates. These centre around issues of equality, power sharing and resource distribution. Both cultural options require a transference of power from the dominant Pakeha state. The central feature of these debates is divide and rule. While entry into biculturalism may be an aim of equality it is likely to lead to arguments for multicultural decentralisation of power. Multicultural distribution of power and resources will not benefit Maori because of the amount of fractionalised distribution required. This places minority groups in positions of conflict and forces them to compete against each other for those resources (Spoonley 1988:103-105).

Holding two or more identities offers a host of difficulties for white Maori. To do so in a non-conflicted way would be extremely difficult particularly when the majority position has power over another. In addition, declaring multiple identities at different times and places could serve to further confuse/franctionalise the situation and detract from the already invisible indigenous position of the white Maori.

The review of literature revealed the importance of acknowledging all of oneself in order to formulate a healthy identity. For those who do not have a great deal of awareness of their Maori identity they will not be concerned with making an identity choice. Others may want to explore this option in varying degrees. The literature demonstrates that the bicultural and multicultural identity argument does not take into consideration issues of power and distribution of that power and resources. In addition, the multiple identity approach is relevant to people of mixed heritage who identify with more than one heritage. The participants in this research identify with a singular Maori identity whilst acknowledging the Pakeha identity.

## SUMMARY

Maori cultural identity is achieved at a group level and with hapu and iwi support it is linked to traditional cultural concepts such as whakapapa, hapu and iwi. The whanau nurture identity by passing on cultural knowledge which if not passed on can affect whether one identifies or not. Identity at a societal level for indigenous people is prevented by structural barriers in the form of negative social, political and legislative factors. The degree to which members identify may depend upon the extent of cultural knowledge.

Identification is also linked to belonging and exclusion heightens the need to belong. In addition, society presents being white as guaranteeing status and material reward. As a result white Maori face social conflict around issues of identity. The literature emphasises the importance of acknowledging all aspects of one's identity rather than denial of one aspect in favour of another in order to identify in a healthy way. In contrast, the bi or multicultural identity options appear less in conflict and can occur if one is raised in a community which encourages this. However, this argument does not take into consideration issues of power in relation to the indigenous position. Choosing to identify either in a bi or multicultural way, causes fragmentation which manifests the effects of colonisation (Smith 1999:97). Increased fragmentation serves to injure the identity position of Maori. The debate lies between the need for healthy identification which acknowledges all the identities. This is in opposition to the tangata whenua position which would not align itself with a process that served to further colonise through fragmentation of the already fragile Maori cultural identity.

The women in this research acknowledge their Pakeha whakapapa but have chosen to make a personal and political choice to identify with their tangata whenua identity. This position involves reclaiming and redefining one's identity as part of the tangata whenua society. The multicultural and bi-cultural arguments serve to perpetuate the effects of colonisation. This is clearly

inappropriate and in opposition to the position of the white Maori women who took part in this research.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: HE KORERO O NGA WAHINE

In this chapter, eight white Maori women who identify as Maori share their stories about their identity. The women speak of political and personal markers of Maori cultural identity. Each participant gave permission for her name to be used in this research. Hence the following condensed narratives are in the 'first person', the voice of each woman tells her own story in her own words. The participants are introduced in order of age.

### INTRODUCING THE PARTICIPANTS

Ephra was born on the 20th of September 1923. Her iwi is Te Atiawa and Ngati Mutunga ki Waiwhetu and her hapu is Te Matehou. Her Maori grandmother was born at Waiwhetu in 1860 and married Ephra's English grandfather and settled in the Wairarapa. Ephra's father was Maori but did not identify as Maori and her Mother was of English and Irish descent. Ephra was raised in a Pakeha way.

*We grew up in country towns. We certainly didn't grow up in any tribal way.*

Ephra did not have Maori cultural knowledge passed on to her. In contrast to this, today Ephra has extensive networks both tribal and city based. Ephra is well known and a much loved lecturer at university who strives to make pathways for Maori at all levels.

Anne is from Ngati Kahungunu and was born in 1939 in Invercargil. Her father was from Ngati Kahungunu and her mother was Scottish. Unlike her two brothers, Anne and one sister identify as Maori. As a child growing up in the 1940s and 1950s, Anne's lifestyle was predominantly Pakeha and urban. Maori cultural knowledge was passed on to Anne by her Grandmother and she

has passed on cultural knowledge to her children. In the 1990s Anne and her family run a business. She is professionally a Social Worker and family court counsellor.

Jill was born in 1952. Her father is from Ngati Raukawa and Ngati Wehiwehi. Her mother is Pakeha of Irish extraction. She was raised in Porirua in a suburban environment mainly with her mother's side of the family. Jill has four siblings who all differ in the degree in which they identify as Maori or Pakeha. Jill and her husband have nurtured their children's identity through their involvement in Kohanga Reo and bi-lingual and total immersion education.

Kathryn was born in 1952 and *"both parents are Maori but don't particularly look Maori"*. Her father is from Ngati Raukawa in Otaki and her mother is Ngati Toa. Kathryn was raised in a tribal environment and continues to be involved with her iwi. Kathryn and her three siblings all identify as Maori, although involvement in Maori activities varies for all of them. Kathryn is raising her children within the kohanga movement, with iwi contact and to know about their Maori identity.

My name is Kelly and I was born in 1958. My father is Maori from Ngati Tukorehe, Ngati Wehiwehi, and Ngati Raukawa ki te tonga. Although he is proud to be Maori he does not identify on paper as Maori. My mother is Pakeha of Danish descent. We were raised within a predominantly Pakeha and urban lifestyle. My brother is Pakeha from my mother's first marriage and my sister and I are both Maori but, unlike me, she does not identify as Maori. Today I am researching this topic and raising my son with te reo Maori through Kohanga Reo to enhance his identity.

Christina was born in 1963. Her mother is Pakeha and her father is from Ngati Kahungunu. Christina was brought up in a Pakeha environment. She and her older sister identify as Maori, her father and the rest of her siblings do not.

Christina resides in Wellington with her partner and children. She teaches in a total immersion Maori classroom and is committed to passing on te reo Maori to her children.

Heni was born in 1966. Her father is Maori from Ngati Raukawa and Ngati Porou, her mother is Australian. Heni identifies strongly with Ngati Raukawa as she grew up with close connections to that iwi and involvement with her marae there. All of Heni's sisters are obviously Maori in appearance and identify as Maori and are involved in iwi and other Maori activities.

Kathie was born in 1971. Her great-grandmother is Maori from Ngati Porou. Her mother is Maori, acknowledges her lineage but does not formally identify. Her brother is just beginning to identify with Kathie's support. Her father is Pakeha. Kathy has recently become a mother and graduated with a Bachelor of Education. She is determined that her children will at least have their reo through Kohanga.

The participants are all white Maori women who are affiliated to tribes throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. They all identify as Maori and at the time of the interviews for this project ranged in age from 27 to 74 years. While some of the participants were raised within Maori lifestyles most were raised within Pakeha lifestyles. Six of the participants had Maori fathers and Pakeha mothers. One participant's parents were both Maori. One participant had a Maori mother and Pakeha father. Six of the women are the only ones, or along with one of two of their siblings, to identify as Maori. All of the participants show a variety of characteristics particular to Maori cultural identity, but for the two women who were raised within their tribal areas their entire families identify as Maori. This may indicate that tribal involvement for white Maori could be a factor which enhances identification as Maori.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF IDENTITY

A report by the Maori Studies Department at Massey University (Te Hoe Nuku Roa 1996:7) suggests seven characteristics of Maori cultural identity which are based on self identification as Maori rather than biological measures of identity. These are: self identification, whakapapa (ancestry), marae participation, whanau (extended family), whenua tipu (ancestral land), contacts with Maori people and Maori language. In some instances identity characteristics could be viewed as authenticity tests of what is an "authentic" indigenous person. Tests such as these can serve to silence groups within the indigenous society such as women and those whose 'blood quantum' is said to be 'too white' (Smith 1999). This argument is based on biological criteria whereas the characteristics presented by Te Hoe Nuku Roa are based on self identification and are essentially sociological.

I have chosen to use the identity characteristics as a guide to the potential influential factors which may have assisted the women to identify as Maori. Some of these markers will now be discussed in relation to the women's stories.

### Whanau

The literature review highlights the role whanau and the environment play in identity development. For Maori, whanau or extended whanau have the responsibility of passing on and nurturing cultural knowledge such as whakapapa.

Firstly, for white Maori, the ability to self identify is dependent on whanau giving the whakapapa knowledge to them. If this does not happen then the option to identify as Maori is not available. If the whanau do not pass identity awareness on to their children this can lead to a gradual loss of knowledge, which will affect identity. Awareness of whakapapa then, is an indication of

cultural knowledge and central to their ability to link to their Maori cultural identity.

Whanau influence on identity was experienced differently for the participants. For example Anne born in 1939 recalls how hard the area of identity was for her father: "*I think that he thought that he had to be Pakeha. He was tortured about it and not able to live knowing who he was.*" The success of the assimilation process of colonisation left many Maori believing that they either were or had to be Pakeha (Stewart-Harawira 1993:29). This appears to be the case with Anne's father and may have resulted in him raising his children within a Pakeha lifestyle. Five of the participants' Maori parents did not identify as Maori. Of the three women whose parents did identify as Maori, all were involved in their iwi as young children and continue to be involved today. This indicates that identification for these women was easier because their parent identified, a condition which also gave them access to Maori cultural knowledge.

In contrast, Kathie born in 1971, talked about wanting to explore her identity further and not being discouraged from doing so by her parents: "*There were no barriers.*" Kathie is the youngest participant and her parents would have raised her during the Maori renaissance. This was a time of heightened and, consequently, positive awareness which would have encouraged Kathie to identify as Maori. There were also more choices available to Kathy than there were for those born prior to 1953. In total, six of the participants were raised within Pakeha lifestyle. Kathryn and Heni were raised within iwi and marae lifestyles and were aware of their Maori whakapapa.

#### Awareness of Maori Whakapapa

For white Maori, another factor which affects identifying as Maori is awareness of whakapapa. Ephra was born in 1923. In the 1920s - 1930s she was not raised with the open knowledge that she was Maori:

*As a child I remember seeing a photo of my grandmother and commenting in somewhat amazement 'is that my grandmother? she's maori', my mother saying to me 'oh didn't you know'.*

Ephra's mother made light of the fact that Ephra's grandmother was Maori. This would have occurred in a social climate which did not support identity difference (Spoonley 1988). Also, people who were less than half-caste Maori were legally defined as Pakeha (Metge 1976:41). This climate promoted an environment where one's whakapapa was hidden or denied out of a belief that it was best for the child.

Unlike Ephra, Anne grew up with an awareness of being Maori:

*I was aware of who I was when I was rowing up because my dad just kept our "Maoriness" very much at the fore all my life. I have a very strong spiritual feeling and awareness which has always been there as that bit of preciousness that belongs to me. I have a belief that it is within the women of my family but not within the men. It was definitely there with my grandmother. I felt a connection with her that was quite different to anything else. We lived in a very Pakeha world but the knowledge and that feeling of link and tie to something which is "other" has always sort of been with me.*

Growing up with obviously Maori whanau provided Anne with visual affirmation of her Maori identity. This has also provided Anne with a spiritual link, one that she associates with her kuia and Maori identity.

Jill's awareness of being Maori was not linked to a cultural identity:

*I can't place the time when I identified, I was aware that Dad's family were Maori and Mum's were Pakeha, I never thought of myself or Mum and Dad as Pakeha or Maori. I never had that concept of what I was or what Mum was or Dad was, it was just my family.*

At this time assimilationist ideas of a racial "melting pot" existed with the aim of producing racial harmony (Spoonley 1988). This encouraged the belief that all people are the same or "one people". This has made it difficult for people

to identify as either Maori or Pakeha and promoted the notion of a "non-race" or non - identification with a cultural identity (Root 1995).

Kathryn was very aware of her Maori identity:

*When it was meal time... feeding everyone who was within ear shot was the accepted protocol. Nanny and Koro would korero Maori with the aunts and uncles. Our whanau always just arrived and you got mattresses out or slept on the floor. Down at the marae we got to help with the dishes or got yelled at by aunty so and so who made sure we were last in line for kai and that we stood back for the manuhiri.*

Belonging to a marae and participating in marae, whanau and iwi occasions is a further marker of identity. These factors would have contributed to Kathryn identifying as Maori.

Awareness of my own Maori identity was in conflict with unspoken mores:

*As the eldest mokopuna I was raised by my kuia. I therefore knew I was Maori and was proud of that. Some of Dad's side of the family were obviously Maori, both his parents spoke Maori fluently and were raised in a very traditional way and yet a great deal of our lifestyle was Pakeha. I was also, aware of this unspoken belief that to "go the Pakeha way" was better.*

The success of the assimilation policies and their affect on the identity formation process is evident in this case. This was because identifying as Maori for the generations before had been fraught with the painful effects of assimilation. They told the following generations to identify as Pakeha but to be proud of one's Maori identity. This translates to keep your Maori identity safe by hiding it. Pretend to be Pakeha. Identifying as Pakeha may be safer, but it also denies the Maori identity.

Christina became aware of her Maori whakapapa when she was seven or eight:

*I heard my Dad talking to a couple of kuia and they were speaking Maori to him and I was shocked. I didn't realise that he knew Maori*

*or could speak any Maori and wondered what the connection was. My nanny was Maori and that was a part that I wasn't aware of.*

Christina did not know about her Maori kuia. Whether this was a conscious or unconscious omission, the result was that if Christina had not stumbled upon this information she could today still have no awareness of her Maori identity.

Like many Maori most of the participants were raised within a social climate which did not promote the positive aspects of being Maori. This climate did not support identity difference or anything that detracted from the 'one people' concept. The defining of Maori through assimilation policies left Maori believing that Pakeha lifestyles and identifying as Pakeha rather than Maori was the option for survival. For the participants, a combination of these social factors meant that knowledge regarding their whakapapa, cultural practices and, therefore, awareness of themselves as Maori was hidden, denied or minimalised.

In other cases there was awareness of being Maori but this was not reflected anywhere in their upbringing, making identification as Maori difficult. Notwithstanding identifying as Maori still occurred for the participants. One of the factors which may have supported this was that the women were all raised around whanau and therefore had potential access to knowledge of whakapapa.

In addition, four were raised around whanau who were obviously Maori and three had whanau who were involved at an iwi and marae level. The combination of these factors provided awareness of whakapapa and of themselves as Maori. The two participants who were raised within iwi and marae lifestyles had little difficulty identifying as Maori, perhaps because of these environments.

The elder of this group, and one other, were not told of their Maori whakapapa and did not realise they were Maori until they either saw a photograph or heard a member of their family speaking in te reo Maori. Both women have had to begin their identity journeys with whakapapa research as a means of regaining the cultural knowledge that was initially denied to them.

### Cultural Knowledge

Culture is socially constructed (Spoonley 1988) and practised by members of that culture (Caloun 1995:93). These cultural rules, roles and traditions are passed on from one generation to another (Root 1996) as a means of retaining those practices (Karetu 1990:112-117). This is referred to in this research as taonga tuku iho (cultural inheritance) a pillar of the "Nga Pou Mana" model of cultural identity (Durie et al. 1995:3). Its importance centres around whether or not it is passed on. This denies access to cultural knowledge and therefore influences one's ability to identify as Maori. For example the cultural knowledge that Ephra has today has been gained through years of research and reclaiming through her involvement in Maori society and activities.

Anne's grandmother, who lived with them intermittently, passed on some cultural knowledge about whakapapa. Other aspects of cultural knowledge were rediscovered through personal research and contact with whanau who are involved at her marae. Jill's father was in contact with his iwi and marae. Both Kathryn, born in 1952 and Heni, born in 1966 were raised with Maori cultural knowledge. They were supported by family and their local communities which enhanced the formation of their Maori identity. As a consequence, these two participants strongly identify as Maori.

Today, Kathie is searching for information about her hapu and whakapapa. This form of knowledge is considered to be a marker of personal identity (Durie et al. 1996:7).

I grew up hearing te reo and knowing something about where I was from but have had to reclaim additional cultural knowledge through research and involvement in Maori activities.

Ephra, Christina and Kathie were brought up knowing very little about Maori culture. As a consequence they reclaimed knowledge through research and involvement in Maori activities. Like many Maori, six of the women had to search for further cultural knowledge about their Maori identity. Because it had not been passed on it was lost to them. Two of the women discovered their cultural link by accident as cultural knowledge had not been handed down to them. In contrast Kathie does not know where she is from:

*I do not know where on the coast I come from, where my marae is or where my hapu is.*

Hence, there was therefore no cultural knowledge passed on to Kathie resulting in the loss of whakapapa knowledge in her whanau. Cultural knowledge is then central to identity. As children the participants all had varying degrees of access to cultural knowledge ranging from immersion to very little. Those with little knowledge were able to learn this through involvement in Maori activities.

#### Involvement in Maori Activities

Involvement in Maori institutions and society is an additional marker of Maori cultural identity (Durie 1997:58). For instance, Ephra has enjoyed many years of involvement in Maori social and cultural life:

*I really enjoy my contacts, being a member of the Rangitane Maori Women's Welfare League and I enjoy my Maori friendships.*

Anne has similar feelings:

*I have done lots of work with Maori in my working life and I have always felt very connected and gained a lot of pleasure from working with my own people.*

Christina adds:

*I'm happy with who I am and I am doing what I want to do and that is teaching in an immersion unit. That has been really important to me and that is all part of how I feel about myself and where I fit in to the whole picture.*

Ephra, Anne and Christina have access to, and participate in, Maori activities through their work and other networks. Jill has access through her work, her children's participation in Kohanga, bi-lingual and total immersion education and her general involvement in her local community. Kathryn, myself and Heni are involved with their iwi and nurture their marae involvement whenever possible. Kathie is involved in her partner's iwi and whanau and hopes to one day connect more fully with her wider whanau.

All the participants talked of feeling enjoyment from giving to and being involved within Maori institutions at some level. From the above an additional way for white Maori to be recognised as Maori is, therefore, through involvement in Maori activities. Another theme that came through strongly in the interviews was that of te reo Maori.

### Te Reo

Te reo is an essential part of Maori human development as it makes the link between language and cultural identity significant. The language was the method used to teach through song, stories and karakia the knowledge to be passed on (Tangaere 1997:46).

All the participants were extremely concerned about te reo Maori and its importance in relation to identity. As te reo is a marker of identity (Te Hoe Nuku Roa 1996:7), it is also audible, bypassing the physical appearance of the individual. The importance of the language was referred to by the late Sir James Henare when he gave evidence to the Waitangi Tribunal that there was

no doubt in his mind that the language is crucial to culture and a key marker of cultural identity. 'Ko te reo te mauri o te mana reo'(Waitangi Tribunal Report 1986). The fight to retain the Maori language is an example of Maori efforts to revitalise a positive cultural identity (Durie 1998:59).

For the older participants and those who were unaware of their Maori heritage when they were young, acquiring the language has been difficult.

Ephra who was born in 1923 states: "*I have tried so hard, but I don't speak the language fluently.*" A major decline in te reo was experienced between 1913 and 1953. This is hardly surprising given that Maori children of this era were punished for speaking their language which was in some cases their only language. The language was 'left at the gate' or the speakers of te reo were punished for using it (Waitangi Tribunal 1986:8). Ephra was going to hui at a time when most major land hui and tangi were conducted in te reo Maori. However, Ephra is a second generation, legally defined Pakeha, raised during a time of declining reo. It is unlikely that Ephra would have been able to learn te reo in such a social climate.

Anne was born in 1939 and her experience of te reo is similar to that of Ephra with even less reo being spoken by Maori at this point. Additionally the 1867 Native Schools Act aimed to ensure the assimilation of Maori into Pakeha society by focusing on reading and writing in English. The education system colonised Maori minds and became one of the sites of domination (Walker 1996:2). Anne is also a second generation legally defined Pakeha and a member of the generation that did not receive te reo (Waitangi Tribunal 1986:8-11).

Jill was born in 1952, and has tried to learn te reo Maori for 31 years:

*I have learnt Maori. It is not something I did thirty years ago and then stopped. I have continued to do so but I am still hopeless. I don't know whether it is connected with me personally, whether I have*

*problems or whether it is connected to feelings of identity. So I am very whakama about speaking Maori. I believe that speaking Maori becomes one of the badges of identification.*

Jill was legally defined as Pakeha and was part of the second generation to be raised without te reo. Jill recognises that te reo is a badge or indicator for being Maori and perhaps identifying as Maori. She believes that te reo makes one more easily identifiable or recognisable as Maori. This is particularly important for white Maori who require additional indicators of their identity.

Kathryn, born in 1952, has also had difficulty obtaining te reo:

*The revival with Kohanga, means you need to korero Maori and I can't speak as fluently as I would like. The main difficulty is I think there is a block up here somewhere in my language cortex for learning te reo. I am stuck at Kohanga level. I think that the language is the key, I feel that I could stand up a lot more confidently if I could korero.*

Kathryn has had difficulty learning te reo and the language was not passed down in her family. Her kaumatua may have believed that she would be disadvantaged if they had taught her te reo. Kathryn further links te reo to her lack of confidence. Being able to stand and speak te reo Maori is a strong aspect of Maori culture and central to identity for Maori (Karetu 1990:112-117). Kathryn appears to view her inability to learn te reo as being unique to her situation. In contrast to this is the history of assimilation and how this process affected te reo Maori and the experiences of Ephra, Anne and Jill.

From the beginning of the century policies of assimilation prohibited the use of Maori in school grounds and promoted English as the only language of advancement. Sir James Henare describes it as 'the bread and butter language'. If you wanted to eat then you had to speak English (Durie 1988:60-61).

The prohibition of te reo in schools had a huge impact on kaumatua (Waitangi Tribunal 1986). In the case of my kaumatua, they would not pass on te reo to their children or mokopuna. The move to monolingualism, compounded by urbanisation and the reinforcement of the official policy of "pepper-potting"

homes, created conditioning forces that strongly affected Maori. They believed that the only way their children would benefit from the education system was for them to speak English.

Christina was born in 1963 after the release of the Hunn report (Spoonley 1988). She talked about wanting to learn te reo and once she decided to do so she went from Maori club at school to learning at Teachers College and going on to Waikato University to increase her ability to korero. There were effectively few barriers, although she was legally defined as a Pakeha. Today she is a teacher in a te reo immersion classroom.

Heni was born in 1966 and was determined about having te reo in her life: "I wanted to learn the language particularly because I love the language and I really want to help it." Heni's upbringing instilled in her a love of te reo which has motivated her political desires to save the language. The language is also a way of expressing ones cultural identity when this is not visible. Additionally, Heni grew up in a much more liberal time with heightened awareness and increasing amounts of Maori activism around land and human rights issues (ibid).

Kathie, born in 1971, speaks te reo:

*The thing that frustrates me the most is knowing that I'm Maori but not having had the language follow. Maori language has been lost well and truly in our family and it's really hard work learning a language, when it's your own language. As there was a strong English line that came through, the Maori language should have come through with it. I'm really determined that my son will grow up bi-lingual and if he decides that he wants English to be his first language, well he has that choice to make, where with us, we didn't.*

Kathie was legally defined as Pakeha given that she is less than "half-caste" Maori. She was raised within a Pakeha lifestyle and had no direct access to cultural knowledge. Even though the Maori renaissance in the sixties and seventies was a time of progress for Maori, the loss and damage incurred by whanau and iwi was huge. The figures indicate that by 1975 only 5% could

speak te reo (Waitangi Tribunal 1986:8-11). The near loss of te reo Maori is an example of the damage suffered by Maori. Despite this, Kathie realises that it can be different for her son, given contemporary awareness of the educational needs of Maori and the establishment of Kohanga reo in 1981 (Durie 1988:63-65).

Of the eight participants, two spoke with relative fluency, two had a degree of fluency and four had very little. They all spoke of the importance of te reo as a marker of Maori cultural identity. Until the 1980s there was little encouragement for Maori to retain their own language, traditions, or culture and the Maori language was actively discouraged (Durie, 1998:75).

This would have impacted on the participants. Despite the small sample it is still apparent that these women's stories are a reflection of the times in which they grew up. For example participants born prior to 1953 have little to no te reo Maori speaking skills, (although one is able to read it). These four participants have all attempted to learn te reo, some over long periods of time, but none of them have strong te reo skills. The age of the participants when they began to learn te reo could also be a factor. Of the four participants who were born after 1953, two are fluent speakers and teachers of te reo and two have a degree of fluency and are committed to further learning. The impact of legislation upon attainment of te reo Maori for those women born prior to 1953 is apparent.

Amongst the later group, only one woman was raised within her iwi and with clear access to cultural knowledge. This is an indication of the immense loss of access to cultural knowledge caused by the assimilationist policies. The effects of these processes for Maori were: urbanisation and loss of access to cultural knowledge. The loss of cultural knowledge does not stop someone from being or identifying as Maori. It is when a person is not visibly Maori that not having access to cultural knowledge serves to prevent them from knowing about their Maori identity option.

All of the participants were born prior to the 1974 Amendment to the Maori Affairs Act, which recognised those of Maori descent. Hence the women were legally defined as Pakeha prior to 1974 and yet they all identified as Maori. The younger participants' experiences through the 1960s and 1970s would have been more positively orientated towards identifying as Maori. This is because of: heightened awareness of Maori needs, renaissance protest, policy and structural change. This climate created positive perceptions within society regarding Maori identity (ibid).

For people of Maori descent, processes of colonisation and assimilation have resulted in loss of cultural knowledge such as whakapapa, te reo Maori, and consequently links to marae, hapu and iwi. My findings confirm the statement by Te Hoe Nuku Roa (1996:7-8) that the absence of these essential identity markers has hindered the process of identity formation for both Maori and white Maori in this country.

The attainment of Maori cultural identity is linked to social factors such as te reo Maori (Te Hoe Nuku Roa 1996:18). The strong messages received from the women who participated links te reo Maori to Maori identity. The women spoke of te reo as a marker of Maori identity one which allows them to be recognised as Maori by something other than physical appearance. At a much deeper level the language is the voice of the tupuna, our hearts and a way of linking to one's culture that in turn instills in one confidence and an ability to stand.

## **SUMMARY**

This chapter is summarised using the Te Hoe Nuku Roa markers of cultural identity as a guide. All of the participants identify as Maori. Only one has minimal knowledge of whakapapa, although she is aware of her iwi. Five of the women participate in their marae activities.

Six of the women are involved with whanau. It is difficult to determine the number of women who have whenua tipu (ancestral land) as it was not focused on but it was mentioned by two women. Contact with marae was focused on more strongly by the participants. All of the women have contact with other Maori and are involved in Maori activities. Levels of involvement vary from Kohanga contact and occasional marae contact to involvement with Maori as part of one's work, or a high degree of involvement in many spheres of ones life.

The Te Hoe Nuku Roa study focused on developing cultural identity profiles. Like the findings of this research their report indicates that a secure identity has been denied many Maori (1996:7-8).

In contrast, it is not my intention to measure the cultural identity of the participants, but to utilise the markers as an indication of what may have helped the women to identify as Maori. The markers are symbolic of a potential guide used by western society to measure the cultural identity of Maori, especially white Maori given that there is no colour to indicate their identity. The markers are a general guide which do not take into consideration personal feelings and experiences or structural barriers which may contribute towards or prevent white Maori from identifying as Maori.

## CHAPTER EIGHT: STRUCTURAL BARRIERS TO IDENTIFYING AS MAORI

During the process of conducting this research it became apparent that structural factors, especially legislation have historically defined Maori (Stewart-Harawira 1993:27-34). In keeping with a structural analysis approach I felt it was important to explore the women's knowledge of structural barriers.

Ephra was aware, of how legislation has influenced her fathers Maori identity:

*In my younger days it was the electoral roll. If you were more than half Maori you had to go on the Maori roll if you were under half Maori you had to go on the Pakeha/European roll. If you were half Maori you could choose. My father was half Maori so he chose the European roll.*

Ephra's father was legally defined as a Pakeha. This means Ephra would have been defined in the same way. However, she felt that the changes to the definition of Maori positively influenced the identification process for white Maori. The 1974 Amendment to the Maori Affairs Act and the 1986 electoral roll changed the definition of Maori, gave for example white Maori the option to begin defining themselves as Maori (Pool 1991:14-19).

*Since it has been a descendant of a Maori I think it's made an amazing difference. You can put down if you wish to, if you are a descendent of a Maori, you don't have to, a lot of people don't, they have just assimilated. It has made it possible for more people to identify as Maori.*

Ephra's education and employment situations found her working with Maori. This increased her awareness of legislation and assisted her to identify.

In contrast, Kathryn feels that the census forms do not offer adequate identity options:

*I do have Pakeha tupuna and Maori tupuna but I am Maori and I am also Pakeha I am not just one or just the other and I do have a problem when I have to write down on forms - I often put Maori/Pakeha, I used to put part-Pakeha or part-Maori.*

Census taking requires one to define oneself by ticking one box (Stewart-Harawira 1993:28). Although Kathryn identifies as Maori she would like to claim her Maori and her Pakeha identities on the census form. The necessity of having to make a preferred identity choice is referred to in the literature as a "forced choice" (Root 1996:xix). The literature also highlights the importance of identifying with both aspects of the self if a healthy identity is to be formed (Hershel 1995:170-171).

Heni was aware of the legal definition of Maori and supportive of the right of people to claim their Maori side regardless of amount of Maori whakapapa. Kathryn would like the option to choose both identities. Ephra indicates that the legal definition has had an impact on the identification process. The 1974 Maori Affairs Act is clearly important as prior to it white Maori were denied access to the option of identifying as Maori.

Most of the participants felt the changes in the definition of Maori, from biological measuring to self identification had a positive affect on the identification process.

The North American cultural studies literature states that when one's racial status is constantly determined by others one may begin to question one's identity (Bowles 1993:172). The 1974 Maori Affairs Act, census forms and societal attitudes have historically combined to define white Maori as Pakeha. These factors have combined to create barriers to the women identifying as Maori. The importance for people to define themselves and make their own identity choices is clear and supports the essential role of self identification in the process of identifying as Maori.

### Identifying as Maori

Identifying as Maori means choosing or self identifying as Maori. Self identification has been used for the collection of census data since 1984 as a

means of estimating ethnic identity (Te Hoe Nuku Roa 1996:7). White Maori now have the legal and personal privilege of choosing to identify as Maori even though they are not of colour.

Ephra recalls when she first identified as Maori:

*Being Maori didn't really impinge upon us a great deal and I didn't identify until I was nearly thirty when I went to train as a Social Worker in 1951/52. My first job was with the Department of Maori Affairs, in the early 1950's.*

Ephra identified as Maori at the age of thirty. This occurred while she was doing a university diploma in an environment where there were few Maori. As a consequence, Ephra was sought after by Maori communities as she was a trained Maori professional at a time when these were few.

One strategy used by Pakeha to discourage white Maori from identifying as such is "divide and rule." As Heni recalls:

*I certainly heard a lot of those kinds of things that Pakeha people say, like "we don't mean you" and "how can you be? You don't speak, look or talk like a Maori" and "what are you doing here, kind of thing".*

The identity choice is met with resistance as this form of self-identity challenges previous forms of classification, rules and the thinking of the person who is reacting to the situation (Root 1996:10).

It is apparent that identifying as Maori is not an easy option. Given the structural barriers of the past, the research required to regain lost cultural knowledge and social attitudes which do not accept and prefer to deny a racial enigma. I wonder if this social reaction is reiterated within the immediate whanau?

### Identifying Differently from ones Whanau

When white Maori identify as Maori it often means identifying differently from one's whanau (Root 1996:10). This often indicates that the rest of the whanau are either opposed to or do not understand the choice. Personal strength and commitment to recovering or retaining one's Maori identity requires white Maori to continue to identify as Maori in a whanau environment that does not support this choice. Christina talks about her mother questioning her choice of identity:

*Christina's mother: 'Oh you have probably got more of something else'.  
Christina: 'I acknowledge that there are all these different parts and all these different cultures that have gone into make me the person that I am but that Maori part of me is really important to me.'*

When white Maori choose an identity that differs from their parents, this may make the parent feel that the child is less like them or less theirs. As a result there is a tendency for the parent to promote a non-race based identity and for the Maori identity to be minimalised (Zack 1996:161).

Kathie's experience was similar:

*It was really important for some reason to state the amount of Maori blood, almost to play down how much Maori blood there was.*

Parents may not be aware of the identity process their children face because it is different from their own. In this case the parent may make an identity choice for their child which will be socially acceptable and not challenge the rules around singular racial identities (Root 1996:10-11).

Kathie simply states: "*and so I am it*". This refers to her singular role in the family as pursuer of things Maori and the sole member to also identify as Maori. Siblings can have different experiences and goals which guide their experiences of themselves in the world (Root 1996:11).

In the case of white Maori it may have been easier for parents to choose the identity that matched their children's colour. If this happens and later the child wishes to identify as Maori, it may mean being the sole person within that immediate whanau group to identify. For example, Kathie's sibling has accepted and retained the Pakeha identity. Encouragement from events in the wider societal environment may also support identification for white Maori. Many of the participants grew up in a time where they experienced awareness during the Maori renaissance period of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. This affected how people felt about being Maori and as a consequence whether white Maori identified as Maori.

Identifying as Maori was also a political act which increased the number of Maori, and potentially altered the balance of power. Identifying as Maori is also about reclaiming what has been lost or denied through generations of assimilation. It is also about reversing the affects of genocide. White Maori represent the line between total genocide and power and privilege to the degree that only one or two Maori survivors exist in some whanau. To identify differently from one's whanau is a personal desire and choice, but it also comes from an awareness of the injustices of the past. The political aspect of this choice has the potential to alter the balance of the power relationship between the two cultural identities contained within the white Maori individual.

### Two Cultural Identities

Having the choice of two identities is a privileged but difficult position to be in.

Jill recalls:

*I think being 'white' and being Maori has some real disadvantages, when you should get the best of both worlds I'm finding that you often get the worst of both worlds.*

Receiving the best of both worlds or having a foot in both worlds is a comment commonly made about people of mixed heritage. The expectation is that you are able to benefit from the good things associated with both Maori and Pakeha cultures and lifestyles. For example the beauty of te reo Maori and the cultural qualities associated with the various parts of the United Kingdom. I feel that Jill is also referring to the difficulty of belonging to more than one culture and the imbalance in the power relationship between the two cultures. The Pakeha culture is supported in every way within this predominantly Pakeha society. The Maori culture is not. Hence to be both is an unrealistic goal as the Pakeha cultural identity will remain dominant over the Maori cultural identity.

My experience was:

*I grew up knowing two lifestyles and two sets of behaviours which I learnt to switch from and to whenever the situation changed. It was very confusing especially when something that was done on one side was clearly not o.k. on the other side. I grew up with an awareness of the differences between Maori and Pakeha and knew that I was treated differently by each group. For instance Maori may look surprised upon meeting me for the first time, but immediately move past that to talk about whakapapa which allows us to explore how we are connected. For Pakeha however I find that there is disbelief followed by further denial and sometimes hostility. It is like I have betrayed them in some way.*

It is clear that two culturally different lifestyles reside closely together in my life and that both reacted differently to the ambiguity of my identity. This is a reflection of how differently white Maori are received by the two cultural groups. The reactions possibly stem from, and are a reflection of, the imbalance in power between the two peoples. The person who is raised with more than one cultural identity is likely to experience strong pressure to choose one identity. This decision will be encouraged at a societal level within the census- taking and within whanau.

For some white Maori increased awareness of the injustices faced by Maori and the realisation of how little is left of the cultural knowledge and language in

one's own whanau will increase the desire to do something to right the wrongs. The added awareness that one cultural identity has power over the other combines to create an intolerable situation with no choice but to identify as Maori. Some Maori might also call this the will of our tipuna. Holding two cultural identities within the one person is difficult. In addition to this when a minority identity choice is made the majority group may react in a hostile manner towards another perceived white person who identifies with the oppressed group of colour. This is described by Root (1996:8) as a kind of hostile disbelief.

This is a reaction based on the belief that the person who is not obviously Maori is a "race traitor" (ibid). The view is that she/he has chosen to be Maori and given up the privilege of the majority white group and that this choice is made even though she/he is a member of the white group. The majority group may be uncomfortable with the thought that they may not be after all the large majority they have always believed themselves to be.

### Declaring your Identity

A term created by the participants is that of 'declaring' which describes the act of declaring yourself to be Maori when you feel you are being perceived as a Pakeha. Anne describes declaring as: *"To feel that you are a Maori and have to explain it and not just be accepted as who you are"*. This is the painful aspect of declaring, but the positive side is that: *"it cuts down on the amount of racist stuff that you have to deal with"*.

Kathie speaks out strongly in favour of declaring: *"You have to be really forward and really bold and say you are Maori, although you don't look it. 'He Maori ahau', 'I am Maori' - that's the reality"*.

Declaring is a way of clearing the way forward and certainly of clarifying confusion about 'what you are'. Although declaring is a way of clarifying

other people's confusion it can also lead to justification of one's identity choice. As Jill has found:

*I have to give my whakapapa to start off with and I feel sometimes when I do that I am selling myself. I don't want to have to be in the position of spelling out my whakapapa and saying where all the connections are.*

Jill's lack of visibility means she sometimes feels that she has to prove that she is Maori. Root describes this as "justifying ethnic legitimacy" (Root 1996:9). This can involve tests of power and requires the individual to exaggerate caricatures of ethnic and racial stereotypes. The initiators of such tests usually win because they create the rules. Those undertaking the test do so to be accepted (Freire 1972)

For white Maori to be true to themselves and to ensure that they are defined correctly, it is important that they declare themselves to be Maori in Pakeha and Maori circles so that everyone is clear about their identity.

White Maori have the right to choose in which situations they wish to declare themselves. However, if one is faced with a potentially hostile or confrontational situation, safety and well being should be a priority (Root 1996). Generally, the women tended to surround themselves with people who support and understand their identity choice rather than face constantly declaring their identity.

Moreover for white Maori to identify as Maori they must self-identify at a personal level. Other options are enrolment on the electoral roll as Maori and selecting the Maori option for the census forms. This may also involve identifying differently from one's whanau who may not understand the grounds for such a choice. The reasons vary from social awareness of injustices, personal desire, need and a political awareness and desire to change the balance of power.

Therefore when white Maori choose to identify as Maori they are choosing a path that requires them to explain their decision and declare their choice of identity. The justification of one's identity choice only becomes necessary when one's identity is not visible.

## CHAPTER NINE: VISIBILITY

Many of the personal identity issues faced by the women centred around colour which necessitates further exploration of the term. Colour is a biological measure of ethnicity central to phenotypical belief systems (Spoonley 1984:15). Within this belief system people are identified by skin colour and appearance as these are markers of identity in a racist society (Carter 1998:258). In addition to this whiteness is a political definition (Ware 1992) which links the participants to majority group status and power. Power is defined by Foucault as being present in all social relationships (Munford 1995).

For white Maori their colour makes them appear as Pakeha. Their Maori identity is not visible unless accompanied by obvious markers of cultural identity such as colour, language or involvement in Maori activities. When the tangata whenua identity is not visible one must constantly speak out or declare ones identity in order to avoid assumptions being made about one's identity. For instance, when Pakeha assume that you are from the dominant group they may be openly racist about Maori in front of you. This places white Maori in the position of having to choose whether to address the racism or not.

Ephra grew up hearing openly racist comments about Maori:

*Attitudes towards Maori in my day were very dismissive of Maori, for example, I do remember hearing in my growing up days that there was no use in educating a Maori, they only went back to the mat.*

Ephra's comments reflect attitudes towards Maori in the 1930-40s when she was growing up. These types of comments would not have encouraged white Maori to identify as Maori. "Passing" is defined in the literature as choosing to pass as part of the dominant group. This is something that white Maori are able to do because the tangata whenua identity is not visible. This is a choice that only those who are not of colour can make.

Anne talks about her thinking on this subject:

*You can pass by and pretend to be Pakeha but there is a point where if it is strong enough in you that you have to do something about it. Being fair skinned enables you to live in those two worlds although that's a real 'catch 22'. I think there was a time in my life when I used it telling some people and not others quite deliberately and with absolute knowledge of what I was doing. I am not proud of that but I think that was the way that you dealt with the difference. I grew silent about it as a way of looking after that very strong feeling I have. Being not obviously Maori it has been something that I've been able to choose to share or not to share.*

As a protective measure Anne learned to hide her Maori identity. When an aspect of oneself is not visible then it is in a sense hidden. Lesbian writers refer to this as being in the 'closet'. It is described as "a void created by fear on one side and silence on the other" (Bennett 1996:4). Anne's comments also indicate shame at having denied a part of herself, but realisation that eventually you cannot deny that part no matter what the circumstances. Some studies suggest that part of the developmental process may include the trying on of each parental racial identity (Hershel 1995:171). This healthy practice is hindered by a society which expects people to choose alliances among one of the groups to which they belong.

Jill refers to 'passing' as an option:

*I think the easier option is to go for your Pakeha side because you then are not challenged and you don't have to speak up. It is not a matter of denying one or the other, it would be the easier option.*

Some of the women have "passed" as a means of self- protection or from not knowing what to do or because they want a rest from continually justifying their existence. Most of the women considered 'passing' to be shameful. Whilst 'passing' refers to mixing with the dominant group, in order to do so one must deny the tangata whenua identity. These difficulties are unique to the white Maori situation partly because their identity choice is not visible.

Being white left some of the participants feeling guilty at having escaped the worst racism. As Ephra comments:

*I have always felt a bit of a hypocrite because it is easier in mainstream society if one is not obviously Maori. I have always felt like I have had an unfair advantage in our society. In many ways it has influenced me markedly in that I have not pushed myself forward in Maori settings because I don't feel I have earned it. I haven't had to go through the 'sturm and drang' that a lot of people who look Maori have, people don't talk about colour any more. They just sort of ignore it but it really fixes people as to how other people react to them and how the system reacts to them and I never had to go through some of that so I really don't have the right; and I wasn't bought up on a marae.*

Ephra feels that her upbringing and colour gave her more privileges and she is, therefore not entitled to be Maori in the same way as those who are of colour and less privileged. She was also raised without cultural knowledge so she does not push herself forward in Maori settings.

Some of the racist comments that white Maori hear from Pakeha about Maori rise from historical attitudes about racial purity (Wilson 1987:4) in order to protect their position of power and maintain their majority status

I believe that my appearance directly affects how I am treated:

*I don't think I have an option as my colour determines how I am treated. Because of the colour of my skin I am automatically in receipt of the many privileges that society has to offer.*

White Maori are then judged on appearance to be Pakeha and, therefore, it is assumed that they also have access to privilege and power associated with this social status. The literature clearly states that white society is based on hidden rules of purity stemming from scientific race theories of the 19th century. Because the ingrained values of a predominantly white society do not give access to people of colour, if white Maori declare their Maori identity access is not guaranteed. While it is clear that white Maori do not experience racism directly from Pakeha. It is only when they declare themselves to be Maori that Pakeha attitudes change towards them. It is at this point that white Maori

begin to experience racism, but still not to the degree that people of colour do and some of the participants felt guilty about this.

It is possible for white Maori to pass as Pakeha because they are not visibly Maori and because their colour links them to those of majority group status. An alternative is the borderlands, where two cultures overlap and where your very existence is a challenge to both cultures. It is where the experiences of privilege and power are on one side and loss of cultural knowledge resulting in repression of identity are on the other. The two are at extreme ends of a continuum. Given all of these factors how then are the women left feeling about their appearance?

#### **PARTICIPANTS FEELINGS ABOUT THEIR APPEARANCE**

Kathryn has a desire to be darker:

*I have always wanted to be darker, I will probably suffer from skin cancer from being in the sun although I usually do get a tan.*

Heni's feelings about her appearance are very strong:

*It pisses me off that I don't look brown so I can't think of anything positive about looking fair and feeling or being Maori. It wouldn't matter if I didn't feel it or want to be. Being Maori is a big part of my life, Maori language is my passion. It would probably make it easier if I didn't look so pale.*

Heni wishes that she looked Maori so she wouldn't have to live with and deal with other peoples' confusion.

Kathie feels similarly to Heni:

*It would be nice to be obviously Maori so that you wouldn't have to be constantly on the back and defending yourself, having to state all the time 'I am Maori'. As long as I can remember I've always wanted to have darker skin and I still yearn for that because I am so fair. It's not about the logistics of being Maori, but about the logistics of being white. It would be just so much easier to have dark skin.*

Not all the participants comments reflect a desire for their appearance to match their identity. Kathryn, Heni and Kathy felt this would make their lives less complicated and them more easily accepted by other Maori.

Identity formation is reliant on being accepted by the group with whom you identify. For white Maori identifying as Maori it is important that they be accepted by other Maori.

### **ACCEPTANCE OF WHITE MAORI BY MAORI**

Acceptance precedes belonging and for Maori it is associated with belonging to a known cultural tradition which is the key to identity (Benton 1981:79-80). Therefore, acceptance is an important part of the process of identifying as Maori, for white Maori. Upon identifying as Maori at nearly thirty years of age Ephra found herself in a work environment with other Maori. Maori Affairs wished to employ a person with a social work qualification:

*The others didn't speak to me for quite some time, after all who the hell was I? They didn't know me.*

Ephra was not automatically accepted by her Maori co-workers.

Jill's experience indicates:

*Because I speak on things Maori but I look like a Pakeha, Maori listening think "who is this arrogant Pakeha talking about things Maori".*

Therefore, if white Maori are not accepted by those with whom they identify then feelings of rejection and identity confusion may arise (Hershel 1995:169-170).

Kathryn grew up in a small town where everyone knew her and that she was Maori. Hence, moving away and being treated as a Pakeha was a new experience for her.

*The attitudes are more from Maori people than from the Pakeha. The attitudes are more what is supposedly seen as negative things from Maori when you are Pakeha-looking. It takes a while to actually get accepted. Going through the Kohanga I was seen as the Pakeha.*

Initially both Pakeha and Maori interact with white Maori as perceived Pakeha.

Christina recalls being unsure about whether or not she should follow Maori protocol in certain situations because of her appearance:

*I never know whether I should go up and mihi in the usual way and give people a kiss because in the past I have had people that have really pulled away from me, when I have done it so I have remained a bit cool about things like that. To anyone I look very Pakeha and that is just how it is and I just accept that as being part of life and unless people get to know me they don't realise that there is that side to me.*

It is difficult initially for white Maori, especially when they are involved in Maori activities with Maori who don't know them.

Even when 'white' Maori have access to cultural knowledge and/or te reo their appearance dictates whether they are initially accepted or not. This kind of experience would encourage one to hold back and perhaps not participate fully at a traditional Maori protocol level.

Heni is aware of feelings of resentment by Maori towards Pakeha who become experts on Maori kaupapa. In the first instance white Maori can be perceived in this way:

*I dislike everyone thinking I am Pakeha and yet it is no ones fault because obviously physically it is hard to tell. I can understand not knowing I am Maori when they first see me but when I say I am Maori I still get looks of disbelief often for a long time. When I show that I*

*am really committed to Maori things I wish that would turn it around. It doesn't always. There is often a bit of a barrier for awhile. Because I don't look Maori it sometimes makes it more difficult for people to believe that I have something to offer. You sometimes see a look on people's faces and you see it as a look of slight hostility or a look of aloofness.*

Looking like the 'other' culture, the dominant culture, like those who have the power, means that initial and often lingering negative reactions to 'white' Maori abound. There are other reasons for the hesitation of some Maori towards white Maori. For Maori, there have been many changes and one significant change has been the degree of intermarriage between Maori and Pakeha (Durie 1994:49). This has resulted in the changed appearance of Maori and the 'whitening' of Maori. This has in turn created a dilemma for everyone regarding white Maori. It is apparent that the saying "if a Maori identifies as Maori then they are Maori" is not always going to be the case. Looking like the other culture which has the power means that some Maori have an initial and often lingering negative reaction to white Maori. To identify as Maori when you are white is problematic for all concerned. The participants, therefore, identified some areas in which they would like to see changes occur. These are addressed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER TEN: WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE

### AWARENESS/EDUCATION/ACCEPTANCE

All of the participants wanted things to change for themselves but in many instances the women commented about hoping that things would be different for their children or the next generation.

Ephra comments: "*I think it is pretty important that families help the children to identify.*" She refers to the difficulty associated with the process of identifying and the need to assist children with this process. Anne states:

*I believe that there are many people around who are like us and they don't know how to deal with it, don't have that same sense I have, that very strong powerful message all the time. I think that where kids get that message that's really a valuable thing.*

Anne refers to the spiritual aspects associated with 'being Maori', the sense of belonging and feelings of wellbeing when you are with other Maori. She also refers to the need to assist those who have no way of finding that part of themselves without support.

Jill refers to the need for more awareness:

*There are more white Maori every day and I think there needs to be some sort of consciousness-raising within society.*

Jill is also aware of the growing number of white Maori in our society who are unaware of their identity options. For example the generations of urbanised Maori who may have lost the links to their cultural knowledge and are consequently not aware that identifying as Maori is an option for them. Jill is suggesting that increased awareness and education may assist white Maori and the rest of society to understand the numerous issues associated with this process.

Kathryn expresses her concern:

*Our own children who have the reo and are perhaps even more Pakeha looking, when they leave home they are defined by strangers who don't know their whakapapa.*

How are her children going to be perceived and treated within society when their turn comes to leave home? She talks further about what needs to change:

*Education and awareness of differences...it is o.k. to be different it is o.k. to be the same, to also have an awareness of your own identity.*

I feel that increased awareness of the cultural identification needs of white Maori are needed. In addition, I would like to see white Maori identifying with who they choose and no longer being influenced by the census or statutory definitions. This may mean identifying within the borderland position or as a white Maori which is neither Maori nor Pakeha but both.

Heni comments:

*Awareness and acceptance from everyone. There are a lot of white Maori people out there and just because you are white skinned it doesn't mean they feel any less Maori than someone who is not white and I guess just to be accepting of it.*

Heni is asking for acceptance regarding the ambiguity of the white Maori which will require attitudinal change through awareness by both Maori and Pakeha.

The participants' suggestions for change were for more awareness, understanding and acceptance of their reality or world views through education of their issues. The participants have been brave enough to allow their voices to be heard and this is the beginning of change for them and others that follow.

Another concern from all the participants was for their children, particularly where their children were also white. The desire to make things better for the next generation is strong.

## **SUMMARY**

The women's stories revealed characteristics/ markers of Maori cultural identity which have contributed towards the women identifying as Maori. The participants identified factors such as upbringing, tribal and marae involvement and whether their Maori parent/s identified, as influencing their choice of identification. Additionally, markers such as whanau and whether or not cultural knowledge such as whakapapa was handed down. Knowledge of whakapapa was central to gaining access to the option of identifying as Maori. An additional identity marker for the women was involvement in Maori activities. The women also spoke passionately about the importance of te reo Maori as a marker of identity. When there is no colour to define one's identity, markers of identity are used as indicators. The participants, experiences of Maori cultural identity raised a number of personal issues.

Firstly, structural barriers such as legislation were noted by one participant as preventing identification for white Maori, defining them as Pakeha, denying them access to cultural knowledge and to the option of identifying as Maori.

The devastation experienced by Maori, as a result of colonisation and assimilationist practices is illustrated in the almost complete loss of any Maori cultural knowledge and identity in the whanau of some white Maori. These assimilationist processes have created white Maori through urbanisation and the resulted estrangement and fragmentation of their Maori identity have left some as the only survivors of their whakapapa lines.

White Maori represent both Maori and Pakeha identities which is thought to give white Maori the best of both worlds entitling them to benefit from both

cultures but consequently they end up with the worst of both worlds. This is because what they have on one side is power associated with the colour of their skin and majority group status. On the other hand they have been colonised to the point where they may be the only survivors left in their whanau, with little to no cultural knowledge. The imbalance in power is huge and one can not ignore the damage that the Pakeha culture has inflicted on the Maori culture and hold them equally within oneself.

The participants needed to make an identity choice at some point. This was prompted by upbringing, awareness of the past injustices, the struggles of Maori during the renaissance period and realisation of the personal losses of cultural knowledge. These facts combined with knowledge of the imbalance of power between the two identities assisted these white Maori women to identify as Maori. Upon identifying they were exposed to open racism about Maori, although as the participants are white, they do not experience direct forms of racism, as Maori of colour do.

Because of their appearance they are asked to justify that they are Maori. They experience mistaken identification and Pakeha tactics of divide and rule. In relation to this set of circumstances the participants developed a coping strategy, referred to as 'declaring' or letting others know that they are Maori. This avoids confusion and lessens the likelihood of people being openly racist in front of them.

When they do not declare their identity this can be taken as an act of 'passing' or pretending to be white. As a result some of the women wish that they were more easily identifiable as Maori.

As perceived whites, white Maori face Pakeha expectations that they will identify as Pakeha in accordance with their appearance. When they do not this threatens the majority group status and previous ways of thinking about race.

Of significant importance to the women is being accepted by Maori, as this is the group with whom they identify. Although white Maori are generally accepted by their Maori communities, the issue of power and looking like those who have power over them means that some Maori will have an initial and, in some instances, lingering negative reaction to white Maori, although all of the women in this research were accepted by their Maori communities.

Pakeha reactions towards white Maori are initially accepting based on their appearance. However, once white Maori declare themselves to be Maori, Pakeha tend to disbelieve and deny that the difference exists. Because it is difference which excludes people from entry and maintains white purity and power. They may also feel betrayed by the person that looks like them but identifies as Maori believing them to be a "race traitor".

The personal issues arising from the women's experiences of Maori cultural identity led them to desire change. The participants identified awareness and education as mediums for change. They felt that if there was increased awareness and education of the position of white Maori, that this would promote more acceptance of white Maori. For the participants the journey of identifying as Maori has been difficult and certainly their choice of identity has been made more difficult by a society that does not understand why they have chosen this option. It is the hope of the women that by declaring their position within this thesis that the seed of understanding may begin to form. In addition to this the women hoped that by sharing their stories the journey for other white Maori might be made easier.

Identifying as Maori for white Maori is a difficult, challenging and political act. It is about reclaiming mana and about saying "I will choose to define myself! I will no longer be defined by others"

## CHAPTER ELEVEN: CONCLUSION

### ANALYSIS OF POWER

In accordance with the framework of structural analysis this final section includes an analysis of power. By examining how power relations operate to maintain individuals in marginalised positions we will understand why individuals are powerless and how they can move from this position (Munford & Walsh-Tapiata 1999:13-14). It is important to note that the powerless position in which white Maori, who identify with their singular tangata whenua status, find themselves in has been chosen by them. This research supports their identity choice and views multiple or bicultural identification as part of the colonising process.

Foucault argues from a poststructuralist position that one must understand the world and interpret the meaning within social practices, behaviours and structures by combining the personal and the political. At the same time, one must highlight everyday struggles and link them to social structures (Finch 1984:34) in order to begin an analysis of the power that is present in the social relationship. This is achieved by discussing the key themes which arise in the literature review. In order to understand the operation of power the experiences and perspectives of white Maori women have been explored. The issues arising from the interviews with the women have been examined and then discussed in relation to the literature. An analysis of power is required in order to understand the nature of the power relationship (Munford 1995:27).

My intention is that power relationships and strategies for social change will be identified and by examining the social forces long and short term goals will be achieved (Barndt 1989:7).

## DISCUSSION

According to the literature, white Maori have historically been defined by theories and an analysis of race and racism and labelled by both black and white communities as not possessing enough blood quantum to belong to either. In New Zealand, assimilation and integration policies redefined Maori identity and created white Maori, who were totally defined by legislation which denied them access to the option of identifying as Maori until the 1953 legislation changes to the definition of Maori. The 1974 Maori Affairs Amendment Act later gave white Maori the option to self identify as Maori.

The women talked of factors which influence identification and traditional cultural markers of identity which are important when there are no visible signs of tangata whenua status. The structural barriers to identification as Maori were identified as legislation, loss of cultural knowledge and social forms of discouragement. These barriers were as a consequence of colonisation and the ensuing processes of assimilation and integration hence a political barrier runs parallel with the other barriers.

One of the social barriers was a non race based belief which encouraged people to hide knowledge about Maori whakapapa. Identifying as Pakeha was also promoted as the way to "put bread and butter on the table". In the 1960s - 1980s events changed and the Maori renaissance saw a growing pride in identifying as Maori. A political belief at this time considered that increased numbers of Maori would change the balance of power between Maori and Pakeha.

When selecting an identity white Maori face the imbalance of power contained within the identities. One is powerless and has been colonised to the point of cultural extinction and the other is from the majority group who did the colonising and who maintain their power by using criteria of difference to retain purity of race. This renders white Maori not eligible for entry unless

they do not acknowledge their tangata whenua status by passing as Pakeha.

This represents the imbalance in the power relationship. It is often when white Maori have a combination of knowledge of whakapapa, of the past injustices and of the imbalance in the power relationship that they then seek to change, reclaim and rebuild their tangata whenua status and identities.

In doing so they face open racism about Maori and because of their appearance they are asked to justify their identity choice. They are perceived by everyone as Pakeha hence they are constantly declaring their Maori identity. They face hostility because Pakeha expect that they will identify in accordance with their appearance. When they do not, this challenges previous ways of thinking about race and threatens majority group status. As a result some of the women wish that they were more easily identifiable as Maori.

The literature reveals the importance of identification in relation to belonging. Given that the women identify as Maori it is important that they are accepted by Maori as this promotes belonging. However, because white Maori are perceived as Pakeha in the first instance Maori can react negatively towards them until whakapapa is ascertained.

Although this thesis supports the argument which sees dual/multiple identification as part of the colonising process which Maori have suffered and continue to struggle against to retain their identity. Two arguments are presented in relation to identification. One supports identifying with multiple or dual identities as a healthy identification process which avoids denial of aspects of one's identity. This option involves identifying with two or more identity options and switching between them as situations demand. A border position is also discussed as a resting option between identities. Additionally, manoeuvring amongst several identities inclusive of an indigenous heritage, is to further disempower the already disadvantaged tangata whenua identity. This research does not support this option as it would serve to further colonise

Maori and white Maori. The effects of colonisation are evident in the historical examples of urbanisation, land, language and general cultural loss which resulted in the slow fractionalisation of the Maori identity. The forced removal of the traditional identity and replacement with a foreign western way of being resulted, for some Maori, in an erosion of who they were. The dual or multiple identity option does not offer full development of the Maori cultural identity in a predominantly Pakeha society but instead requires that Maori further integrate the western identities. The Maori identity has suffered much from the effects of colonisation and as a result needs to recover, reclaim and strengthen rather than to be broken down further. The task of holding multiple and different identities within the one person would be difficult to maintain particularly when one is switching between cultural variation and differences in power. This argument does not, therefore, take into consideration the potential differences in culture and power or the perpetuation of colonisation in its approach.

The second argument supports singular tangata whenua identification as both a healthy and political identity option for white Maori. The choice of a single tangata whenua identity does not occur at the expense of the Pakeha identity. For white Maori their Pakeha whakapapa is worn every day and some may also verbally acknowledge this aspect of themselves. The option to identify as Maori represents a choice to develop, to reclaim and to politically align with a part of themselves which was in some cases virtually lost to them.

Identifying as Maori for white Maori is a difficult journey and as a result of this the women would like to see changes through education to promote awareness and acceptance of white Maori and to make the journey easier for other white Maori.

The women who participated in this research are all white Maori who identify as Maori. Their identity choice is as a consequence of a combination of personal, social and political factors. However, they have chosen a minority

tangata whenua position which is contradictory to their appearance and consequently is queried by both Maori and Pakeha. Such an identity decision is not made lightly and requires commitment to maintain. It is clear that white Maori are driven by a desire to reclaim and restore the tangata whenua status for white Maori at a personal and structural level and in doing so strive for more equal balance in the power relationship between Maori and Pakeha.

#### **NOTE FROM THE RESEARCHER**

My personal journey as researcher and participant has resulted in clarification of my own position in society as a white Maori women. This research supports singular tangata whenua identification for white Maori, a decision guided by the literature findings. This was also in support of the current identification choice of the women who acknowledge their personal cultural identities but identify as Maori. The literature, however, supports multiple identification for healthy identification to occur. I recognise that there is difference within all groups of people and aware that some white Maori genuinely identify with two or more of their identities. The answer to this dilemma does not lie within this thesis but is a matter of personal choice. I am aware that this research raises additional questions in relation to white Maori it is my suggestion, therefore, that further research is needed in the general area of identity for white Maori which may offer additional clarification of this subject area.

#### **A MODEL FOR CHANGE**

This model is called 'niho taniwha' and it was designed by Maori and is suited to Maori kaupapa and seeks to assist change within that kaupapa. It is one which John Bradley promoted at Massey University in 1996 and 1997.

MOEMOEA

Create awareness and change at a societal, and structural level so that white Maori may more easily access their Maori cultural identification option and be guided by the world view of other white Maori.

KAUPAPA

Awareness and acceptance of the world view of white Maori

TIKANGA

To conduct more research about white Maori.

TE ARA TAUMATA

Education and promotion of white Maori perspectives as a part of tangata whenua society.

The above mentioned model for change offers a guide to achieving increased awareness and acceptance of white Maori through education. This will also provide a guide for other white Maori who may want to begin defining themselves by identifying as Maori. Paulo Freire describes this as "human vocation and that which distorts this vocation is oppression" (Carter J, 1998:259-261).

White Maori have the potential to see the world from a unique perspective, one which has been negotiated between the dual national identities within Aotearoa. The white Maori perspective has potential for development and offers knowledge based on the experiences gained on the journey and the search for a way to begin defining oneself.

## Appendix I

I N F O R M A T I O N   S H E E T

Project: ` BEING FAIR SKINNED AND MAORI'

Principal researcher: Kelly Bevan

A Master of Philosophy student contactable through  
the Social Policy, and Social Work Department,  
Massey University. (06) 3569099

Supervisor: Rachael Selby

A Lecturer with the Social Policy, and Social Work  
Department, Massey University. (06) 3569099

Transcriber: Kelly Bevan

This is a pilot project for future research on `being fair skinned and Maori'. I invite you to participate in this research and offer you the opportunity to help to build an information resource on this topic to be used as a baseline for further research.

Interviews will take about an hour and will be tape recorded if you are happy with this. My aim is to record your story based on your experiences as a `fair skinned Maori'. If there's a question you don't want to answer, you do not have to. If you have any questions about this research during your participation feel free to ask. You can also choose to stop the interview at any time.

You will receive a transcript of the interview so you may edit any parts that you do not want used.

When the taped interview is no longer required it may be returned to you or destroyed which ever you prefer.

Participation is on a voluntary basis, and is independent of any papers in which any students may be enrolled, or any assessment procedure associated with any course of study.

Although I am the principal researcher I will also be transcribing the taped interviews.

As previously mentioned this is a pilot study hence confidentiality cannot be guaranteed due to the small number of participants in the study.

If you would like a summary of the research findings they will be posted out to you upon completion.

If you have any queries please ask me and I will be happy to answer them. I look forward to interviewing you.

Appendix II

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Project BEING FAIR SKINNED AND MAORI

Principal researcher: Kelly Bevan

Participant's Name: .....

1. I have read the Information Sheet for this research project and my questions about the project have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can ask more questions at any time.
  
2. I understand that I am free to stop the interview at any time, or decide not to answer some of the question.
  
3. I agree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that confidentiality will be difficult to maintain and agree to my name being used in any written or verbal reports about the study.
  
4. I do/do not consent to my interview being audiotaped. I understand that if I do agree to audiotaping, I will receive a transcript of the interview and will be able to cross out any part of the interview that I do not want to be used in any way. When the tape of my interview is no longer required I would like it to be erased/returned to me at the following address:.....  
.....  
.....

5. I understand that if I have any concerns about this project, I can write to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

I Agree/Do Not Agree To Take Part In This Interview.

Signature: .....(Participant)

.....(date)

Interviewer's statement:

I have discussed with ..... the aims of this project and the interview process.

Signature:.....(Interviewer).....(date)

.....(Name of Interviewer, please print)

## Appendix III

INTERVIEWERS PROMPT SHEET

Introduction ie. Name, age, etc.

Parentage/whakapapa ie. personal knowledge/awareness of being Maori.

Upbringing, and Family dynamics ie. Pakeha Mother, and Maori Father,  
Tribal/Urban?

Attitudes ie. Parental/Societal.

The process of identification ie. difficulties/Positive aspects.

Awareness of the concept of 'passing as' or pretending to be white.

Awareness of legislation which may have effected the process of identification  
for 'fair Maori'.

Feelings about 'being fair skinned and Maori' today.

Thoughts about what needs to be changed in society to assist the process of  
identification for 'fair Maori' today.

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## CHAPTER FOUR: THEORETICAL REVIEW

I agree with Smith (1999:28-29) that theory is predominantly from the Western academy which has constructed all the rules by which the indigenous world has been theorised, and thus silencing the indigenous voice.

Smith argues that research is linked in all disciplines to theory and is generated from theoretical understandings (Smith 1999:38) that have oppressed indigenous people. This has resulted in histories being recounted, distorted and in cultural dissection. Smith calls for a stop to Western theory-making about indigenous people. She argues, however, that theory is important for indigenous people as it helps make sense of reality, to deal with contradictions, to plan, to strategise and to take control over their lives. Smith further stresses the need to critically evaluate methods of research and the theories that inform Maori (Smith 199:38-39). In other words, the need to decolonise. This does not mean throwing out all Western theory and research, but coming to know and understand these areas from a Maori perspective and for Maori purposes. The challenge is, therefore, for indigenous scholars to change this. Consequently, I searched for theory that would support and inform the research process and show relevance to my topic on white Maori women. I then critically evaluated the theories and drew out aspects that would support my research. As the women are of Pakeha and Maori parentage I drew on theories which focused on people of mixed heritage.

A great deal of the information concerning people of mixed heritage has been collected while British sociologists have been conducting research on other aspects of race relations. Studies (Wilson 1987) conducted in England from 1940 onwards assumed that mixed race children suffered from identity conflict. It was found that discrimination and prejudice were among the main causes of the problem (Wilson 1987:5-9).

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