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**Teaching New Zealand Histories:
A Policy Watershed or a Watershed Policy?**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

This is a study of the Sixth Labour Government's policy mandating the teaching of New Zealand histories in all schools and kura by 2022, for all levels of the compulsory curriculum (school years 1-10). This research explores the origins of the policy and asks the question why a policy approach was taken, rather than other approaches available to the Government, or the Ministry of Education, to achieve the policy outcomes. Looking at this through the theoretical frameworks of policy anthropology and applying the non-linear thinking of an assemblage methodology, I explore my own perceptions of this policy. I track the way this policy evolved through the documentation, the public consultation on the curriculum changes, and eventual release of the new curriculum and supporting resources. I argue that various human and non-human actors and influences, which I term components, were arranged in such ways that they created an environment, or zeitgeist, which manifested the policy. In taking this approach I sought to avoid accepting explanations that linear chains of causality led to the policy's development. Instead, I sought to perceive the components in the environment as actors in a drama choreographed not by discreet forces, but by their own movements causing their interactions, proximities, and intensities to shape the environment from which the policy emerged. This research does not focus on humans and non-human actors but more on the interactions of forces which were generated as they negotiated the paths and shaped the environment in which they themselves exist.

Keywords:

Anthropology, Aotearoa New Zealand, Assemblage, Curriculum, Education, History, Learning, Policy, Schools, Teaching,

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

The policy press release on September 12, 2019, announcing “NZ history to be taught in all schools” (Ardern & Hipkins, 2019), seemed simultaneously unsurprising but also quite novel. It was unsurprising because the Labour Government and its coalition partners were making a number of policy announcements, altering the course of the ship of state from the direction set by the preceding National Government and novel because this appeared to be rather more than just insisting that schools and teachers teach New Zealand history. I thought it unusual at the time that a policy approach was needed to mandate teaching of history to all 5–14-year-olds. The announcement made an impression on me even though at that time I had no intent of researching the policy. I am not a policy specialist, but, as a resident of Wellington, I have, through my work and personally, frequently encountered policy announcements. Some impacted me but many did not, at least not in any significant way. Yet, I became increasingly interested about how this particular policy was ideated, formed, and implemented. In this announcement, I perceived a notable change in the way we teach, learn, and debate the stories of the past in Aotearoa New Zealand. “Watershed” was the term used by the Minister of Education to describe the change (*Region-specific early battles, migration, to be taught in new history curriculum*, 2021). The term is useful because it describes a dividing point, which determines subsequent flows of water. This is a good metaphor for the way a policy seems to alter the subsequent flow of ideas. The government’s announcement elicited within me conflicting thoughts and emotions, questions, and assumptions. These, I thought, provided reason enough to research this policy.

In this introductory chapter, I replay the policy announcement to introduce the object of my research (the announcement press release text is included as Appendix 1). I will then discuss my initial response to the announcement and outline the questions this research prompted about the policy and, subsequently, I will begin to contextualise history teaching in Aotearoa New

Zealand by discussing some of its features. The chapter concludes with an outline of the thesis structure.

Replaying the Policy Announcement

Each time I reread the policy announcement, I cannot help feeling a little nostalgic for those days before COVID-19 became a part of our lexicon. Then, the policy wording seemed to express a brighter outlook for the future, prompting the Minister of Education, Chris Hipkins, to quip that this was “the most popular policy he had announced, to date” (Wernicki, 2020b, p. 2). The policy below is presented with a commentary intended to weave the elements together, like a story, without distracting from the messages it conveys or seeking to influence the reader’s own interpretation of those messages. I think it necessary to replay this announcement in full as it acts as the principal component of my analysis, which I later describe as a “singularity” because for me its appearance triggered questions about its origins and later prompted observations of its effects. This replaying of the policy announcement through the press release echoes the words of the Cabinet Paper that went to the Social Wellbeing Committee for ratification on 9 September 2019, just days before the announcement (Ministry of Education, 2019a). The announcement may therefore be seen as the performance that made the policy visible to the public as well as an act of performance in the wider drama unfolding in Aotearoa New Zealand at the time.

The wording of the policy announcement itself hinted at the policy intent and some of the antecedent concerns that gave rise to it, without detailing what they were. The dictate the policy is making is summarised in its opening sentence: “New Zealand history will be taught in all schools and kura by 2022, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and Education Minister Chris Hipkins announced today” (Ardern & Hipkins, 2019, para. 1). Although this announcement is ostensibly

about education matters coming from the Minister of Education, the Prime Minister was lending her considerable political weight to the announcement: “This Government is committed to a better New Zealand that we can all be proud of, and which recognises the value of every New Zealander” (Ardern & Hipkins, 2019, para. 2). This seems not to be simply a dry policy announcement but one that attempts to engage with a national esprit de corps, a taken-for-granted feeling of national pride, that seemingly brings all New Zealanders together. The Prime Minister then gave a hint of the policy’s origin: “We have listened carefully to the growing calls from New Zealanders to know more about our own history and identity” (Ardern & Hipkins, para. 3). This suggests that history and identity are somehow related. The Prime Minister continued: “With this in mind it makes sense for the National Curriculum to make clear the expectation that our history is part of the local curriculum and marau ā kura in every school and kura” (Ardern & Hipkins, para. 3). This statement summarises the essence of the change. The National Curriculum will now mandate history teaching. Until this time, schools had the autonomy to operate within a looser framework. The rationale for these changes continues in the policy: “The National Curriculum currently enables schools and kura to decide how New Zealand history is covered, but variation in delivery means too much is left to chance in the teaching and learning of New Zealand history, Jacinda Ardern said” (Ardern & Hipkins, para.4). The Prime Minister concludes with specifying what will be different: “The curriculum changes we are making will reset a national framework so all learners and ākongā are aware of key aspects of New Zealand history and how they have influenced and shaped the nation” (Ardern & Hipkins, para. 5).

The press release includes the specifics of what is understood to be those key aspects of history (unattributed to either the Prime Minister or the Minister of Education): “They will span the full range of New Zealanders’ experiences and are expected to include:

- The Arrival of Māori to Aotearoa New Zealand

- First encounters and early colonial history of Aotearoa New Zealand
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi and its history
- Colonisation of, and immigration to, Aotearoa New Zealand, including the New Zealand Wars
- Evolving national identity of Aotearoa New Zealand in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries
- Aotearoa New Zealand's role in the Pacific
- Aotearoa New Zealand in the late 20th century and evolution of a national identity with cultural plurality” (Ardern & Hipkins, 2019, para. 6).

“Chris Hipkins said it is important for learners and ākonga to understand New Zealand history as a continuous thread, with contemporary issues directly linked to major events of the past” (Ardern & Hipkins, 2019, para. 7). The Minister goes on to state: “Our diversity is our strength, but only when we build connections to each other. We can move forward together, stronger when we understand the many paths our ancestors walked to bring us to today” (Ardern & Hipkins, para. 8). The sentiments of diversity and strength and moving forward together acknowledge the inherent differences but intertwined fates of individuals and groups within the collectives of society and the nation. The argument therefore appears to be that knowing about the past will help people better appreciate their collective present. When the Minister of Education went on to state that: “The Ministry of Education will work collaboratively to develop a New Zealand history update” (Ardern & Hipkins, para. 9), it compelled this particular institution to take those actions. The uttering of these words of power harnesses resources and efforts with the goal of achieving the policy directive. How this would be done was also confirmed: “The Ministry will call on historical and curriculum experts, iwi and mana whenua, Pacific communities, students and ākonga, parents and whānau, and other groups with a strong interest in shaping how New Zealand history is taught” (Ardern & Hipkins, para. 10). The insistence is for the Ministry to work with the stated groups, which gives them standing in the ensuing work. The Minister then reconfirmed the timeline: “Once the updates to the curriculum are known, existing supports will be reviewed and an implementation package with teaching

and learning resources will be developed ready for the 2022 school year” (Ardern & Hipkins, para. 11). In closing, the press statement affirmed without attributing the speaker, that: “The package will allow schools and kura to include the new content and learning expectations in their local curriculum, working in partnership with their local communities and mana whenua” (Ardern & Hipkins, para. 12). This conclusion sits alongside the earlier statements about the National Curriculum but expressly promotes local history teaching in collaboration with communities and mana whenua. The press release was reported across media, which is where I first encountered the policy (Long, 2019b).

Policy Problematics

Lineages of thought are important because in imagining a model that assumes “a national identity with cultural plurality in Aotearoa New Zealand” (Ardern & Hipkins, 2019, para 6), as does the policy, then those who exclusively occupy only one of those cultural vantagepoints may have difficulty accepting the others’ viewpoints. Initially looking at this policy from the vantage point of my own background and understanding, I imagined my perspective to be observing from a viewpoint standing apart from the cultural duality of Māori and Pākehā. As a child of the Cold War, born on one side of the Iron Curtain and growing up and living on the other, I do not accept the notion that history provides its readers with objective truth. My experience has been that the writing of history often involves influences beyond the predictable trajectories of reason that purport to give accurate accounts of what happened and why. I found this in my own research, which, among other topics, considered the wartime story of the Polish Children of Pahiataua (Beaglehole, 2005). The well-described history of the “Pahiataua Children” focusses on the cohort of orphaned Polish children, who, accompanied by their caregivers, were given refuge in New Zealand in 1944. Their heartfelt story has been documented in a variety of publications on the subject (Cf. Jagiello, 2005; Manterys et al., 2004; Skwarko, 1974;

Suchanski, 2012; Szymanik, 2013; Tomaszuk, 2004; Wood, 1958). Many from this group, together with their descendants, retain strong links with Wellington's Polish community. Their history has become, what I describe as, a mythologised foundation story of this community, establishing itself as a "prevailing narrative" of post-war Polish migration to New Zealand (Wernicki, 2015, p. 15). From this experience I perceive a number of problematics that the policy initially raised for me, three of which will be discussed here.

The first focuses on the classification of peoples. This is not always consistent within countries, across time or between people. Individuals' affirmations of ethnicity and status may be unrelated to where they were born, or which citizenship they hold. For example, analysis of New Zealand census data showed a significant variance between the numbers of people who were born in Poland and those who classified themselves as Polish. This was offset by those born outside Poland that claimed Polish ethnicity (Wernicki, 2015, p. 41). Why should this matter for New Zealand history? It seems to me that it is not just classifications of "Māori" or "Pākehā" that curriculum developers would need to consider. "Indians," "Chinese," "Pacific Islanders," "Europeans," and others, in as much as such collective labels are useful, all likely struggle to some degree, as do I, with their own plurality within "our" New Zealand context. If the intent of the policy is to teach history to "New Zealanders," then how might learners be encouraged to associate with that history? Given that well over a quarter of New Zealand residents were not born in this country (Stats NZ, 2019), how will they—or their children—relate to local history? It seemed to me that unless the topics engage learners because they are relevant to them, the curriculum and its teaching will attract the same critiques as the relevance of instruction about English monarchs had in the recent past (see, for example, *England wins out in the historic present*, 2007; Hay-Mackenzie, 2017; Husband, 2015).

A second problematic is one of the labelling of people for reasons of simplifying narratives. The term “refugee” with reference to the Pahiatua Polish children had been used widely both since they arrived (National Film Unit, 1944), and in various publications (Beaglehole, 1988, 2013; Burnley, 1972; Manterys et al., 2004). However, the term is not always accepted by those labelled as such. Tomaszuk (2014), for example, vociferously riled against the term. She insisted that those Poles who survived the deportations—of which she was one—were instead “forcibly taken” from their homes by the Soviets. She did not see herself as a “refugee” throughout any of her experiences. My experience of this prompted me to take considerable care when telling another person’s story, especially where convenient labels are applied. Otherwise, it may inadvertently give rise to offence or perpetuate stigmatisation as noted by Beaglehole (2013). The same may likely to apply to the use of such generic labels as Māori rather than specific iwi, hapū, or mana whenua, especially when histories relate to localised events. Other collective labels, such as kūpapa (collaborators), taurekareka (captives), or mōkai (slaves), will also need to be understood within the complex and nuanced social arrangements and relationships in which they lived. Descendants may justifiably agitate vociferously if, for the sake of Cartesian simplification, the narrative besmirches their forebears. Educators are, of course, aware of such matters, but I imagine it is inevitable that situations will arise where some will be aggrieved by the telling of a history, and they will voice their disapproval. I suspect that mischief-makers may also take the opportunity to push their own agendas. I wonder, how prepared are we as a nation for such discourses, especially where these debates will not just be confined to the classroom but will be played out in the public arena? If so, are Facebook or Twitter the right forums for such exchanges?

A third problematic relates to the selection of historical topics. Because there are just so many histories and perspectives to explore, there is a need to be selective about which history to teach. The dominance of the standard Pahiatua Children narrative overshadows other aspects of their

and other Polish migrant history. Others within the wider community felt their stories seemed to be relegated into insignificance. The stories of those who survived the Second World War within Poland and only later emigrated was one such group (Wernicki, 2015). Such histories are not part of the Pahiatua Children’s narrative, which primarily emanates from those deported from Eastern Poland. There, men, women, and children were transported to camps or collective farms where they were immediately acquainted with the economy of the Soviet gulag “you-eat-as-you-work system” (Applebaum, 2003, p. 55). Their history is important to me because they relate to *my* compatriots. They and their descendants still mourn the confiscation of their Kresy lands, the Eastern parts of Poland that have been forever lost. I wonder, are we all prepared to listen attentively to the voices of those who in this country are still grieving for what they had lost? There remains for me a small step between my own visceral historical experiences and the histories I understand of Māori and their colonial encounter. How, then, is history to be “reset” in an engaging manner—without retraumatising those affected—and repackaged for consumption by children: Māori and non-Māori, tangata whenua and colonisers, Pākehā and recent migrants, all caught within the purview of a National Curriculum?

These concerns for how histories are taught comes from my own encounters with “difficult histories.” This term has been characterised within our Aotearoa context as largely relating to the New Zealand Wars, which exert a “decisive influence over the course of the nation’s history” (Kidman & O’Malley, 2018, para. 1). Nevertheless, I see history as a useful way of understanding the present. Other New Zealanders think a critical appreciation of the past is essential for “Māori and non-Māori to be effective Treaty partners” (Sheehan & Ball, 2020, p. 65). In thinking about these concerns, I wanted to be prepared, not just with policy knowledge but also equipped with critical reflexivity for the impending debates between the various participants likely in such multicultural discourses (Dietz & Cortés, 2011). However, it was not until the draft curriculum was released for public consultation on 3 February 2021 that the

public could see what was being proposed (Ministry of Education, 2021d). The responses were varied. There were claims alleging indoctrination and identity politics (ACT New Zealand, 2021; Sadler, 2021), the expression of concerns over content (Gerritsen, 2021a, 2021b; Jancic, 2019; u/HarrowingOfTheNorth, 2021) and others offering varying levels of support (McConnell, 2021; Sankar, 2021; Tyson, 2020). All have begun staking out their positions in the digital and social media spheres. It was at this stage that I began to question more closely what had been going on with the teaching of Aotearoa New Zealand histories up to that point.

Policy Questions

The central question this thesis asks is why a policy approach was taken to achieve a specific end rather than selecting alternative pathways to making such changes. Using a policy to change the content of the National Curriculum seemed highly unusual. More commonly, curriculum changes are made within the Ministry of Education. Resources are then made available together with Ministry guidance on how the curriculum is to be applied. This is what makes the history curriculum policy a policy watershed: it is an apparent departure from the way that policy had previously been utilised. This was not about the policy providing high-level directives to the Ministry about how they set the New Zealand Curriculum content. This was specifically stating what the content of a specific subject within the National Curriculum was to include, together with how it was to be included. This was accomplished by using a policy in an overtly visible manner with a highly symbolic policy announcement. However, did it emerge from a milieu of intent or just spring forth from the foreground of happenstance? Before analysing the component parts of this policy, I needed to ask questions about what this thing called a “policy” was. It was something that apparently has the ability to transform the will of actors into actions taken by a chorus of other actors to achieve their purpose. During this research, I recognised that those who are close to it, who championed it, or the technicians who nurtured its

introduction likely perceive their policy work to expressly further the intentional and rational objectives of government. They and the detractors scoffing at the policy's relevance, together with their media interactions, amplify its existence. In this jumble of perspectives, debates, and contradictions, how is research useful in bringing clarity? I began with my own encounter of the policy announcement, perceiving it as a singularity, filling a space in which previously nothing like it had ever taken shape. Looking back in time to identify the clues of the policy's emergence then looking forwards to make sense of the waves of pressure it created to overcome the inertia of the present provides a view of the change that materialised in its wake. The tools I used for navigating this journey were adapted from DeLanda's (2006, 2016) interpretation of assemblage theory. I deployed DeLanda's concepts as templates for nonlinear ways of thinking about how a policy is assembled. In taking this approach, I argue that it was the arrangement of components, which included human and nonhuman actors, that created an environment that was recognised by Graeme Ball as a "zeitgeist" that heralded the policy into existence (Young, 2018).

When looking at the policy's origins, my analytical eye was simultaneously drawn to its future implications. I wondered what calls were listened to that prompted the change. I found it was not just one, but several efforts layered upon each other, that produced the critical mass to bring about change. I also investigated the apparent contradictions. On one hand, the policy mandated what history topics will be taught as part of the compulsory education in schools encompassing Years 1–10 (5–14-year-olds). On the other hand, the policy allows a level of local autonomy to accommodate the different people and histories involved. The implication was that this policy was signalling the intent to initiate meaningful change in the way teachers approach the teaching of history. Partnership with local communities was expected and, therefore, *mana whenua* was invited to be coproducers of new content appropriate to their local environments. The concept of the delivery of a "local curriculum" as distinct from the implementation of a National

Curriculum delivering standard content itself prompted questions. For example, without a consistent national definition, what may be defined as “local” in a history context? Would that be delivered by individual schools and kura? Partnership also suggests a level of equality, irrespective of the relative capacity and capability of the participants or even whether there are existing relationships between the school, mana whenua, and the local community. I am still surprised how, in looking at the policy press release, that such a compact set of words can compel activity with a force that perpetuates action, both causing and overcoming friction. Yet those words are knotted together containing such a variety of meanings and implications that it is difficult to know where to start. However, a starting point is necessary if the policy is to be adequately explained.

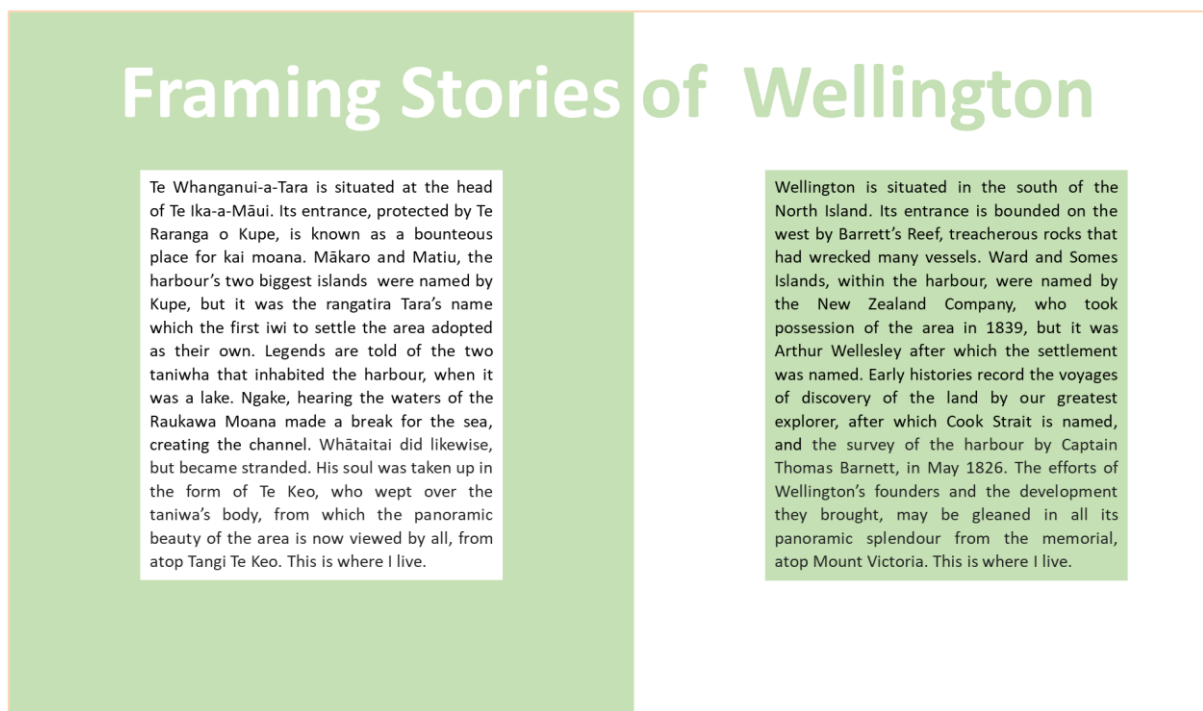
Teaching and Learning History in the New Zealand Context

In telling stories of the past, it is necessary to start at a beginning, but that beginning is not necessarily one, fixed point in time. This is because beginnings may be contextual to the story but are also contingent upon the context of the storyteller. In Figure 1 below, I explored the way two different perspectives shape the telling of a story, each providing a snippet of history of Te Whanganui-o-Tara or Wellington Harbour, the place where I live. Its telling can be seen as complementary or contradictory, depending on the reader. Some may be drawn to one rendition or the other. Had I sufficient competency in te reo, I would have translated both versions and juxtaposed these so that the colour of language would also help to complement and contrast meanings. In our context of cultural plurality in Aotearoa New Zealand, often only one side of that common story is told. While progressing this research, I came to understand the impact that has on those whose stories are suppressed and are presented with a version that does not necessarily match with their understandings of the past. Stories are of critical importance to indigenous writers as these provide “ways of passing down beliefs and values of a culture in

the hope that the new generations will treasure them and pass the story down further” (Smith, 2012, pp. 145-146). This could well describe the context of the history teaching policy.

Figure 1

Framing Stories of Wellington



Note: Wernicki (2020a)

History has been taught to children in Aotearoa New Zealand since before the first settlers arrived and established classrooms for children in the early 1800s. Before then, the traditional mātauranga Māori approach of teaching and learning was practised by the tangata whenua (Mead, 2003). Telling such stories of the past is integral to the enculturation of children into their society. These different traditions, methods, and approaches for the transmission of these stories had been deployed here in Aotearoa New Zealand's formal institutions, be they the indigenous whare wānanga or the colonising church or state schools. In their own ways, they had each taken steps to gather under their authority the way that knowledge is imparted from adults to children in their distinctive teaching and learning environments. Yet, it was state

structures that indelibly stamped their own authority on the teaching of history in New Zealand schools in the colonial context. This can be traced from the first national regulations gazetted in 1878 to the 1990s. From the onset, there were concerns about the difficulties in teaching history with parents having an option under the 1877 Education Act to withdraw their children from history lessons (Stenson, 1990). The reason for this was not to do with different versions of Māori and Pākehā narratives, but rather because Catholics and Protestants might disagree on the content of history taught. While a similar clause was included in the Education Act 1914 it was not transferred through to the Education Act 1964 (Manning, 2018). Discourses about teaching history in schools is not new phenomenon. Arguments about history—when used in wars of words to snipe across media channels, using provocative language to make their various points—become what was described by one education scholar as “History Wars” (Manning, 2018, p. 123).

The decisions of politicians and educators of the past are transmitted to the present through lineages of precedent, policies, and practice that frame the existing environment. In this, the elected government—through control of the resources of state, including the Ministry of Education—directly controls what, when, where, how, and by whom children are taught. The Ministry categorises and structures the components of a child’s education from the time children must enter school to the time they can or must leave:

Every person who is a New Zealand citizen or resident must, during the period beginning on the person’s sixth birthday and ending on the person’s 16th birthday, be enrolled at a registered school. (Education Act, 1989 s. 20(1))

What is notable in the context of the policy is that history was not a standalone topic in the compulsory school curriculum. It forms part of the cluster of disciplines classified as the “Social Sciences” (Ministry of Education, 2014b). History is only taught as a subject at the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) level (Years 11–13 for 15–17-year-olds). It is also relevant to keep in mind that despite the complex words or potentially challenging aspects

of the histories, the policy is intended for 5–14-year-olds. Furthermore, when talking of “teaching history,” the context of the discussion seems important. For example, contemporary pedagogical practices focus not on the rote learning of historical facts. Rather, students and ākonga are encouraged to learn how to research, how to interpret sources, think about causality and significance and develop skills relevant to historians. All of this also needs to be delivered, delimited by the overall time allocated to social studies’ teaching, teachers’ preparation time, resource availability, and, of course, age appropriate to the students concerned. This is the present environment that has been shown to deliver history teaching that the Prime Minister considered “inconsistent” and therefore needed to be addressed by the policy (Ardern & Hipkins, 2019).

The aim of my thesis, therefore, is to explore what led up to the announcement of the history curriculum policy to answer two basic questions: why *this* policy, and why *now*? The changes in the education of the students of Aotearoa New Zealand that this policy will affect will transform their knowledge of the history of Aotearoa New Zealand, which, the policy explicitly intends, will shape their identity. The aim of the policy is not simply to change what is taught in schools but to remake New Zealanders. It is because of this, I suggest, that the government used the heavy-hitting tool of policy to generate this transformation. In these ways, the history curriculum policy is both a watershed policy and a policy watershed. It is a watershed policy in that it instigates a ground-breaking change in the way history will be taught with potentially far-reaching consequences, and it is a policy watershed in that it marks a significant moment in the use of policy to achieve governmental ends—in this case, to remake New Zealand identity.

Thesis Structure

To negotiate the journey that this research has taken, the thesis has been divided into five chapters. The first is this introduction chapter, which has provided a replay of the policy, my initial perceptions of the problematics the policy raised, and a brief background of history teaching and learning in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The second chapter looks at the literature and theory, which, like the forces of gravity, influenced the structure of the words and their writing. These are the theoretical clusters of policy and assemblage that, brought together, helped me perceive the phenomenon of the policy singularity in ways I had not previously imagined.

The research design in the third chapter further elaborates on how I approached this research. This includes a discussion of ethics, which emerged for me as a significantly personal reflexive encounter that I had during this research, resulting in a change in the way I approached this work. The research design also formally sets out the research aims and goals and methodological considerations. These include both those planned beforehand and those adopted during the process of the journey as the milieu itself influenced how the research took place.

The fourth and most substantial chapter analyses the policy. It is presented in three acts, like a drama, consisting of a build-up, a climax, and the release of energy that forged new elements and coalesced new thinking within the history curriculum. The chapter is preceded by a prologue in order to contextualise the drama along the temporal continuum in which the action takes place.

The fifth and concluding chapter begins by adding a postscript to the detailed analysis of the assembling and emergence of the policy by describing how the policy was fulfilled in the

announcement that the new curriculum has been finalised and will be ready for schools to use from 2023. The chapter will then outline my feelings and perceptions of the policy. It answers the main research questions of why this policy was needed and why a policy approach was taken. It also answers the question posed in the title of this work—namely, is the policy that mandates teaching of history a policy watershed or a watershed policy? Although the question is posited as a binary, the answer is more nuanced. In a way, it was neither because the moment had arrived for such a change to be made but also both. It was a watershed policy as far as the government instructed the Ministry of Education to make extremely specific changes to the National Curriculum, but it was also a policy watershed because it prompted conversations about how the histories of Aotearoa New Zealand could, should, and would be conveyed to the students of the nation.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURES AND THEORY

This chapter summarises the primary literatures and theoretical framework for the thesis. Focussing on the creation of a policy, I will firstly outline what the existing literature in the field looks like, noting the way policies are often understood and discussed in linear, closed forms. Secondly, I will consider what the relatively small but pertinent subfield of a policy anthropology has brought to the study of policy. Finally, I will introduce recent developments in assemblage thinking, drawing on the work of Manuel DeLanda in the main to develop a conceptual framework and language that accounts for the more than human, contingent, and fragile nature of policy formation. This will form the conceptual basis for the analysis of the creation of the history curriculum in Chapter 4.

History and its teaching and learning produce a variety of perspectives of the past. When consumed by diverse groups of recipients, they produce different echoes of the historical images on different people's minds. Those perspectives or "pasts" (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 5) bring with them different dispositions towards the subject of history in the Bordieuan sense. Stanley Cavell the noted Harvard philosopher's commentary on Wittgenstein's "forms of life" may very well apply to the context of Aotearoa New Zealand (Fassin, 2014, p. 69):

We learn and teach words in certain contexts, and then we are expected, and expect others, to be able to project them into further contexts. Nothing insures that this projection will take place (in particular, not the grasping of universals nor the grasping of books of rules), just as nothing insures that we will make, and understand, the same projections. That on the whole we do is a matter of our sharing routes of interest and feeling, modes of response, senses of humor and of significance and of fulfilment, of what is outrageous, of what is similar to what else, what a rebuke, what forgiveness, of when an utterance is an assertion, when an appeal, when an explanation-all the whirl of organism Wittgenstein calls "forms of life." Human speech and activity, sanity and community, rest upon nothing more, but nothing less, than this. (Cavell, 1962, p. 74)

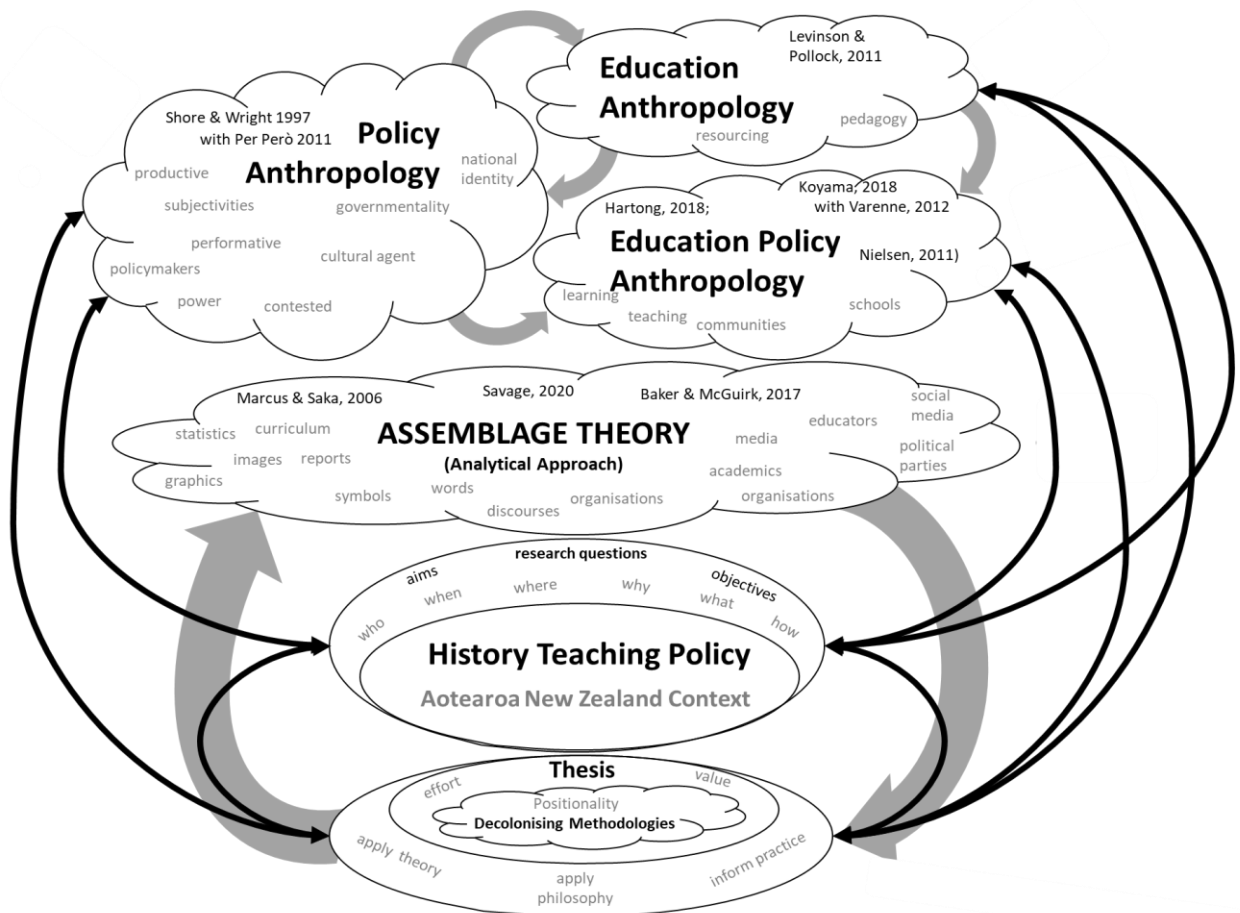
History's teaching and learning, therefore, produces a range of experiences for different teachers or students even though they may be looking at a common historical narrative. Here, I will apply an anthropological sensibility rather than a historian's rigour in identifying chains of causality to consider the complexity of a policy that mandates teaching and learning about the past. By critically thinking in terms of how questions of time and temporality are dealt with in the context of culture, perspectives of histories emerge in ways that are less linear than the narratives that describe them. This research, then, is essentially a testimony of my experience as both witness and writer of historical events. Likewise, the duration of the development of a policy and, from that, a curriculum will occupy its own unique time and space yet imprint itself on those it seeks to exert its benign power. In researching this I looked at a sequence of events that precipitated the policy and convey my perceived understanding of it through frameworks that make sense to me. I see those *whirls of organism* as culture, politics, worldviews, and history as combining and sustaining the *forms of life* we collectively refer to as Aotearoa New Zealand.

To put this thinking within a conceptual framework I developed an illustration to show the interdependent nature of the various methodological elements in Figure 2 and illustrate how they interrelate. It provides a snapshot of how I imagined the literatures on policy and assemblage theory helped shape this research. It maintained its shape throughout the research process, as the charted relationships between concepts, researchers and the field came into, or faded out of, focus. The illustration positions discrete parts together, but represents a system of concepts, which pulls together clusters of researchers, operating across constellations of domains. The intent of this is not to evaluate whether this, my perceived cosmology of literature and theory, is supported with evidence at the final destination. Instead, I intended this to conceptualise and ground my thinking in the existing research and literature. At this point it

now serves as a useful way to chart the next stage of the journey which explores how the various literatures and theory shaped this work.

Figure 2

Conceptual Illustration of Literatures and Theory



Policy Anthropology

Shore and Wright (1997) proposed a “new domain of anthropological enquiry, the *anthropology of policy*” (p. 3). It provides a way of looking at policy through the examination of language and discourse. It considers how the policies, “in setting a political agenda, ... [give] ... institutional authority to one or a number of overlapping discourses” (Shore & Wright, p. 18). Furthering this thinking Shore, Wright & Però (2011) describe policy as being “productive, performative and continually contested. A policy finds expression through sequences of events;

it creates new social and semantic spaces, new sets of relationships, new political subjects and a new web of meaning” (p. 1). Policy anthropology was originally intended to address “concerns that citizens are becoming alienated from a remote commercialised policy-making process” (Shore & Wright, 1997, p. 3). Earlier policy anthropologists used “a governmentality approach in order to explore the shift from welfare state to neoliberal forms of government” (Shore & Wright, 2011, p. 15). Shore et al. further explained that policy anthropology developed in response to critiques that, among other things, traditional policy studies allowed too little space for individual agency (p. 17). This domain appears to offer significant scope then to research agency and relationships. While the policy anthropology domain is well developed and is continually generating thinking, it seemingly only attracts a modest level of published scholarship. Scopus results in June 2021, for example, offered only twenty-three results when searching for the title, abstract, or keywords for “policy anthropology” and fifty results for “anthropology of policy.” However, in both cases, at least 20% of those results included articles involving education or teaching, showing this as a highly fertile topic for existing researchers.

The anthropology of education has been a “self-conscious subdiscipline since the 1950s” (Levinson & Pollock, 2011, p. 1). Within the domain, schools have been considered ethnographic settings which make “a great site to make explicit ties among the arts and artifices of teaching/learning situations and writ large cultural politics” (McDermott & Raley, 2011, p. 37). While earlier critical anthropology had tended to see the involvement of the state’s role in education in negative ways, since the 2000s educational policy has been more institutionally defined as a subfield (Blasco & Vargas, 2011). From these two anthropologies, policy and education, the anthropology of education policy arose (Castagno & McCarty, 2018). Good guidance is available in resources on a range of theory, methods and current issues relating to the domain (Castagno & McCarty, 2018; Levinson & Pollock, 2011). Relevant for this research

are how the state and other social actors bring effect to the production of citizenship, using a variety of symbolism including the trope of war to promote national belonging (Benei, 2011). Also relevant is how postcolonial influences have informed education through frameworks of development, and postcolonial and global network studies (Stambach & Ngwane, 2011). This research will therefore use an approach informed by the application of conceptual toolboxes of policy anthropology and education policy anthropology, in order to add another case study to the compendium of research. By doing so, it seeks to add to the body of knowledge that Shore and Wright (1997) describe as policy's utility by government as a "cultural agent" ...[when used for]...constructing a national identity" (p. 24).

Assemblage Theory

Assemblage theory provides an analytical methodological framework with robust philosophical substructures which support innovative approaches. Building on existing work in policy anthropology and the anthropology of education, in this thesis, I draw on recent poststructural assemblage approaches. The assemblage approach is seen as being able to simultaneously work with the tensions between the ephemeral and structural elements of the heterogeneous social context. It firmly links method to its theoretical foundations (Marcus & Saka, 2006). Assemblage approaches have already been used to research education policy in various ways (see, for example, Hartong, 2018; Koyama, 2018; Koyama & Varenne, 2012; Nielsen, 2011), but not with a focus on the creation of a policy from its inception as I do in this thesis. By abandoning linear thinking, an assemblage approach allows us to engage with the data without immediately accepting claims that only observable causality chains can track a policy's development. A policy assemblage approach has given rise to more nuanced research on policy movement, mutation, and manifestation in transnational contexts as well as transfer, borrowing, and diffusion in state-centric accounts (Savage, 2020). Geographers, in particular, seem to have

utilised assemblage theory as a tool for thinking deeply about how seemingly similar policy formations are produced and moved between countries and embedded into different politico-economic contexts (Baker & McGuirk, 2017; Kinkaid, 2020; McFarlane & Anderson, 2011; Prince, 2010; Swanton, 2013). It is from reading their approaches that I am encouraged to adopt what Lewis (2014) called an “abusive fidelity” (p. 235)—that is to say, by translating the manifold ideas expressed within the term *assemblage* in a way that “produces something interestingly new in the process of translation from one discipline to the other” (Fassin, 2014, p. 52). However, such translations cannot be made without first appreciating the conceptual language being translated. In this section I intend to foreground assemblage thinking and its attendant analytical tools, in the process identifying the key conceptual ideas I will use and deploy in my analysis. Its conceptual foundations of “relations of exteriority and emergence...heterogeneity, relationality and flux...and...attention to power, politics and agency” provide a buffet of concepts with which to examine policy...[thus]...allowing researchers to see and explain things in ways that many established traditions in policy research do not” (Savage, 2020, p. 321).

The key terms I will use to analyse the emergence of the History curriculum as an assemblage arise from Deleuze’s¹ “simplest definition” (DeLanda, 2016, p. 1) of the concept. This concept of assemblage captures a multiplicity of heterogeneous components, which nevertheless establish relationships despite their inherently different natures. Moreover, these relationships are unlike linear structures, such as causal models or Bayesian networks, which seek to explain dependencies between discrete components of a system. Instead, assemblages seemingly form “alliances, alloys; these are not successions, lines of descent, but contagions, epidemics, the

¹ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari throughout their writings together and separately provided a number of definitions of the concept they helped develop and promote. Writing in their native French their term of *agencement*, was translated into English as *assemblage* DeLanda, M. (2016). *Assemblage theory*. Edinburgh University Press.

wind” (Deleuze & Parnet, 2002, p. 69). Conceptualised in such a way, the policy environment in this case is not being observed in reductionist terms of base components producing a predictable or desired effect. Instead, the components within an assemblage can themselves be perceived as affective components within the unique environment in which they were part of creating. Their relationships can be described through the language of “interiority and exteriority” (DeLanda, 2016, p. 2) , conceptually better perceived as intrinsic and extrinsic orientations, which bind the components, perhaps only temporarily, into a homogeneous ensemble. Therefore, the concept of a component is created through relations of exteriority, which are independent of the assemblage of which it is a part, and relations of interiority, which help stabilise the assemblage in question.

DeLanda (2016) usefully advances Deleuze’s concept of intrinsic relationships that arose from an ecological perspective of symbiosis to help explore the relationship between components and an assemblage. Deleuze envisioned an ecosystem as a type of assemblage, involving exteriority relationships between heterogeneous species, acting in concert to maintain equilibrium within the ecosystem in which they operate. Intrinsically, each component may be coded, meaning they conform to a perceivable ordered pattern or form, but the linked ensemble may variably be either coded or decoded (DeLanda, 2016). For example, the policy at the epicentre of this research is an assemblage that is both intrinsically and extrinsically coded. It emerged in a particular form and employed very particular language, encoding it intrinsically as a policy. Its extrinsic coding, or the content of that policy, continues to legitimise actions within the ecosystem of Aotearoa New Zealand to perpetuate its intent. The conversations it generated may likewise be perceived as coded, conforming to the rules that operate in the channels across which such conversations take place. The coding of mass media articles, for example, differs from the coding of conversations on social media. However, the feelings the policy roused in people may not necessarily be coded. Nevertheless, the zeitgeist that

collectively emerges from people's sentiment could carry a trace of the coding or contribute to supporting the environment where the coded policy flourishes. It is less important in assemblage thinking than in a Bayesian analysis, which requires the quantification of antecedents to make inferences to measure the relationship between the relevant components. Rather, the observation perceives the intensity of the relationship by observing how components respond to each other.

With these initial conceptual building blocks in place, an analysis of an assemblage, such as policy, can be attempted. Such an analysis starts by not assuming the policy grew out of a planned set of rational and calculated steps, each of which can be analysed through identifying threads of causality. Rather, such an analysis looks at the heterogeneous components that existed in proximity to each other, forming the conditions from which the policy materialised and recognising that components have their own relations of interiority and exteriority. Language encodes the meaning, being the respective understandings, positions, or the taken-for-granted assumptions of the various actors in the process. The encoded language can be examined to glean from it not just the agency that various people have but also the agency that may be attributed to nonhuman actors, such as documents, that inform, instruct, or otherwise serve a performative function of changing a status quo. DeLanda (2006) demonstrates how both declarative sentences and beliefs of people and groups are recognisable as forming propositional attitudes that carry their own *intensities*. This allows the analysis of interactions to not just consider linguistic constructs, which may be of interest anyway, but evidence of the assemblage coalescing into the form that eventually expresses the emergence of the policy *singularity*. Here, the definition of a singularity encapsulates the concept of being a discrete single component, like a person, a city, or a nation state as perceived by DeLanda. I have taken it to mean that the instance of the policy announcement can be perceived as both a component

of the policy assemblage as well as the event that created the intensity of forces which forged new components that perpetuated momentum along a trajectory encoded by the policy.

If a singularity like a policy document itself can have agency, how might the research account for the role of the nonhuman? Influenced by the thinking of Latour (2005), who provides useful guidance on the agency of nonhuman *things*, a case can be made that everything has potential agency. Agency is itself discernible in the policy object as much as it is evident in the people involved in its creation. Where people form groups around their shared interests or relationships, they express their coding to each other or to those outside the group. Therefore, identifiable groups, as opposed to individuals classified into groups who involved themselves with the introduction of the policy, are another element of the assemblage that went into the policy's creation. The relationships of people and groups, their leaders, members, or channels through which they communicate each have their own subjectivity. However, I perceive such nonhuman actors as exhibiting many of the characteristics of living organisms and should not just be portrayed as inert tools fashioned for a particular purpose. In applying assemblage theory, I open myself to the thinking that nonhuman actors, such as a consultation document, may not only sustain the survival of a policy but, when encountering the exteriority of the public sphere, adapt the policy to the environment within which it exists.

The policy assemblage can be seen as comprising of heterogeneous components, both physical and nonphysical, which, when interwoven, produce an effect in the world. In the case of a policy, physical components include the words that make up the policy form. These specific words are enshrined in identifiable forms of documents and delivery that constitute the outputs of a government's work. That effort arising from people to craft the words in certain ways to convey certain meanings goes through processes of distillation and refinement until all the relevant elements, such as the tone, tenor, and its readability and length, produce a desired output. Granted, such government publications are now more virtual than they would have been

in the past, but the physicality of their construct arises from writers typing at keyboards or reviewers highlighting words with lines or crosses, denoting such activity as representative of the type of knowledge work that is valued in a twenty-first century context. The human actors are also physical even if most of us only see the nation's leaders virtually or only encounter public servants through evidence of their work by noting their signatures on official documents or oblique references on Ministries' websites.

Groups also form components relevant to the assemblage. These include organisations that are communities of people who either categorise themselves or are categorised by others as being a distinct part of a larger whole. These include labels, such as politicians, the public, media, Māori, Pākehā, New Zealanders, teachers, students, parents, and schools, to name but a few. These may be further refined into subgroups, such as political parties, social and mainstream media, iwi and hapū, New Zealand-born and migrant New Zealanders, primary and secondary teachers, engaged and disaffected students or parents, as well as school deciles. Each of these elements can themselves be fused with other elements to bring new meaning to their interactions and thus form new assemblages. For example, Māori schools, teachers' organisations, or migrant students modify the general contexts of the single label into more specific but also potentially different components. All these components, and more besides, produce the actions that influence the assemblage or are themselves impacted by it. Categories, touched on above, provide the ability to make generalisations about the policy assemblage in a way that may be relevant when researching other similar assemblages. However, they also help to assess whether this policy assemblage was truly as unique as it first appeared to me in September 2019.

The nonphysical components that comprise the policy also need to be seen in the light of its announcement. The indelible mark on the date the policy was announced is a temporal signature around which analysis can be conducted by positioning it along a timeline of antecedent and

dependent activity. Albeit on a grander scale of communities, cities, and states, DeLanda (2016) in adopting assemblage thinking about history, concluded that “assemblages have a fully contingent historical identity” (p. 19). By this, he means they followed a path to come into existence. The history at the time the policy was being formed is an integral part of the policy assemblage. This provides the basis for conducting an analysis of the historical components that predated the policy yet remain contemporaneous with the policy assemblage. In this Bergson’s (2002) explaining concept of duration, conceptualises time as contingent on a perceptive consciousness. Caton (2014) usefully adds his summary to his analysis of Bergson’s thinking that duration is “dependant on the consciousness of heterogeneous states” (p. 237). It seems essential to developing the understanding of the policy as an assemblage not only with relationships between particular places or forms, but also particular times and the different perspectives of pasts held by different actors. Assemblage theory, then, provides a framework and language to look at a seemingly straightforward government policy and demonstrate how the components are threaded together to form what I am referring to here as the policy assemblage. It is a way of thinking about policy that encourages more holistic questions of policy rather than focussing discussion on the mechanics of cause and effect.

Thinking Through Policy as an Assemblage

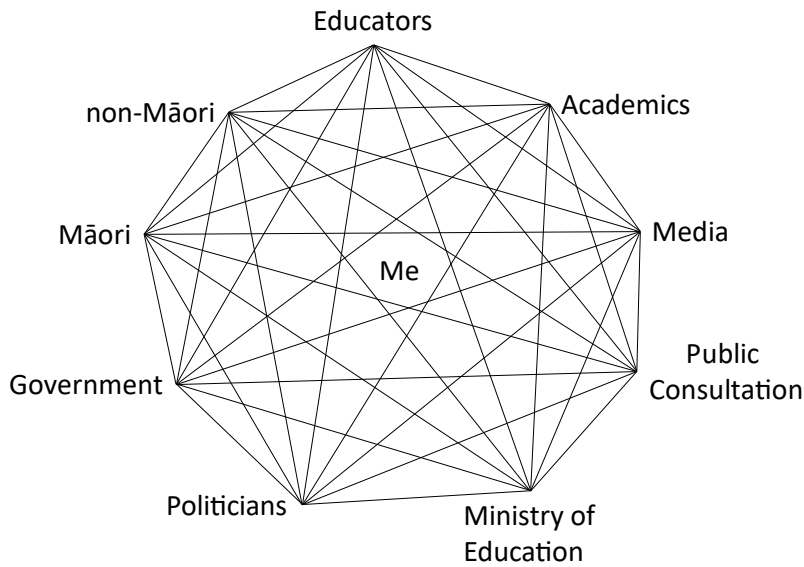
In analysing the policy, describing the space it inhabits and utilising the concepts and language of assemblage theory, I intend the forthcoming analysis to prompt questions of the reader. Questions not only about the policy and the process but also whether the analytical approach in observing the policy in this way is more useful than a reductionist perspective that neatly simplifies the policy into well-defined positivist knowledge baskets bundled within a narrative of intent and causality. In doing so, I am challenging myself and the reader to look beyond the veil of empirical elements of relationships, which must be seen to be measured or discretely

classified within a scientific taxonomy. Here, I intend to deploy my observations, my perspective, and my interpretation as the instruments to observe participants as they react to, support, or disrupt the complex social arrangement that I call the policy assemblage. I use the language conceived by Deleuze and Guattari (1977, 1987)—and refined by DeLanda (2006, 2016)—which has become an Esperanto for social scientists who wish to move away from the gravitational forces of empiricism. In doing so, I want to make visible the diverse components that make up the whole without excluding the agency of actors because the forces they exert and relationships they enter into cannot be proven to be statistically significant. Even assuming that actors must take physical form imposes restrictions on the observer’s modes of thinking that constrains the imaginative model that Deleuze and Guattari propose. Furthermore, shifting temporality, recognisable at some point that the present is constantly folded into a past that itself shapes the future, provides instances that attract the researcher’s gaze. These things form, as proposed by Latour (2005), “a type of momentary association which is characterised by the way it gathers together into new shapes” (p. 65). I imagine those shapes to be captured within the strata of relationships so that their fleetingness is not missed in the blink of an eye. Using this approach, the social complex is made visible within strands of the rhizomic system that provides an analogy for an environment, which otherwise resists the explanation of structural or generative models.

Throughout the thesis, the main components that I refer to are human and nonhuman actors who are identifiable individually but are themselves part of the matrix of a larger whole. While tempting to treat these components as discrete elements with their interrelationships as linear—as illustrated in Figure 3—the overall shape of the assemblage is not static. Relationships intensify and wane over time, and, based on whether they involve two or more components at any one time, their links to components change. Within the construct of the policy assemblage, I imagine the actors to include government, the Ministry of Education, and educators. Another

Figure 3

Assemblage Components and Relationships



component I perceive has Māori and non-Māori coding, which are highlighted to me as being different because the origins of thought seem different as much as are their respective historical contexts. The ever-present media is seen not only as the transmitter of

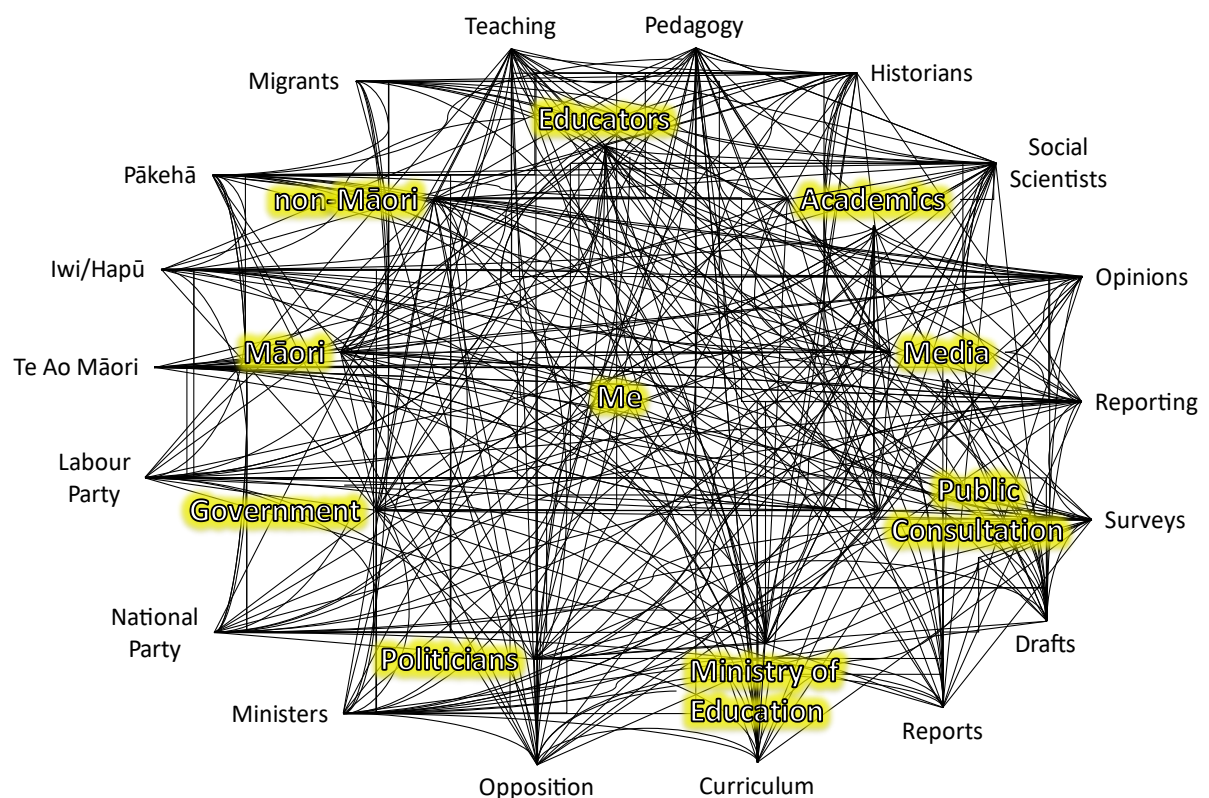
information but also as an active participant so is therefore a component that requires attention. Academics are a component because in their role they often engage publicly as knowledgeable authorities and therefore are given space by the media and others to express their positions. Politicians are necessarily a component because, dependent on the coding of their particular ideologies, they create bridges of alliances or walls of obstacles with other components. My interaction with this assemblage provides the observations that highlight those interactions on which my research gaze has focussed.

Throughout the thesis, I highlight those perspectives from my own position, ensnared within this matrix of relationships I also have with the various components. For example, of the two components, Māori, and non-Māori, only one is tangata whenua because the other arises from the colonial enterprise that encoded its own structures on the social landscape. However, that sentiment may not be shared by others who may see themselves as being both people of this land but non-Māori or Pākehā. That highlights how in setting these components the perspective may not be able to be universally defined. Furthermore, these components are not presented

here as a totality but as an assemblage described by a method and, as experienced within this environment, perceived as a system of relationships. It is that environment that produced the consultation documents, the component I call public consultation. Other disciplines may describe such activities as a banal process or a mechanism, but, in this analysis, it represents an intercept between the Ministry and their publics, all orbiting within the galaxy of all the other components. These components should not be seen as binaries or totalities nor even as precisely defined concepts from predefined knowledge domains. They are components and therefore participate in the drama because they are caught in the Doppler effect created by the policy singularity, aligning with, and repelling from each other over time. Figure 3 was by necessity a view of higher-level strata of the assemblage. The next level of strata exposes an even more complex constellation of relationships—nonlinear and nonbinary—and therefore potentially creating an overwhelming complexity (as illustrated in Figure 4). I think it better left discovered through thinking about the multiplicities of relationships—forming, and releasing,

Figure 4

A Different Strata of Components



strengthening, and reforming over time—rather than describing each and every possibility of relationship between two or more components. Furthermore, even if each set of perceived relationships were to be written about, there are many more that would reveal yet more strata whose complexity, unless dissected like something already dead by the scalpel of history, would make the analysis of the living whole unreadable.

This chapter has sought to outline the key literatures that have informed the research. Outlining the policy anthropology and anthropology of education policy literature, I sought to demonstrate the extent of work in this field, noting that both literatures have called for new ways of engaging with the policymaking process beyond its representation as a linear and bureaucratic process. Building from this work, I have sought to draw on and develop the conceptual language of DeLanda's (2006, 2016) theory of assemblage, as offering a means of analysing and discussing policy formation as a multifaceted, diverse, and contingent process. In this next section I will outline the methodological approach of the research, acknowledging the challenges of mobilising an assemblage approach in practice.

CHAPTER 3 – RESEARCH DESIGN

In this chapter, I explain the methods I used by tracing the history of the project. When drafting the Information Sheet for my research participants, I entitled my research project: *Teaching New Zealand History: A Policy Watershed or a Watershed Policy?* The wording choice was deliberate. It was intended to catch the attention of busy policymakers to draw them into a conversation. The questions about policy watershed and watershed policy will be answered in the concluding chapter of this thesis. However, why it is relevant here is that it illustrates how the methodological approaches I intended to shape the research also gave shape to the research outputs. A policy watershed suggests a point of departure from the way policy had previously been done. The watershed policy suggests this policy instigates a ground-breaking change in the way history will be taught. It is posed as a binary question. However, in line with the assemblage logic, the response to the question need not result in a binary either/or answer. It may be neither, it may be both, it may be a bit of both, and/or it may be something altogether different. Approaching the research through a disciplined engagement with nonlinear thinking gave me a level of discomfort. There was always more to this policy than was initially apparent. As I got closer to the policy, I was confronted by my own reaction to the way the policy was to be implemented, causing me to review my positionality with respect to it.

Methodological Considerations

Assemblage thinking in the context of this research is not just viewed as forming a useful theoretical construct but can also be applied “*primarily* as a methodological-analytical framework” (Baker & McGuirk, 2017, p. 429). In proposing this they identify four “epistemological commitments” (p. 427) necessary to critically approach what is being examined:

- The phenomena being researched should be approached accepting that multiplicity rather than singular explanations determine paths of causality. As is pointed out, assemblages are “the product of multiple determinations that are not reducible to a single logic” (Collier & Ong, 2005, p. 12).
- Acceptance that “processuality” (Baker & McGuirk, 2017, p. 431) *is* the way the phenomena form. What happens during the process of arrangement as heterogeneous components orientate themselves or are organised by other components, actors, or assemblages is central in perceiving the phenomena under investigation. Ong (2007) perceives such interactions as “promiscuous entanglements [that] crystallize different conditions of possibility” (p. 5)
- An assemblage methodology needs be committed to identifying the efforts which create and sustain assemblages. McCann (2011) explains that “assemblages are always coming apart as much as coming together, so their existence in particular configurations is something that must be continually *worked at*” (p. 145, emphasis in the original).
- While the assemblage methodologies noted above apply orient the researcher’s disposition towards multiplicity, processuality, and labour, they need also be committed to an “auto critical mindset” (Baker & McGuirk, 2017, p. 432). This avoids the temptation to develop explanatory frameworks that work against the fluid and flexible approach of the methodology, which in many ways mirrors the assemblage of a phenomena under observation.

It is with these four commitments that assemblage thinking is applied directly as a methodology.

Policies are transmitted in text—spoken and heard but also written as Apthorpe (1997) characterises as the “writ of language” (p. 44). The precision of the policy text is critical. Meaning turns on the selection and ordering of words, much like the title of my research. Likewise, the discourse resulting from the word selection generates its own words and

meanings. The sources that provide the data for the analysis will be public speeches, Hansard records, publicly available documents from various government departments, web pages (including opinion blogs, press releases, and media reports), and social media posts on the topic. Knowledge generated from the discussions held at the many conferences on the topic will be limited to those that I attended. Not all dialogues are captured within this range of sources. Missing are those held in semipublic spaces not visible to me as a researcher, such as marae, political party meetings, and school board or community meetings. I know, for example, that the University of Waikato held some seminars on the topic, but I was unable to attend these. However, I anticipate that others who did are also likely to be undertaking a study of this so that will in future offer us opportunities for comparisons of the completed research. Likewise, discussions at marae may well be covered by those looking at this from Māori or, more broadly, Indigenous perspectives. Teachers may cover the view of schools, curriculum, and pedagogical perspectives. Policy researchers may look at the party-political angles, particularly if they perceive a newly emerging pattern within the policy framework. I expect that there is plenty of space for a variety of perspectives to gaze upon the policy and respond to it from their respective specialist disciplinary or multidisciplinary vantagepoints.

To answer the questions *why* and *why now*, the various perspectives around the policy needed to be analysed. Critical discourse analysis could have been used to seek threaded meanings and themes emanating from the tangle of discourses on the topic, faithful to a Foucauldian approach (Foucault, 2002). However, using that method with precision to map these within the research time frame while concentrating on the assemblage approach is, I believe, beyond the scope of this research. This research will not narratively track threads of causality obtained from evidentiary sources to demonstrable conclusions. Instead, discourse will be used as one of the components brought together in assemblages. The assemblage method is in my mind, like a telescope, intended to observe what was hitherto unseen—used to isolate clusters of evidence,

understand the diffractions of perspective caused by predisposition or power, and identify any surprising voids. The method is not intended to precisely map the cosmos but, rather, to perceive patterns of distribution. Nevertheless, discourse is one of the elements that researchers of education policy focus on. It is suggested that defining “policy” in its technical and public understandings is important, together with including both emic and etic perspectives and “shedding light on the social and cultural processes in which policies are implemented” (Hamann & Rosen, 2011, p. 475). Yet how to approach this research is not bounded by the walls of the library but the physical spaces of the wider world. It was when encountering these that predictability of theory needs to bend to the pragmatism of the realities facing the researcher.

I intended to begin this research by speaking with the policy architects, especially those instrumental in the policy’s creation. I assumed those to be the presenters of the policy, the Prime Minister, and the Minister of Education. I wanted to ask them to step through their recollection of the policy’s assemblage. Another potential participant was Kelvin Davis in his role as Associate Minister of Education responsible for Māori Education. He sponsored the antecedent work on the policy as a result of findings coming from a Māori Affairs Committee’s report to the House after it considered the Anderson and Bell Petition² and proposed a day of commemoration for the New Zealand Land Wars (Māori Affairs Committee, 2016). He was speaking with Ministry of Education officials about “supporting teaching and learning of Te Tiriti o Waitangi” (Cleaver, 2019c, p. 2) just before the announcement. Interviews were intended to be used to triangulate the information available in the documentary and online sources. These would provide the emic perspective on the policy development and other

² The Petition of Waimarama Anderson and Leah Bell, two students from Ōtorohanga College, who aimed to raise awareness of the Land Wars include these histories into the New Zealand Curriculum as a course of study for all New Zealanders and to memorialise those who gave their lives on New Zealand soil with a statutory day of recognition. They presented a petition of some 12,000 signatures in December 2015m for consideration by the Māori Affairs Committee.

considerations that may have led to the policy announcement and not necessarily visible in the etic discourse. In the initial approach, participants were asked to offer their time or suggest others whom *they* thought I should be talking with. During the interview, I would elicit their willingness to put me in contact with the analysts and drafters of the policy. This variant of the snowball method for recruiting participants would have allowed me to probe deeper and broader by making contacts if and when they became available rather than adopting an a priori approach in a situation where access is not at all assured.

In preparation for conducting semistructured interviews, the approach was investigated and particularly useful methodological material for use in the context of research of educational policy was found (Galletta, 2001). As the research progressed, it was anticipated that interviews would become more structured as the familiarity with the topic grows and more specific detail was sought, as described by Weller (1998). Despite the planning, including the preparation of a Participant Information Sheet (Appendix 2) and Consent Form (Appendix 3) I had no control over whether my participants would be willing to take part in the research. This in itself does not create a critical weakness in the research, but it did limit access to the important emic perspectives on the policy. Part way through the research, it became apparent that I would not be able to rely on the interviews I sought. In the end, only one participant, Graeme Ball, President of the New Zealand History Teachers' Association (NZHTA), agreed to be interviewed. While that interview was invaluable in contextualising and triangulating the timelines of activity, it did not provide me with the emic perspective I was looking for. In the midst of a COVID-19 crisis, I suspected this was likely to happen. Education Minister Hipkins helpfully confirmed, however, that "the information [I] was asking for is publicly available" (C. Hipkins, personal communication, 30 June 2021). Confident, therefore, that the documents to which I was pointed are key to the assemblage of the policy, gave me a new starting point. I

had a list of documentary evidence to work with, together with clues about how others perceived the origins of the policy (Belgrave, 2020).

To prepare to engage with the topic, I had already attended a public meeting at Naenae in Lower Hutt featuring historian Vincent O'Malley, talking about his research on the Waikato Wars and Minister Hipkins talking about the policy (*Matariki talk: Local histories matter*, 2020, July 11).

To compensate for unsuccessfully attracting participants to be interviewed, I sought to better understand the context of teaching of history and histories. I supplemented this by attending the 2021 NZHTA Conference at Waitangi and the 2021 New Zealand Historical Association (NZHA) Conference, which, due to the COVID-19 restrictions, was delivered online. These helped me to identify a range of conversations taking place. Granted, all these tended to be contexts where actors were largely supportive of the policy, but that did not stop people asking questions, expressing concerns, and, like me, trying to understand what such a policy approach might mean for Aotearoa New Zealand. I therefore needed to adopt other methods of social and cultural research.

Lury and Wakeford (2012) recommend an approach to research methodology that opens new modes of analysis and offers a number of “devices” for conducting contemporary social and cultural research. Within this, a number of approaches are necessary for analysing policy documents themselves. While the patchwork of methods including categories, lists, and numbers are immediately useful for describing the policy, other methodological approaches are also valuable. Assessing the trove of social media discussion helps to understand the coding of the discussions taking place within and between groups. More traditionally, the themes may emerge from the dialogue or, at times, the diatribe, which is harvested from the varying catchments of social media, blogs, and electronic traditional media. While these channels are coded by the environment that itself attracts, excludes, and censors contributors, such conversations point to the components of the policy assemblage. Communicating with actors

that had taken part in the processes of government that resulted in the policy also gives voice to individuals who took part in preparing documents and included themselves in the discourse on the policy. It is within the analysis for each of these sources that the threads of connections, matrixed within analytical categories, lists, and numbers, that will help plot the constellation of components that assembled to produce this policy. Ruppert (2012, p. 45), however, challenges researchers to remain reflexive in deploying classifications as they construct the social world within their research. So how does one make sense of all this?

One way was to perceive the relationships between elements within time. This prompted the development of the “rhizome map,” illustrated in Figure 5, but which is more clearly displayed and described later in this paper. This had its genesis in the need for producing a timeline that listed events and the dates associated with them, simply to understand the flow of action. Options for producing this included a chronological list or a list with major events and subordinated events inset in a multilevel list, or nonchronological clusters of themes and events and dates around each of those. Neither was satisfactory because the chronological lists did not fully portray the relationships between components while the latter thematic approach did not convey the temporal relationships between components. A simple linear timeline was therefore developed using Microsoft Visio drawing software and standard timeline shapes adapted from the software’s schedule stencil. However, even this simple mapping required a delineation of the sorts of activities that the various components represent. Despite this, from that, an ever more complex timeline evolved, which required the adoption of colour and multiple layers, like strata, to demonstrate how the events and actors arranged themselves in the drama.

partnership exists between the tangata whenua and the Crown, there exists (at least) two worldviews that should be acknowledged in research. I do not have knowledge of the tikanga surrounding mātauranga Māori or specialist knowledge relating to Māori history. In that way, I was not equipped to even consider the option of researching this policy from a te ao Māori viewpoint. My inclination therefore was to look towards those models of thinking that have been informed by my own cultural perspectives and my own experiences of learning or researching history. During the research, I expected to encounter te ao Māori concepts and approaches. I did not want to treat these as a label, an attribute, or appendage as may occur within a colonialised construct of thought. I felt that by being informed by Smith's guidance on the way researchers should approach interactions with Indigenous knowledge and realities, I was adequately prepared for such encounters. For me, this was not merely a consciousness raising exercise as Mercier (2020) warns against.

So, to borrow a phrase that one historian used when talking of history (Vincent O'Malley in Wernicki, 2020b), I embarked on the journey: “Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua, I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past.”³ With this approach, I sought to demonstrate how in examining this policy with the experience of my perspectives could help to open up a universe of possibilities rather than simply attracting catastrophic collisions of opinions. In doing so, I wanted, in some small way, to progress the work of decolonisation as proposed by Thomas (2020). As part of the thinking and writing about the ethics processes, I considered how I needed to remain mindful of my positionality regarding this research. I decided to adopt a methodological approach to supplement any ethics-based ways of maintaining a perspective on my own biases. I intended to outline my experience of encountering the survey the Ministry of Education conducted as part of the public consultation

³ For detail of this Māori proverb see Ramek, L. (2016). Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua: 'I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past'. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 17(4), 387–398. <https://doi.org/DOI: 10.1177/1463949116677923> .

on the draft curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2021a). This is because such an approach would allow me to examine my positionality with reference to the materials without encountering research participants and thus any potential ethical dilemmas.

Massey University's Human Ethics Code (Massey University, 2017b) does not, nor could it, describe all the dynamic research environments and unique ethical considerations that researchers face. Its research values do not consider all the contexts in which the researcher may find themselves, but they are nevertheless intended to encompass all such contexts. While the MUHEC does not provide a prescribed way of acting in every given situation, ultimately, the actions of researchers, including their treatment and relationships with participants or the way they obtain and present knowledge, are judged against the standards of the Code. Preparation for the ethics approval included the examination of key ethical considerations that required close ethical scrutiny before commencing research. I explored the ethical issues that I imagined signalled the greatest risks. I thought about the considerations that need to be given to my research participants. I considered the implications of this research on tangata whenua and the obligations all researchers have, through the University, to the principles of the Treaty (Massey University, 2017b). I also considered my researcher's bias to be an ever-present factor in this research. At the very least it should be made visible.

At this point, I feel it necessary to confirm that I did not think that I embarked on this research as a complete novice. In getting to this juncture, as students of anthropology, we had been exposed to its theory and practice. We were encouraged to read ethnographies as well as consider and question the anthropologists' ethical positions. We had been exposed to anthropological and ethnographic exemplars as well as the more notorious episodes in anthropological practice. We had seen how in the evolution brought about through the passage of time, theoretical and methodological positions had shifted to bring us to the point where we

are at now. Therefore, my intended research needs to be put into perspective. The scope and breadth of my research does not propose fieldwork with vulnerable informants, nor does it include placing my participants or myself in harm's way by researching in precarious or dangerous surroundings. The research is essentially studying a process that unfolded at the intersections between the political and social domains of policy formation and history teaching in Aotearoa New Zealand. The research does, however, take place in a public space and therefore there are certain considerations that must be given to those features of the policy landscape being surveyed. I came into this research through a recognised anthropological domain, supported by supervisors in a structured setting that was innately mindful of ethical issues.

When looking at ethics in this familiar academic setting, before actually undertaking fieldwork, I felt anxiety when interacting with the institutional ethics processes. These seemingly insist on the need to address *all* the relevant ethics questions. However, tensions around ethics committee processes exist. Some academics see them as better serving bio-medical approaches rather than the social sciences (Stewart-Withers, 2016). Others characterise this as putting these ethics approaches between disciplines into conflict (Chenhall et al., 2011). Moreover, the adoption of universal principles is not seen as relevant in all contexts (Msoroka & Amundsen, 2017). While researching this policy seems an innocuous scholarly exercise, it rests in the political sphere, a potentially public space that attracts its own risks. I recognise that the perception of the research and the researcher can vary when viewed from the vantagepoints of different participants. I imagined a scenario, for example, that in critiquing the policy, the researcher's outputs are used to validate or admonish the policymakers' approach by their political friends and foes. My key research question was to understand why a policy approach was taken to achieve a specific end rather than selecting alternative pathways of making such changes. Those may well have been a cheaper, easier, and quicker option. It could be argued, for example, that the policy approach,

with its public machinations, including consultation, potentially added up to a year of bureaucratic churn for something that could have been delivered by the beginning of 2021. A member of the Opposition, or a body such as the Taxpayer's Union, could potentially use such detail to point to waste of public money. Indeed, they frequently and vociferously attempt to attack the Labour Government on any number of issues (*ACT New Zealand, "News", 2021; News, 2021; Press Releases, 2021*). The question nevertheless remains, whether the level of interest in this specific area would attract even the most ardent of critics, given all the other policy areas critics could target.

This situation is compounded by my own political dispositions, to borrow a relevant term from Bourdieu (1998). My political preferences are most aligned with the National Party (Vox Pop Labs, 2020). If I were to encounter something that grates with my personally held political beliefs during the research, then I imagine that I may be compelled to mention it in the thesis. However, I would be aghast if this research, entered into in good faith as an academic exercise, were to be taken and used for political point scoring. Alternatively, if, in undertaking this research, I were to encounter problematic stances or activity taken by actors, why should I not take a principled stand against this? The question posed here is deliberately provocative. Activist approaches are commonly employed by anthropological researchers, albeit utilised more as a method (Hale, 2006). The fact remains that involvement in such activism is not what motivated me to do this research in the first place. I would naturally shy away from taking such public positions. Furthermore, I doubted that this project would uncover anything other than what was contained in the policy and subsequent consultation material. These research outputs are not intended for anything other than academic discourse, not used as a political cudgel. Of course, such a scenario is possible. However, I intended to write up the analysis in a way that did not provide inflammatory content. My supervisors also provided critical scrutiny, thereby assisting me in avoiding problematic language.

Extant research, much like caselaw for the legislature, provides guidance through precedence on how to negotiate particular ethical challenges. The foremost risk at the onset of my research was to secure participants, particularly significant actors, who, should they become dissatisfied with the research outputs, could subsequently claim reputational harm. This happened in the case of an ethnographic account of an aid programme. In that case, policy professionals attempted to withdraw their support and “insist on their consent to research findings or publication” (Mosse, 2011, p. 51). Being clear with participants that their involvement is that of a participant and therefore grants no additional rights in validating or authorising the overall research did not help in this case. For my project, I believe that following the recommended process for informing participants of what is asked of them then giving adequate opportunity to review, correct, or withdraw what they had supplied would greatly reduce risk. Awareness of the audience seems to be key here. Cunha (2017), reflecting on her work with policymakers, considered the ethnographic approach a useful way of providing “the sense of *context*, of *complexity*, and of *process*” (p. 110, emphasis in original). She usefully concludes that apart from the storytelling, calling on theory as a “mode of reasoning” (p. 112) allows the ethnographic knowledge to be appreciated by a wider circle of specialists, including policymakers. This was useful advice because ensuring benefits accrue for participants is an important ethical consideration.

In this research, I did not intend to specifically explore Māori perspectives of the policy. I therefore did not see an issue with my research perpetuating the colonial project with respect to knowledge acquisition without the approval of the people being referred to. I also did not imagine any of the issues arising of the type encountered by van Meijl (2000), as I appreciate that views about the policy will sit along a spectrum, be they expressed by Māori or anyone else. By adopting this position, I concede that I will only be able to make claims about the data collected from participants or from public documents so not necessarily seeking Māori

perspectives specifically. However, given the small number of interviews, I could not make claims on behalf of Pākehā or any other group either. While this may provide a culturally “safe” or neutral environment, I am still mindful that, as Thomas (2020) points out, the work of decolonisation is ongoing. While I have difficulty wearing the mantle of Pākehā in an environment where the conversation is a binary Māori or Pākehā, then having no iwi connection, I default into the latter category. However, I adopted the mindset that I reject the baggage that comes with the term. I favoured therefore the categorisation as tauīwi (alien, stranger, foreigner, or non-Māori), nevertheless conceding my positionality is shaped by the winds of colonisation. Yet I cannot speak for all tauīwi. I can only speak from my own perspective, based on my background and appreciation of my own history. From that, I have developed an empathy for the struggle of peoples for independence. I have witnessed how stories of the past can be used as a political tool, as has been experienced in my native Poland (Jaskulowski et al., 2018) and more recently as a justification for war in Ukraine (Putin, 2022). I also appreciate the difficulties of suppressed or ideologically generated history. I felt qualified to recognise the inherent bias in the historical sources as they related to the policy. I just needed to make sure that in the writing I did not inadvertently add to the colonising project, as did Dominy (1990). In the writing, I kept in mind that in taking a position, it should not be framed in a way that it could be used as a tool for expressing opposition to a group. The Research Adequacy guidance from the MUHEC provides questions that may be used to identify problematic areas relating to project preparation, data collection, and also research outputs (Massey University, 2017b). None of these applied to this research in any substantial way.

Like Thomas (2020) I remain in the midst of an ongoing process of learning Māori, te reo, and tikanga, but progress is slow. I do this because I appreciate that diverse types of knowledges are relevant for my scholarship. Given my interest in history, I expect this will be essential if undertaking further research in the history of Aotearoa New Zealand. I have therefore

considered whether my research in any way will use māturutanga Māori knowledge. I had also reviewed Massey University's values and behaviours with respect to people generally and Māori specifically (Massey University, 2017a). Given that I am not versed in the tikanga of research, I sought not to work with iwi or hapū views on the policy. Therefore, using Mead's (2003) guidance on tikanga, I do not expect this research to meet the level necessary for requiring consultation with Māori. In coming to this conclusion, I have questioned whether I was a victim of "Pākehā paralysis" as Tolich (2002) entitles her paper on the subjects. However, I simply do not see this as falling within the scope of my research. Likewise, I did not intend considering gendered or class perspectives as these do not pertain to this research even though they could be. Saying that, however, if Māori perspectives emerge in a way that require ethical considerations, then I planned to discuss the implication of this with my supervisors and, if necessary, seek further ethical approvals. What I was acutely aware of is that the histories of Aotearoa New Zealand have versions that have taken a colonial perspective. These have been produced from the colonial mould and, therefore, suffer from its biases. Smith (2012) specifically addresses this, noting the importance of history to Indigenous peoples. She also outlined the critique mounted of Western history by Indigenous scholars. Recent histories have challenged those narratives with scholarship taking a more considered approach, mindful of the different perspectives in the sources and the way history can be told (for example see O'Malley, 2019; Salmond, 2017). It was this colonial baggage that I was not keen to take along on the journey.

In thinking about ethics, having discussions with supervisors, lecturers, and classmates, I sought to evaluate my own biases. Lee (2015) concludes that "[q]uestions that research participants ask the anthropologists during fieldwork provide a critical way to reflect upon historical and persistent issues related to field-work, such as positionality, self-reflexivity and methodology" (p. 39). Ideally, this would be best assessed in a field environment, but this would need to be

done undertaking fieldwork with participants, for which ethics approval was obviously needed. Because fieldwork with informants was not possible without ethics approval, I instead encountered the field of my intended research by examining documents—artefacts arising from the policy. As an outcome of the policy, the Ministry of Education (2021a) opened public consultation, seeking feedback on the proposed new curriculum. My initial thinking was that it would work as a methodological approach to autoethnographically document my own feelings and views on the new curriculum through participation in this public consultation process even though the analysis of the draft curriculum sits outside this research. I considered, therefore, that the public consultation sits outside the ethics approval processes because I participated in it primarily as a citizen, not as a scholar. I would have done this anyway because I have an interest in the way that New Zealand history is taught in schools. By reflecting on my experience of it, this would provide the opportunity to view the material and my positionality relating to it. My intent was to express any concerns that, in the keenness to ensure a representative history is taught as would be expected under the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, that its content should also consider the 27.4% of New Zealanders that were not born here (Stats NZ, 2019).

A Reflexive Observation of Self

A reflexive approach needed to be taken, not only because it is an essential feature of anthropological research but because my experience had been that in the past, reflexivity had often altered my taken-for-granted stances. I felt I had the skills to write in a way that the information provided by participants would retain its fidelity, despite any personal perceptions of their position and its interpretation. Furthermore, there was always more than one set of eyes critically assessing my research outputs. The supervision system supports objectivity, with supervisors able to guide or call out situations where they themselves are not comfortable with the wording or the overall research direction. Given that staff are held to the MUHEC, arguably

even more so than students, significant ethics breaches may have career implications for supervisors. If, by my actions, I was to embarrass or otherwise compromise the professional integrity of my supervisors, such a situation would be immensely impactful on me. Therefore, there exists a level of cultural and social pressure to engage with the topic of ethics in a forthright and open manner. As it happens, we are all members of professional bodies, such as the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/New Zealand (ASSA/NZ), with its own code of ethics (Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/New Zealand, 2015). This serves to essentially bind me with my supervisors in a compact with respect to ethics, to which we individually and communally subscribe to. Apart from University ethics processes, it is also against these standards that my research may be assessed. This is because my membership of the organisation is contingent on agreeing to the code of ethics, so, by default, these become part of my research practice.

I expected, having gone through the process, to be able to use the notes and recordings taken of the experience of providing feedback on the public consultation for two purposes. First, by reflexively analysing the way I approached the exercise, I hoped to provide some insights about the nature of my own biases, which subsequently may highlight ethical issues. In writing about these here in a relatively formal but essentially private setting, my intent was to use the exercise in a safe place in which to outline my thinking. I reasoned that by following this approach and before seeking ethics approval, I would gain a greater level of confidence that I have imagined the breadth of scenarios from which ethical issues may arise. Second, it would provide data and insights for my thesis. I prepared the approach methodologically by planning what I expected to do before accessing the material. This essentially involved reviewing the public consultation documents and taking part in the survey. The survey questions and actual feedback were documented so that I could reflect on my initial perceptions. My actual responses to the survey questions were not anticipated to be as relevant as was my response to the overall consultation

experience. I drafted the responses in Word and posted them into the online form so I could give considered feedback. My intention in reviewing the audio and the questions following the taking of the survey was to identify any ethical concerns that would need to be taken up in the ethics approval process.

Having completed the greater part of the thinking about the ethics issues, I then completed the Ministry of Education's (2021b) curriculum survey, *Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories in the New Zealand Curriculum*. In doing this, I gained a deeper appreciation of the content of the curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2021e). I experienced going through the process of discovery in a way that a member of the public would have, reviewing the curriculum and answering the questions. The survey authors suggested it would take 5–10 minutes to complete, but I took considerably more. I made my concerns known around aspects of the curriculum. The portrayal of Aotearoa New Zealand history as Māori history and the history of colonisation was confronting—"Māori history is the foundational and continuous history of Aotearoa New Zealand" (Ministry of Education, 2021b, p. 2) the draft curriculum states. Given that I do not whakapapa to Māori, I was disappointed that *my history* was not adequately covered and seemed to appear lumped together with the colonisers. In class discussion, I had previously spoken of my perception of standing apart from the Māori/Pākehā narrative, also acknowledging that doing so does not necessarily privilege objectivity. However, my submission pushed back against the level of Māori history proposed in the curriculum and, in doing so, I was quick to point out I do not align myself with the rhetoric of those who seek to deny Māori partnership rights. I certainly did not agree with such sentiments as were made evident in a number of submissions to the Māori Affairs Committee on the topic of New Zealand's commemoration of the Land Wars (see, for example, Calder, 2016; Faulkner, 2016; George, 2016).

This was, however, not the end of the matter. In stepping back and reflecting on my own positionality, pondering the questions asked and the way I answered them, I realised I was looking at something altogether different. By approaching the survey in the way that I did, I had lost sight of the way the curriculum was worded and framed. I realised that the curriculum can be seen as offering a decolonised way of teaching of New Zealand histories. It acknowledges the right of tangata whenua generally and, more notably, the mana whenua locally to tell the history of Aotearoa New Zealand. It dawned on me that this is not about either balance or equality, about Māori and Pākehā, or about Tauīwi. By adopting an advocacy position of seeing *my history* expressed in the draft curriculum, I did not necessarily adopt a “titiro, whakarongo ... korero” (Massey University, 2017b, p. 10) approach, as recommended in the Researcher Values of the MUHEC Code. I realised that I needed to abandon my preconceptions about advocating for seeing things in the curriculum. By pulling away from that as a motive in the research, it then allowed me to focus on peeling back the layers of meaning in what the policy was proposing. In light of this realisation, I felt it necessary to withdraw my submission. It no longer represented an appropriate response to what I perceived to be the intent of the curriculum. Shifting from advocacy for history to be taught in a particular way to listening to the ways history can be taught is more aligned to what this research was about. These are the very values referred to in the Code (Smith cited in Massey University, 2017b, p. 10). However, for me, just reading about them, without experiencing their application, was not enough. Sometimes, I best learn through practical engagement in the field rather than perceiving it as a theoretical setting.

This exercise did not itself close the matter of ethics. I tried to remain vigilant to the way I approached the discussion around Māori and non-Māori perspectives of this topic, if indeed such classifications can be so easily demarcated. It is up to the reader to judge the extent to which this has been achieved in the next chapter, which explores and analyses the policy.

CHAPTER 4 – EXPLORING POLICY PATHWAYS

This analysis chapter is presented in three acts, with a prologue bringing into focus the environment that shaped the teaching of history in Aotearoa New Zealand schools. The first act explores the changes that subsequently produced an environment in which change was not only made possible but became immanent. The second and central act will discuss the emergence of the singularity of the policy, including an exploration of the question of why this policy emerged. The third act explores the waves of activity that were generated by the policy singularity and the responses that were created in its wake. To help negotiate this temporal terrain, a timeline map will be used as a guide to placemark specific events on a linear scale. The intent of this is to help describe the ordering of things, but it also helps to contextualise the individual and visible points of emergence by the various rhizomic components, which collectively sustained and influenced the policy singularity, and which were themselves influenced by its emergence.

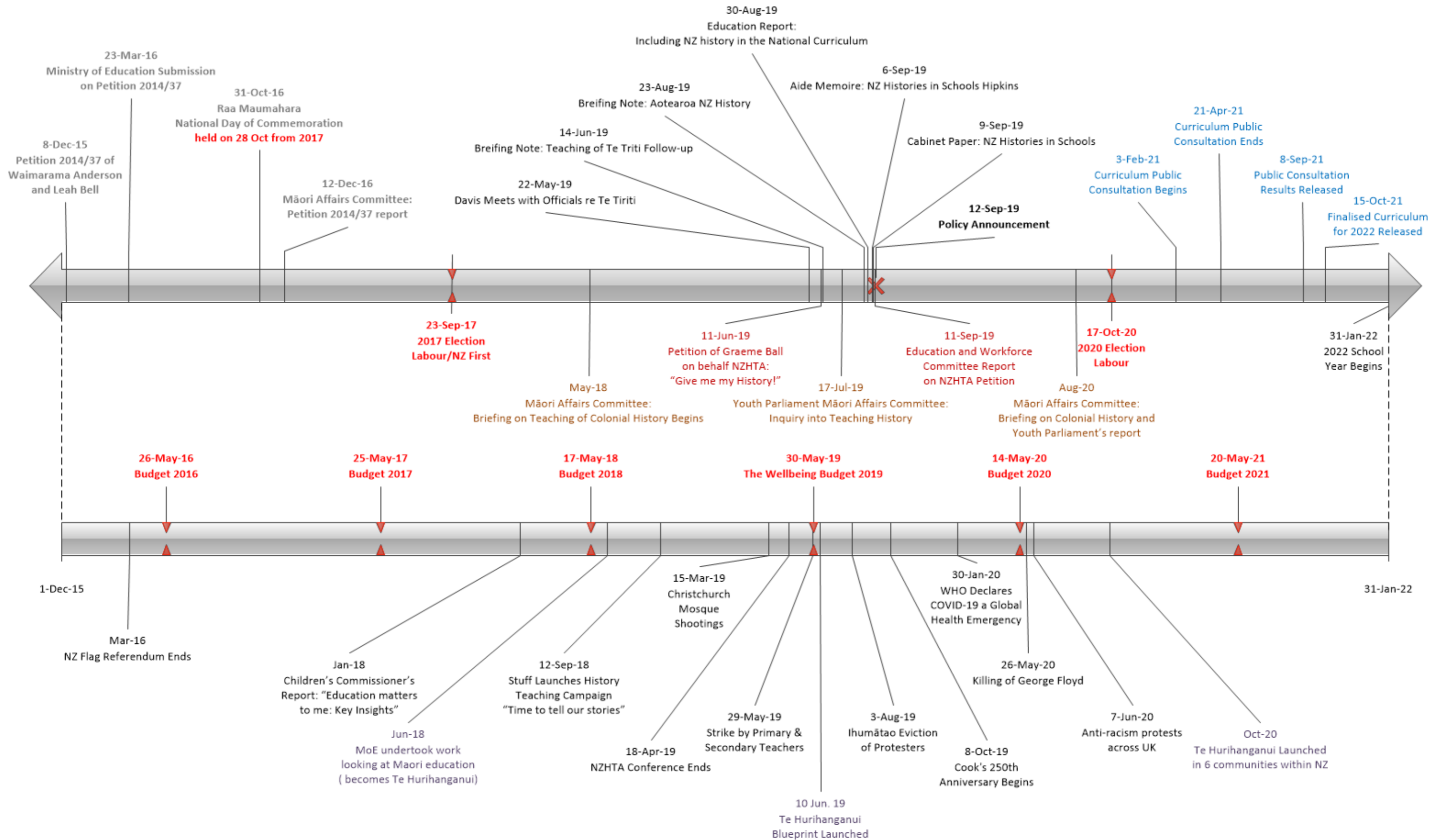
The “rhizome map” (Figure 6) is the guide that is used throughout the section to orientate the discussion. Along the top are shown the key dates of the Anderson/Bell petition, the Policy announcement, and its antecedent documents as well as the subsequent public consultation events and releases. Beneath the main timeline are shown the activities of the Parliamentary Committees that engaged in promoting the policy as well as the two election dates, which help punctuate the timeline between its beginning on December 1, 2015, to its end on January 31, 2022. In the language of assemblage, the *legitimacy* of elections provides the mechanism by which government decisions are made. At this point, it became evident that adding any further detail risked overloading the map and thus reducing its utility altogether. Therefore, a copy of the timeline was reproduced and placed beneath the original. Along its top were shown the budget dates for the period. This provided a view of the regular heartbeat of a government’s decision making. Budgets secure the necessary resources, directing work effort as represented

in part by the size of the financial envelope dedicated towards governments' policies. Furthermore, the *emergent properties* of the policy components are *contingent* on those budgets.

Along the bottom of the copied timeline are a number of notable events that help frame the contexts around that time. As explained previously in the methods section (Chapter 3), the points in time are only the visible representations that punctuate the appearance of activity. All the points have themselves antecedent activities that gave rise to their appearance, and many have subsequent actions that were needed to be undertaken to sustain their existence or efficacy. Throughout the analysis section, excerpts of the map will be highlighted as the light of analysis focuses on certain timeframes or the specific relationships of the respective components that together make the policy assemblage. While the temporal dimension is therefore important in this analysis, equally relevant are consideration of the *intensities* that exist between components that produced the *individuation process* that brought about the policy singularity.

Figure 6

Mapping the Rhizome - Timeline of the ANZH Policy



Prologue: A View of the Space

The aim of this prologue is to identify the key components in the existing history teaching assemblage to describe what and how they code, and how it came to be that out of their actions and interactions that it became possible, or even likely, that something like the history curriculum policy would emerge. I begin by discussing the State-Education component. It is, perhaps, the most powerful component in shaping the history education assemblage through its state-mandated ability to decide the National Curriculum. Because of this, the engagement of State-Education in this project of change was critical to what could and did happen. What follows is a discussion of the coding of particular key components—students, politicians, educators, a youth/educator/state assemblage, and media—which, through their agreements and dissents, impelled a new trajectory.

The State-Education Component

In the assemblage of the state, education of its citizens is an essential component. This was recognised from the onset as it formed students “to become citizens of a great empire” (T.B.Strong, 1921, cited in Body, 2011, p. 6). To enable this the Ministry of Education (2021i) describes its role as being:

...the Government’s lead advisor on New Zealand's education system. We shape direction for education agencies and providers, and contribute to the Government’s goals for education (para. 1).

The Ministry of Education, as an organisational assemblage, operating within a wider State assemblage, provides a canvas on which are drawn the goals, aspirations and activities which guide the work of the Ministry. Indeed, the site’s hierarchical structure codes that order in its classification of the Ministry’s webpage (see Figure 7), logically arranged from the “Home” page, through “Our Work,” and then the *raison d'etre*, linking in with the authority of the elected officials designated as its Ministers. In describing this in such a way with this language, I am

Figure 7

Excerpt from Ministry of Education Sitemap

- [Our work About us](#)
 - [Education in New Zealand](#)
 - [Education agencies](#)
 - [The role of the Ministry of Education](#)
 - [Crown entity board appointments](#)
 - [Crown entity monitoring](#)
 - [Our purpose and vision](#)
 - [Our Ministers](#)
 - [Our leaders](#)
 - [Careers in education](#)
 - etc

Note: Excerpt from Ministry of Education: Sitemap 2022)

evoking the images of the State apparatus—in this case certainly not despotic, but it would nevertheless be authoritarian in the context in which it operates (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). One small component of that work is the development, and subsequent the implementation of the history teaching policy.

What is taught is signalled through the structure of a curriculum “which set[s] the direction for student learning and provide[s] guidance for schools as they design and review their curriculum” (Ministry of Education, 2017a, para. 1). It is noteworthy, because it is only moderately apparent viewing the Ministry site that an important characteristic feature of the New Zealand education system has two components. The National Curriculum is composed of *both the New Zealand Curriculum* as well as *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*, which “describes the essential knowledge, skills, values and attitudes appropriate to Māori-medium schools” (Ministry of Education, 2017b, p. 4). The Ministry explains this by providing the whakapapa of the first Māori education strategy, launched in 1999 after consultation of both the Ministry and Te Puni Kōkiri [Ministry of Māori Development] with Māori in the previous year. Republished in 2005, then refreshed in 2008 as *Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success: The Māori Education Strategy 2008–2012*, and further extended in 2013 as *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success 2013–2017*, its latest iteration from 2020 is *Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia* (Ministry of Education, 2021g). This signifies the responsibility the Ministry has in collaborating with Māori as Treaty partners on a curriculum taught cognisant of te reo and te ao Māori. However, as a

non-Māori I am unclear whether such strategies, as signifiers of the work undertaken by Ministry, achieve what Māori would expect from their relationship with the Crown.

If simply changing the curriculum drives the teaching of history, then it seems a straightforward task for the machinery of government to effect change through use of its authority. However, a policy, springing into existence through it being announced, like a singularity, is also just a component of a greater assemblage. The autonomy for schools and kura to teach specific subjects had been a taken-for-granted cornerstone of education policy by the Ministry of Education. In their submission to the Māori Affairs Committee on Waimarama Anderson and Leah Bell's petition, the Ministry of Education did not support the move "to include the New Zealand Land Wars in the National Curriculum as a compulsory subject or topic of study (Hughes, 2016, paras. 13-15). The rationale was that it would fundamentally change both the National Curriculum and the extant governance arrangements of schools but also "erode the autonomy of Boards of Trustees to determine their own school/kura curriculum, thereby creating a difficult precedent" (Hughes, 2016, para. 14). This could be perceived as evidence of institutional inertia, resistance to make changes because the components are arranged in a predictable set of relationships to form the assemblage of the status quo. Alternatively, the component that can be described as a certain strata of the Ministry leadership may not yet have fully appreciated that the environment in which they were operating was changing. In this ambiguity of possibilities, where every different answer could have generated its own universe of futures, it is also a good place to start when looking at an assemblage.

Within a legal-technical entity, it was still nevertheless possible to have conflicting rules, opposing actions, or divergent interpretations, but once the decision was made it bound the assemblage with the component parts—given the instructional coding—to perform in certain ways. This serves as a useful example where intrinsic and extrinsic coding are not entirely

consistent. This then raises the option of extrinsic actions needing to be taken for the intrinsic coding, or recoding, to take root and thus realign the overall assemblage. In the policy recoding, there seems to be a desire to balance the coding of established positions that maintain autonomy within the local school or kura while mandating a coding of the National Curriculum that insists that specific historical topics outlined in the policy are locally taught. Moreover, the coding in the policy that sets the relationships between the actions of actors in teaching and learning acknowledges Māori and non-Māori, not just in having followed different routes to get to Aotearoa New Zealand but also acknowledging their own teaching and learning traditions. The teaching traditions have their own whakapapa emanating from a te ao Māori perspective, or a historiographic lineage, recognised at least in Western scholarship as originating from Herodotus, dubbed by Cicero as the “father of history” (Momigliano, 1966, p. 127). At least two traditions appear to be woven together by this policy as the components of Māori and history are melded together as something else when spoken of as Māori history. Less visible are the traditions of yet other approaches to acquiring and conveying historical knowledge. Each may have its own oral and ancient traditions of learning, educational assemblages arising from African, Asian, and Pacific regions, dominant in their own contexts and less visible but still very much present in the space that this policy assemblage occupies.

History, in the curriculum for 5 to 14-year-olds, prior to the policy announcement was barely recognisable as a component. Social studies is the term applied to the allocation of time teachers gave to the teaching of such diverse subjects as culture, the environment, history, and economics (Ministry of Education, 2007). The curriculum presently denotes all these in the achievement objectives of levels 1–5 (Years 1–10) as “social studies” while from levels 6 through 8 (Years 11–13), encompassing the NCEA standards, the disciplinary distinction is made between the subjects of social studies, history, geography, and economics (Ministry of Education, 2014a). Apart from the difficulty of coding history, a subject within the humanities

as a social science, there is a recording of history within the policy, isolated not just as a component of an assemblage but rather an assemblage in and of itself. Social studies, as a field of education, also has its own place in the New Zealand curriculum. The 1961 Department of Education's *Social Studies in the Primary School* defined social studies as:

“a study of people: of what they are like — their beliefs, their aspirations, their pleasures, the problems they have to face; of how and where they live, the work they have to do and the ways in which they organise themselves” (Mutch, 1996, p. 9).

Given the breadth of the topics taught and the amount of time to be spent on history is not large. The way social science is taught, while guided by the Ministry, is not proscribed.

While content is not specified, the approaches, professional practice, and strategies as well as conceptual themes are provided for teachers (Te Kete Ipurangi, n.d.). The time allocated to each of the components is likewise not specified. An Education Review Office (ERO) survey from 2005 found that, on average, the surveyed teachers taught 10–15 hours of social studies per term (Aitken & Sinnema, 2008). Assuming little has changed and extrapolating this suggests an average of 50 hours annually is spent on all social studies' topics. So, dedicated history teaching would make up less than 2% of all available school time.⁴ This seems disproportionate to the effort being focussed on the discussion of the policy. It therefore suggests that the value of the discussion to the policymakers, wider society, and the teachers and children themselves is not so much about the time focused on its teaching but rather the content of the teaching itself.

⁴ The figures are based on an average of 190 school days annually with 4.5 hours of teaching time each day. Furthermore, that time is on the generic social studies topic, not specifically focussed on history but also all the other domains folded under this particular assemblage. Assuming, that history topics make up a third of all the topics in the social studied curriculum, with all the other topics still needing to be taught, such as aspects of culture, geography, or economics, the amount of history teaching is likely to be in the region of 1.5-2% of the available time annually.

In research on the history curriculum, following the changes made from 2007 and embedded in the 2011 NCEA, it seems evident that curriculum development was very much a politically motivated process, with policy driving decisions signalling the “desired educational outcomes” (Hunter, 2011b, p. 6). The component of education therefore has a relationship with politics. Yet where the component of politics operates, it invariably brings with it the intense relationships with media as it navigates its messaging around particular positions. This may be perceived in the policy announcement, but this should be considered usual as opposed to it being somehow *good* or *bad* in the context of the social environment. It can be imagined that all educational policy is political because as with any given area of the social environment, decisions and trade-offs are made. So, whether that is in allocating resources to promote work or withdrawing funding from projects, the political mechanisms of the state are displayed.⁵ All such decisions refer to components of the political and educational because the decision outcomes often impact the component referred to as voters, on which the component referred to as politicians relies to maintain their jobs on a triannual cycle. For example, in 2018, the government also undertook a NCEA Review (New Zealand Council for Educational Research [NZCER], 2018). This seems to have been a common occurrence throughout the nation’s history as successive governments seek to maintain currency in their thinking about education (Education Central, 2018). It is also when political parties have the opportunity to reflect the intensity of their membership and incorporate their particular visions on how the assemblage of an ideal education system may look. Therefore, it may seem this is also the case with the history teaching policy. The assemblage component of politics, exerting power to achieve the aims of the incumbent government, is in company with the component of education through a policy assemblage to further their respective educational and political objectives.

⁵ These can be seen in debates about charter schools, assessment changes or whether te reo Māori should be taught throughout the compulsory school years.

In the ever-changing social environment, all politicians are subjected to the changes taking place with just their perspectives and ability to govern varying the decisions they make. In the new millennium, different approaches were needed from those taken in the past. Changing technologies, demographics, and teaching practices focussed politicians on the urgent need to review whether the education assemblage needed to be differently coded to support Māori. *Te Kotahitanga* was developed from 2001 with the aim to “investigate how to improve the educational achievement of Māori students in mainstream secondary school classrooms” (Ministry of Education, n.d.-b, para. 1). It was a multiphase project from 2001 to 2013, establishing a professional development programme for teachers to adopt a more culturally responsive pedagogy and culminating in the effective teaching profile that consisted of six elements:

1. Manaakitanga – teachers care for their students as culturally located human beings above all else;
2. Mana Motuhake – teachers care for the performance of their students;
3. Nga whakapiringatanga – teachers are able to create a secure, well-managed learning environment;
4. Wananga – teachers are able to engage in effective teaching interactions with Māori students as Māori;
5. Ako – teachers can use strategies that promote effective teaching interactions and relationships with their learners; and
6. Kotahitanga – teachers promote, monitor, and reflect on outcomes that, in turn, lead to improvements in educational achievement for Māori students.

(Ministry of Education, n.d.-c, para. 1).

In so doing, these Māori concepts—in the words of assemblage—were continuing to recode the technical language of teaching, appropriate to the Aotearoa New Zealand context.

The Wellbeing Budget of 2019 invested \$42 million over three years in a new programme to further build on the work of the *Te Kotahitanga* programme (Davis, 2019). Driving these changes was the greater diversity within schools, in which, by 2019, “the current ethnic breakdown in English-medium schools [was] approximately 50% Pākehā students, 22% Māori, 12% Asian, 10% Pacific, and 3% other ethnicities. Importantly, English-medium education [included] 90% of all ākonga Māori” (Curriculum Progress and Achievement Ministerial Advisory Group, 2019, p. 7). Teaching these students was a population of educators, whom Rafferty (2018) characterised as being 74% of Anglo-European ancestry. While teachers may assert that they are not biased, teachers were said to tend to avoid controversial topics. Rafferty demonstrates that this is not unique to New Zealand. Citing experiences from Northern Ireland (Barton & McCully, 2005), England (Harris & Reynolds, 2014) and Uganda (Datzberger & Donovan, 2018) she demonstrates that the way history is taught affects the ability of students to engage positively with historical events or conflicts. Furthermore, it is argued that an inclusive understanding of history is necessary for an inclusive society (Rafferty, 2018). Such thinking seemed to be gaining traction at the time Rafferty made her observations. So, if the assemblage responds to changes in the sociocultural milieu in which it operates, it may be attracted to respond to criticism by producing different engagements with components or simply shift intensities between components to produce different opportunities for change. There were other changes also being made that affected the thinking about the way the past was understood and taught at school.

To prepare teachers for engaging in more diverse classrooms the Education Council and the Ministry of Education produced a set of cultural competencies for teachers of Māori learners. From the introduction, the emphasis was made that the vital foundations for teachers having genuine and productive relationships with their Māori students included engagement with “whānau, iwi and wider communities” (Education Council, 2011, p. 0, para. 1). Then, one of

the themes that emerged from the Ministry of Education’s *Education Conversation | Kōrero Mātauranga* online survey conducted from 23 March 2018 to 3 July 2018, was the need for a greater emphasis on Māori History. Apart from the respondents referring to the Te Tiriti o Waitangi they also perceived “the need for better teaching of Māori culture and history. Some commented that these aspects of the Curricula should be compulsory” (Ministry of Education, 2018, p. 7). Yet Māori history already had made a place in the curriculum; *Te Takanga o te Wā–Māori History Guidelines for Years 1–8*, proposes a pedagogy which focuses around five themes: Whakapapa, tūrangawaewae, mana motuhake, kaitiakitanga, and whanaungatanga. These are hardly subversive themes and, rather than flowing against traditional history teaching, they instead refocus the telling of stories in the Māori voice, introducing the approach of local history being told by local experts within local contexts (Tamua, 2015). Furthermore, additional resources to support the teaching in this way were developed through private researchers and funders, even if the government declined to fund them (Hanly, 2016). Therefore, when Harcourt (2015) was arguing for place-based education to be the norm well before its introduction in the new policy, so by the time the policy was announced it was already arising from established practice. The Ministry of Education emphasised that there were existing resources as well as a \$1million annual budget administered by Te Puni Kōkiri, which “...supports whanau, hapu, and iwi to share knowledge, create resources and revitalise cultural practices in recognition of the wars and conflicts in Aotearoa New Zealand...” (Cleaver, 2019b, para 6.).

The work of education can be seen as continuous and contingent. Its continuity arises from the experiences of the past and continual pressure to adapt to the environment that moulds it—politics, society, and technology—a system of interactions that influence and reinforce each other’s orbit. This is no physical solar system, however. There are tensions, fashions, trains of thinking, and a host of other forces that influence by accentuating the interactions between components in a way that promotes change by expressing dissent or forming new alliances to

achieve different results to those in the existing space. Having outlined key elements of the already-existing history-teaching assemblage, I now turn to the dissents and agreements circulating within the field that contributed more directly to the emergence of the policy singularity.

Act 1: Dissent and Agreement—Interactions of Actions

This section focuses on the more immediate interactions of components that led to the singularity of the policy announcement. The actions of petitioners and those who did and did not support their position nevertheless were entwined in the conversations of the time, which, like fertile soil, produced new varieties of relationships between components that flourished under the zeitgeist of later times. Students, politicians, educators, academics, and the media all contributed to creating an increasingly loud public din about the teaching and learning of history. It was this din, simultaneously part of a zeitgeist and part of creating it, that produced the conditions that made the policy possible.

The Student Component

Some four years before the policy announcement, the discussion about how the history of the New Zealand Wars should be taught and commemorated was generated by the 2015 petition of Ōtorohanga College students Waimarama Anderson and Leah Bell. It led to the establishment of a National Day of Commemoration for the New Zealand Wars—He Rā Maumahara. Their additional request—to have the histories taught in all New Zealand schools—was not entertained. The difficulty in their approach and argument was that not all senior secondary school students took history as an NCEA elective, so the teaching of the Wars would have had to be at the junior secondary school level, being Years 9 and 10. Furthermore, they were focussing on the New Zealand Wars as the only topic of compulsory history teaching, which

seemed to be quite limiting in its scope, without exploring the wider contexts in which the Wars took place.

Of course, to effectively teach about the New Zealand Wars, teaching about the Treaty would also need to be included. Achieving the objective that all students be compulsorily given the opportunity to engage with the topic of the New Zealand Wars would require some sort of civics or history component to be included for all NCEA students or for it to be taught during the compulsory school curriculum, meaning before they are required to select NCEA subjects. As not all students would select either social studies or history at NCEA level, it had been suggested this be done in Year 10 so that all students would have at least some exposure to this history (Kidman & O'Malley, 2018). While this did not find favour with the Minister of Education at that time, some teachers embraced it. Hamilton Junior High School was one such school that supported the approach (Leaman, 2018). Because some schools did confront the difficult histories and others simply did not, learning this history was inconsistent across the country. The process of presenting the petition significantly advanced the debate about whether a day of commemoration should be set aside for the New Zealand Wars, with John Key, the Prime Minister of the day, ruling out the possibility of an additional holiday (Smallman & Small, 2018).

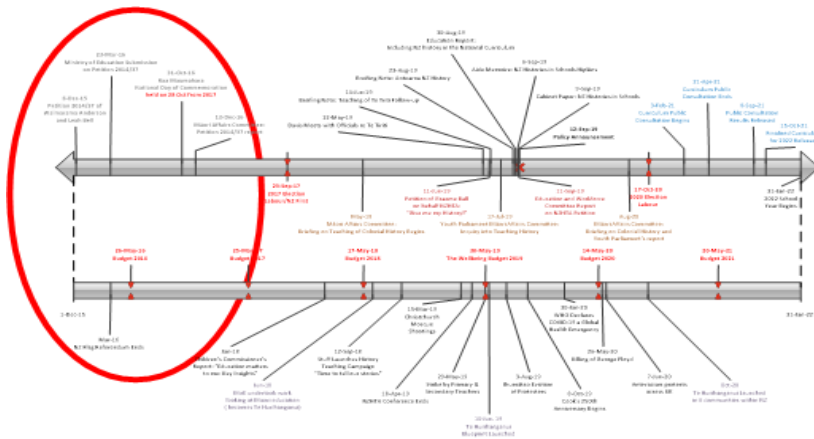
The Politician Component

The 2015 petition can also be seen in the context of the political discourse between the Labour Opposition and the National Government. The intensity can be implied in the proximity the petition's presentation to Parliament had with the New Zealand flag referendum. The petition was presented just a few days before the conclusion of the first referendum that provided the most popular flags to be voted on in the following year (English, 2015b). Then, the Māori Affairs Committee heard the Ministry of Education's response on the Anderson/Bell petition

the day before the second flag referendum closed (see Figure 8). The referendum itself created its own dialogues of support and opposition, capturing the imagination of nascent vexillologists who submitted their flags for consideration by a Flag Consideration Panel, which was made up of an eclectic group of New Zealanders, whose role was to “engage with the public about a

Figure 8:

Map Excerpt - Anderson/Bell Petition and the NZ Flag Referendum



possible New Zealand flag” (English, 2015a, para. 1). This provided significant media coverage for Prime Minister Key and the National Government, even if it did not fully capture the support of the public. Meanwhile, the Labour Opposition claimed that the flag referendum was providing a distraction from a faltering economy and that the \$27million cost of the referendum

could be better spent on “insulating houses, providing meals to kids in schools, things that are actually going to make a difference” (Small, 2015, para. 14).

While the parents, school, and wider Ōtorohanga community supported Bell and Anderson in preparing the petition project, this was also a political act. They asked for Nanaia Mahuta’s (Labour’s Member of Parliament [MP] for Hauraki-Waikato) help in presenting the petition to Parliament (Smallman & Small, 2018). The MP also worked with the two on the wording of the petition and helped with the process after being approached by the pair because of her strong links to the Kingitanga movement (Harris, 2017). Looking back from a future vantagepoint, it is striking how the narrative of the petition continues to be retold while the narratives of the flag referendum have passed into the historical archives. It is also striking that the two topics are not more intricately linked as potentially emerging from a common dialogue. Both arise from the growing importance of questions of nationhood, albeit emerging from quite distinct parts of the political spectrum.

The Educator Component

The perspective on whether the teaching of New Zealand histories was as a result of good teaching practice or, alternatively, was topic avoidance as the path of least resistance to avoid problematic discussions in classrooms is itself dependent on the coding agreed between the components of school boards and teachers. Institutional racism has been recognised as a coded reality within the country, directly impacting Māori communities (MacDonald, 2017). Therefore, there exists coding that academics and others who promote the teaching of history were still grappling with. One perspective on the intensity is that the difficulty is not *whether* to teach New Zealand history but *what* New Zealand histories to teach. The intensity between components is in who decides what to teach and when. If left to chance, this may attract choices of ease or of favouritism, which may not be ideal when seeking to cover a complex and

contested domain of material (Rata, 2020). Yet, this is precisely the situation before the policy approach was announced. The build up to the announcement produced its own intensities, with University of Canterbury senior lecturers Richard Manning and Garrick Cooper attacking teachers who refused to teach New Zealand history as being “wilfully blind and unprofessional” (Smallman, 2018, para. 2). One view held was that teachers have the ethical responsibility to reinforce biculturalism in schools (Stewart, 2018). Hunter (2011a) had previously provided examples of the sort of critique classified as “traditional/conservative” or outdated, together with a proposed “alternative/counter” orientation to teaching history.

Yet, in all of this, the essential components are human actors, for whom the intensities elicit emotion. Leah Bell tells of her experiences in a powerful narrative of how she, as a 14-year-old student, listened to a kaumātua telling their ancestors’ stories through their tears of the events that occurred in Rangiaowhia in 1864. It was this experience that spurred her and fellow students to collect some 12,000 signatures and present their now celebrated petition to parliament in 2015 (Bell, 2020b). That depth of feeling and what it meant for the petitioners has been described by Bell in a variety of contexts, including speeches and articles (Bell, 2020a). In one of those explorations of feeling she mentioned a disagreement with a relative about how the history should be approached. Her experiences therefore seemed not to represent a universal intensity; they were quite individual. Those feelings were also not just oppositional reference points on a Cartesian plane of Māori/Pākehā. They were mingled with feelings of pride of Pākehā ancestors who respected and engaged with Māori reo and tikanga (Bell, 2020a). This intensity conflicted with those towards other forebears who acted contemptuously towards Māori. Such poignant reflections demonstrate the often-conflicted situation that many New Zealanders encounter when unravelling their family’s myths by closely and critically examining their histories (Shaw, 2021a). Despite what may be seen as only a partial success, the commemoration debates seemed to have fostered greater academic interest, with frequent

reference made to the Anderson/Bell petition (Mulholland, 2018). However, even how the national commemoration of the New Zealand Wars emerged is told in different ways. From the perspective of Te Puni Kōkiri, while acknowledging the Ōtorohanga College students' role in presenting their petition, it was the iwi leadership that “took up the call and formalised their tautoko [support] for the concept of a national day” (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2021, para. 8).

Teachers were also sharing the positive experience of their schools as exemplar models for others to learn from (“Different perspectives emerge as students research first encounters,” 2019). The *Te Hurihanganui* document further describes the historical context of why a Māori approach was needed. Prior to colonisation, “education” was a collective and lifelong process of learning about one’s place in the world. The colonising approach brought with it different methods of teaching and learning. Those who adopted such ways flourished; those who did not were marginalised (Milne, 2009). This had led to devaluing Māori knowledge traditions and fostered inequitable outcomes while furthering racism and bias (Ministry of Education, 2021j, p. 5). *Te Hurihanganui* is seen as a way of addressing this. The experience of teaching Māori history has already been captured as a result of *Te Takanga o te Wā*. Ricky Prebble, a teacher from Wellington East Girls’ College, talks about Māori history and what this means from his perspective. This seems an unscripted practitioner’s perspective rather than a polished piece of what may be described as Ministry “spin.” In it, he touches on the Māori history approach of incorporating a te ao Māori perspective and thus legitimising evidence contained in waiata, mōteatea, or oral testimony, which Western historical tradition had seen as less valid, or less powerful, than its own written sources (Ministry of Education, 2016).

The debate about whether the New Zealand Wars should be observed as a public holiday continued and for some remains ongoing (Tyson, 2020). In the discussions, one community crowdfunded organisation claimed that teaching children was not enough and that the adult

population also needs to likewise “join in building a future where each of us understands, values and honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi and our unique history that brought us here” (Team ActionStation, n.d., para. 8). The political and media environment was therefore disposed to enable such debates, and the technical environment of the internet-enabled social spaces also provided new ways of campaigning. What is demonstrated here are the parallel discussions that altogether gain momentum and provide the intensity from which change emanates, such as a policy to orientate the environment to what is perceived to be closer to the social ideals of a given individual or singularity. Given that, perennially, Waitangi Day provides opportunities to reflect on New Zealand’s history and for various groups to apply political pressure to raise awareness about the teaching of New Zealand history, it also raises the intensity of the relationship between history, Māori, and the Crown. Moreover, if the perspectives of the components of students, teachers, and parents are not aligned, then that will cause a disconnect as dialogue flares into intensities involving the other relationships parents have with school boards, politicians, and the media.

On Waitangi day’s-eve in 2019 the debate about the Treaty and history was again ignited. Reporter, John Gerritsen (2019), portrayed the debate as one polarised between teachers on one side, led by Graeme Ball of the NZHTA, and the government on the other, albeit with Minister Hipkins confirming that work was underway to provide schools with more support in the teaching of New Zealand history. At Waitangi that year it was also reported that the Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, told reporters that children should learn about the Treaty of Waitangi. Yet, at the same time, her “associate minister of education and minister of Crown Māori relations, Kelvin Davis, was quick to quash any impression the government might make the topic compulsory” (Gerritsen, 2019, para. 23) In the same article, the New Zealand First MP Shane Jones reiterated that it was “up to schools to decide what they taught ...[and he believed] ... most, if not all, would teach students about the Treaty of Waitangi” (Gerritsen, paras. 25-

26). The Ministry of Education's deputy secretary for early learning and student achievement, Ellen MacGregor-Reid, confirmed the role of the curriculum was to set expectations about what is to be taught: “While we do not set out compulsory lesson plans that all schools must follow, we expect schools and kura to teach Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Māori history and the New Zealand land wars [sic]” (Gerritsen, para. 28) MacGregor-Reid stated that in social sciences students were required to “explore the unique bicultural nature of New Zealand society that derives from the Treaty of Waitangi, and to learn about past events, experiences, and actions and the changing ways in which these have been interpreted over time” (Gerritsen, para. 29) At that time, early in 2019, the components were not all aligned but, equally, they were not misaligned, so the intensities of Waitangi Day soundbites can be seen to be fleeting, just as there are new concerns that shift the gaze of media attention elsewhere after the Waitangi Day formalities conclude on February 6 each year.

Within an environment that was stratified by layers of concern, Myles Ferris, President of Te Akatea, the Māori principals' association, stated that while most schools taught about the Treaty of Waitangi, all had a “moral obligation to teach New Zealand history correctly” (Gerritsen, para. 30). While this can be taken out of context to argue that there are authorised or approved histories that should be taught, what was meant was that the way the teaching takes place provides context for students today based on the experiences from the past. Ferris continued: “Even at primary school level we can teach about social justice, we can teach about the injustices that have happened” (Gerritsen, para. 32). However, despite the intensity towards the teaching of history, Ferris was cautious about supporting the approach to make teaching Māori and colonial history in schools compulsory, stating it needed to be done with care. Moreover, compulsion is a difficult concept for educators, he claims, because it allows people with agendas to dictate to schools what should be taught (Ferris, 2019). Ferris seemed to be demonstrating

that the intensity of the compulsion to insist on the teaching of history exists simultaneously with the intensity to resist compulsion, from his perspective as a Māori educator.

History in its telling, I think, will always emphasise, or deemphasise components depending on the knowledge and intensities of the teller and the listener. The role of such testimony seems not just about recording experiences for the purposes of creating historical records but also to convey the intensity of a situation in such a way that the social assemblages that facilitated those experiences are exposed. Then, the components of actors, having felt their intensities of the interactions, can hold to their status quo, or signal the need for change as they wish. In listening to different testimonies and what they code, I am emotionally attracted to some components more and unwilling to listen to and accept others. If this is my experience, I imagine it likely that other actors have similar tendencies. Therefore, what is heard or ignored by particular actors or components is dependent on the environment that they create around themselves and also the intensity of the reactions of other actors.

The Academic Component

Academics also involved themselves in the discussions as part of their ongoing work in domains associated with New Zealand history. Vincent O'Malley conducted a social media straw poll about whether people learned about the New Zealand Wars at school. The results from 1,484 respondents found that 32.6% did, 61.5% did not, and 5.9% instead responded to the third option: "What are the NZ Wars?" (V. O'Malley, 2018). However, what is interesting about this are how the comments from the respondents reveal the quite different experiences of being taught the history at both the NCEA level as well as the compulsory part of the curriculum. Some respondents referred to clearly memorable fieldtrips while others experienced no learning at all in the subject (O'Malley, 2018). In the case of O'Malley and Kidman their fieldtrip researching the battle sites of the Waikato Wars refined their thinking

about memory and the teaching of difficult histories as they travelled around the Waikato (Kidman & O'Malley, 2019). The pair had been key actors in agitating for the New Zealand Wars to be taught more broadly in schools, suggesting that one way of ensuring people left school with some understanding of New Zealand history was to “tweak the Treaty achievement objective in year [sic] 10 so that it is made explicit that the history of the New Zealand Wars should form part of this teaching” (Kidman & O'Malley, 2018, para. 10). More ambitiously, they thought the topic “would be to embed it throughout the school years” (O'Malley & Kidman, 2018, p. 14). According to O'Malley (2021), Pākehā are suffering from “historical amnesia as a society” (para. 7/1:21). The antidote to this selective remembering is history because it provides a grounding for a sense of identity and, therefore, provides a sense of belonging to place.

Academics Liana MacDonald, an educator and experienced secondary school social studies and English teacher, and Keziah Wallis, a social anthropologist, were also on a research road trip. During their 2019 trip, they sojourned at the Ihumātao site, occupied at that time by protesters.⁶ This encounter left an impression on them: “History is not in the past. It walks with us now” (MacDonald & Wallis, 2020, para. 29), they wrote. Further along in their travels, they arrived at Rangiaowhia, which in the colonial period was a Ngāti Apakura community until it witnessed one of the more infamous acts of violence during the Waikato Wars. Colonial troops, commanded by General Cameron with the cavalry under Colonel Nixon, invaded the settlement early in 1864. Their official reports estimated that 12 Māori were killed, with similar numbers wounded. However, the descendants of Rangiaowhia tell of between one and two hundred Māori being killed. What was particularly egregious about the attack was that Rangiaowhia was

⁶ Ihumātao, located a few kilometres from Auckland Airport, was Māori land confiscated in 1863 and farmed by the Wallace family for 150 years. When the land was sold to Fletcher Building the intent was to develop it into residential housing. A protest group called Save Our Unique Landscape (SOUL), set up a camp to stop the development in 2016. Four years of occupation, and negotiations between the Government, representatives of Fletchers, SOUL, and King Tūheitia resulted in the Government buying the disputed land to put into trust.

full of women, children, and elderly. As it was an unfortified village, the Māori warriors were stationed at Paterangi Pā, some distance away (MacDonald & Wallis, 2020). Reconciliation of the telling is one thing that historians and history teachers can help address. These are the sorts of stories, similar to the kaumatua's stories the Ōtorohanga College students were exposed to, that leave indelible marks when heard. Yet, if not told, the hurt remains for those who suffered the assault because, unlike Colonel Nixon's gravesite that today still memorialises his death "of wounds received in the service of his Country" (New Zealand History, 2017), the names of the Māori dead were not similarly inscribed in stone.

A Youth/Educator/State Component

Calls to teach history in schools also came from quite a range of actors, all influential in their own ways. The Youth Parliament in 2018 provided one example where young peoples' voices were given a forum in which they called for greater efforts in "teaching of New Zealand's colonial history in schools" (Tirikatene, 2020, p. 12). Another significant collaboration was between the Children's Commissioner and the New Zealand School Trustees Association (Children's Commissioner & NZSTA, 2018), whose report referenced Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that children have a right to say (and be heard) what they think about issues pertinent to their wellbeing. The report included feedback from 144 face to face engagements and 1,534 online responses from children and young people aged 3-19 years of age. The six key insights from this were summarised as:

1. Understand me in my whole world
2. People at school are racist towards me
3. Relationships mean everything to me
4. Teach me the way I learn best
5. I need to be comfortable before I can learn
6. It's my life - let me have a say (Children's Commissioner & NZSTA, 2018, p. 9)

The responses to the racism questions were particularly confrontational. Reading it certainly made me feel sad that children and young people encounter such behaviour, either from teachers or other students. That this child-centred approach to teaching history comes from these two specific groups demonstrates how components can come together to form alliances of a sort that had not previously been established.

The Media Component

In all of these discussions and views, the mainstream media has had a guiding role or at least it did have until comparatively recently (in historical terms) when the internet emerged, providing a new media component. One of the impacts of the rise of the internet and other digital media has been the reduction in the power of the mainstream media to shape coding. As a result of this, competition mainstream media entered the digital space and, in this way, continue to be powerful coders. *Stuff Limited*, an independent privately-owned news organisation that runs New Zealand's most popular news website but also publishes the daily newspapers in Wellington (*The Dominion Post*) and Christchurch (*The Press*), launched "a campaign to get the teaching of the New Zealand wars [sic] into the broad school curriculum so future generations can get a better understanding of the events that shaped us all" (MacKenzie, 2018, para. 3). *Stuff's Time to tell our Story* campaign ensured the media outlet clearly inserted itself into the debate, shaping perspectives by the stories it chose to present.

The *Stuff* campaign seemed to influence the policy to be expedited, with the Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, pointing out to the Minister of Education, Chris Hipkins, that this was "becoming a grass roots movement" (Leaman, 2019b, para. 7). Media was again a catalyst for change, as were internet groups interacting with different demographics. Together, they served to increase the intensity of interests, beating a rhythm that was increasingly difficult to ignore. The media reports threaded the narrative, stepping back through time from the announcement,

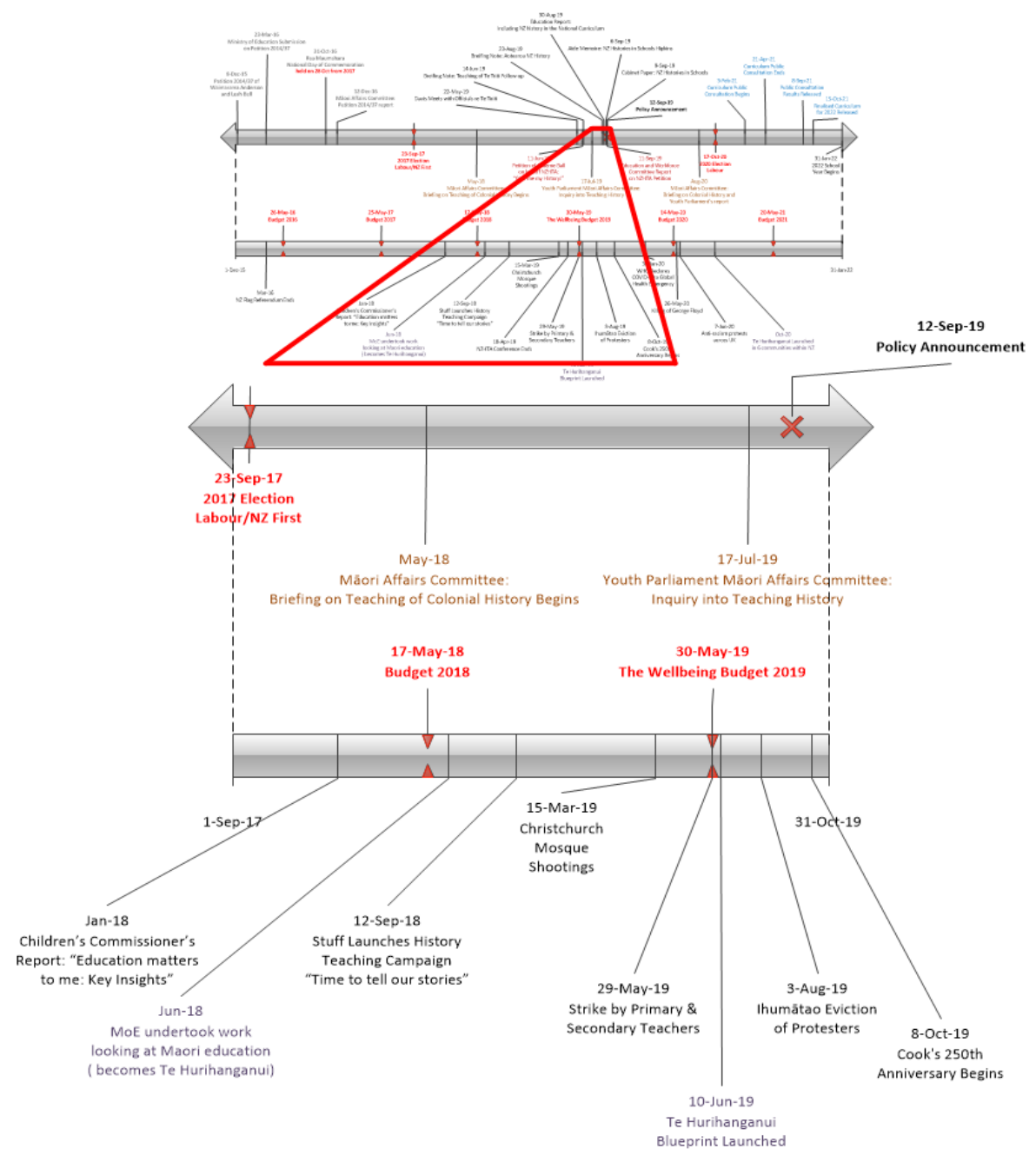
the NZHTA petition, *Stuff's Time to Tell our Story* campaign, and earlier to the Bell Anderson petition from 2015 (Long, 2019b). Between the discussions and debates, the opinion pieces and the cartoons, and the increasing intensity of the reporting, the *Stuff* news organisation was prompted to look at how it had reported in the past and the monocultural journalism that had been a defining feature of its reporting from their inception in the 1860s (Parahi & Stevens, 2020). All of this was happening at a time when discussions about identity, who New Zealanders were, and what kind of country New Zealand was becoming were taking place. From March 15, 2019, as a result of the Christchurch mosque shootings,⁷ there seemed less tolerance to entertain racist language and attitudes, and the dialogues around the Ihumātao occupation as well as those around the 250th commemoration of Cook's arrival further created an environment ripe for something to happen. Hence, the zeitgeist provided the environment where different decisions were able to be taken than would have been possible at other times (illustrated in Figure 9).

Within the diverse coded groups, there were differing views expressed on whether the teaching of history should be compulsory in schools (Newton & Blick, 2016). The Ministry of Education's claim that it was not their role to tell teachers what to teach was rebutted by Graeme Ball. He pointed out that with mathematics and the sciences, the Ministry issues specific instructions on which topics to teach. In responding to this argument, the Minister of Education, Chris Hipkins, portrayed the curriculum as "a very enabling ... framework.... The question was whether the requirements in the curriculum ... are specific enough to New Zealand history" (Daalder, 2019, para. 14). It was this specificity that was being worked on in the drafting of the policy and would later emerge in the draft for consultation.

⁷ The Christchurch mosque shootings were a terrorist attack by a sole gunman described in media as white supremacist. He murdered 51 people at two mosques while streaming the attack live on Facebook.

Figure 9

Components and Intensities - The Developing Zeitgeist



The narrative above describes what I have identified as key components that were part of the zeitgeist that provided the conditions for the emergence of the policy: State-Education, Politician, Educator, Youth/Educator/State, and Media. It is their dissents and agreements and their interactions that encouraged the belief that something needed to be done, coupled with the

motivation that it could be. In Act 2, I explore the Policy Singularity. This is the event of the policy announcement. I use the term *singularity* to describe the instance of the policy announcement as the performative event that brought the policy to life by making it visible. What had previously been worked on by specialists operating behind the scenes so that political leaders could agree on a way to respond to the building tensions for change was made visible to the public. Like the Big Bang, this singularity also generated its own formative processes by coalescing components into new formations and with a different energy than had been previously evident.

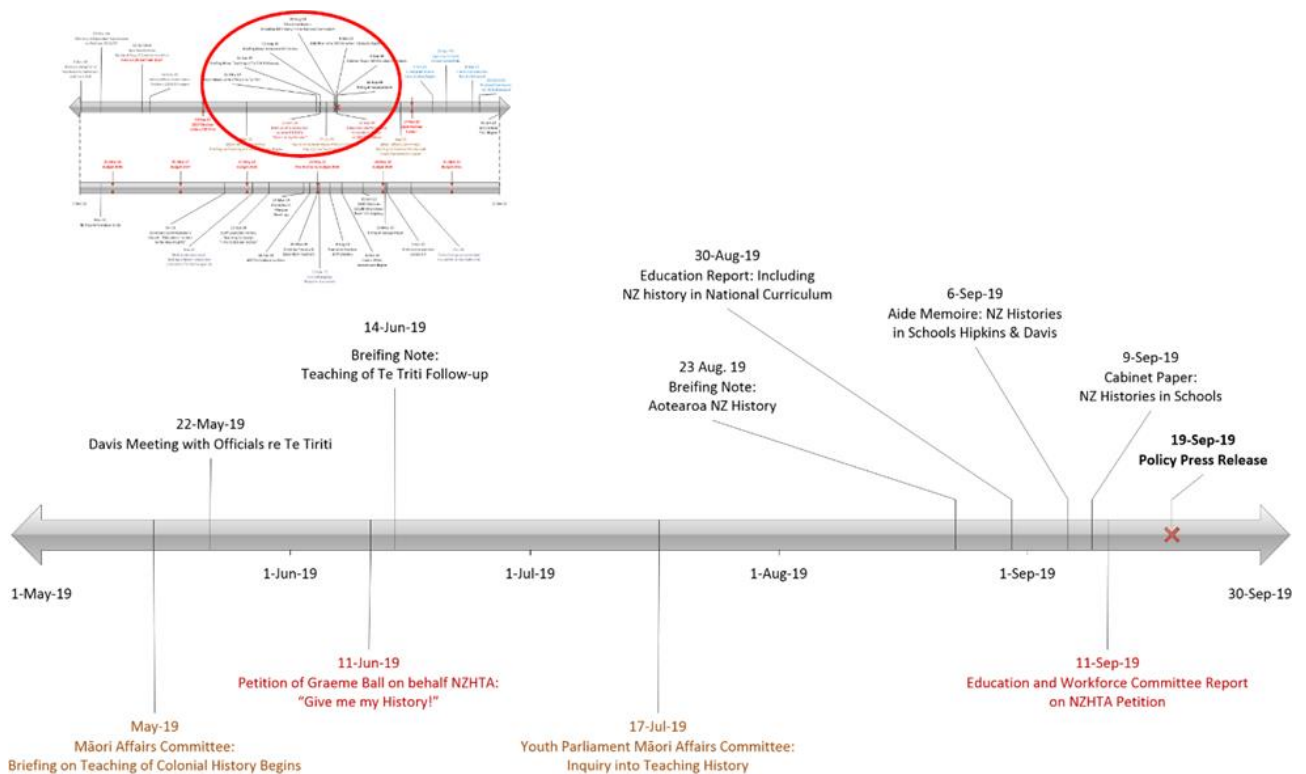
Act 2: The Policy Singularity

In the interactions described in Act 1, the agreements and dissents and the relationships between the different components produced a space in which this particular singularity—namely, the policy—could emerge. The very act of talking was creating and releasing the tensions that existed between components until its crescendo was punctuated by the singularity in the form of the policy announcement. Once it arrived, it signalled that from that point onwards, different conversations would take place with different components formed, creating different relationships between those old and new components. The announcement was preceded by a flurry of activity, connected with, and implicated in the intensities of other components, including teacher strikes, Ihumātao land protests, the aftermath of the Christchurch mosque shootings, and preparations for the highly contested commemorations of the anniversary of Cook’s arrival. The timeline in Figure 10 isolates the story of the events immediately preceding the release of the policy from all the other components that may have contributed to its formation. I focus on a particular set of Ministerial and government documents as this is where and how the actual policy came to be assembled in the form that it was. The subtle changes in

language and involvement of the key actors can be seen in Figure 10. The Associate Minister of Education, responsible for Māori Education, Kelvin Davis met with officials to discuss the teaching of Te Tiriti in May and June of 2019 (Clever, 2019c). This occurred at the same time as the Māori Affairs Committee was commencing their briefing on the teaching of Colonial History (Tirikatene, 2020). Simultaneously, the NZHTA petition was being heard by another Parliamentary Select Committee (Education and Workforce Committee, 2019). The intensity of the interactions between the components of the Committees and the Ministers and the Ministry was increasing. By August, the work that was forming the policy was being referred to as Aotearoa New Zealand Histories (Clever, 2019a) , and the emphasis on Te Tiriti had gone. This is significant, signalling a move beyond the particular events of February 6, 1840, and the common binary narratives about the meaning of the document. Instead, opportunities are created to look at other dates, or focus on narratives less determined by colonial contexts, or those exclusively tethered to a bicultural narrative.

Figure 10

The Policy Singularity



The path through to the announcement, the singularity that came out of all the work to date and subsequently gave rise to the work necessary to make it happen in the real world, occurred on September 12, 2019 (Ardern & Hipkins, 2019). It was no coincidence that the announcement of the policy was made on the same day as the unveiling of the plaque in the debating chamber that commemorated the New Zealand Wars. This was witnessed by Leah Bell, invited as one of the Ōtorohanga College students under whose name the petition was tabled at the Māori Select Committee in 2015 (McCarthy, 2019). This act symbolised the link between events that happened in 2015 and this policy announcement. When the government made the announcement, it received “broad backing across politics with the National Party... saying the Government's decision to teach more history was a step forward for the country” (Jancic, 2019, para. 5). Given that the National Party had been a main part of the Education and Workforce Committee, which just the previous day released their report recommending this approach, this support was not surprising. As would be expected from a political party's role as Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, concerns over its implementation were voiced by the National spokesperson on education, Nikki Kaye: “It can't be a once-over-lightly” (Jancic, para. 7), giving a hint of the intensity the policy had on those potentially affected if it were not implemented in a way that they expected. Kaye the then National Party Spokesperson on Education and Education and Workforce Committee member called for a public debate about the content of what would be in the curriculum. She observed: “This isn't like another area of the curriculum. It cuts to the core of national identity, who we are and where we come from” (Jancic, para. 7). Such a concern may equally have been voiced by any New Zealander expressing a concern for the future of *their* nation.

My interpretation is that the Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, prompted the policy announcement. It was she, alongside the Minister of Education Chris Hipkins, who announced the policy. In the days following, the Prime Minister confirmed that her former social studies

and history teacher, Gregor Fountain, was one of her “role models” and that this prompted her decision to move forward with the policy. She added that: “He taught me to question where my opinions came from because a lot of my opinions came from my parents” (Leaman, 2019c, para. 8). This seemed as if the coding the Prime Minister was exposed to in her youth had an impact on this decision. The pivotal moment was her 2019 visit to Hamilton which prompted her to have a conversation with her Minister of Education and point out to him that this was a “grass roots movement” (Leaman, 2019b, para. 7). Recognition may have been evident but so was the tension around Ihumātao, all of which built towards making the announcement in a particular way. It was not signalled as promoting Māori history, nor did it hide the fact that Māori history will be given far greater prominence than other histories. It seemed to be continuing the work of the Ministry and rolling out the Māori history model, focussing on the telling of local histories. By utilising existing resources while ensuring a greater emphasis (by requiring more) collaboration with local iwi and hapū, it embraced Indigenous ways of telling histories. Engagement with local historians, while using the national and regional resources available for teaching history within the parameters of the social studies curriculum, bounded the teaching within school budgets, and teacher capabilities.

Dr Phillipa Hunter of Waikato University was unsurprised by the announcement. She perceived “a constellation of factors where really the past speaks to us now in the present” (Leaman, 2019a, para. 7), referencing the introduction of legislation pardoning Rua Kēnana of his arrest in 1916⁸ on the same day as the policy announcement. She also perceived the Prime Minister’s unveiling of the commemorative New Zealand Wars plaque in the debating chamber on the day of the policy announcement and the protests at Ihumātao as instances of colonial history being

⁸ Rua Kēnana was a Tūhoe religious leader who was harassed by colonial authorities, eventually accused of sedition during the First World War and imprisoned for ‘resisting arrest’ Binney, J. (1996). Rua Kēnana Hepetipa. *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/3r32/rua-kenana-hepetipa>

brought into the present. She also stated that “most importantly, the racist underbelly of Aotearoa New Zealand society has been given scrutiny following the March 15 Christchurch massacre”(Leaman, para.10). Other academics confirmed the importance of historical knowledge in helping to understand and engage in conversations about the present (Brown et al., 2019). Others identified this as something more than simply history, with the announcement seen as not just about learning but nationhood. Hokotehi Moriori Trust chair Maui Solomon insisted that it is “healthy to debate and understand more deeply our history and to learn about Māori, Moriori, European and other histories, it's only going to strengthen our nationhood” (RNZ, 2019, para. 33).

Reactions to the policy announcement represented a spectrum of views, with all perceiving this policy as something that would effect change. NZHTA Chair Graeme Ball was a little surprised by the announcement: “The fact that the Prime Minister, and the Ministry of Education behind her, has moved so far is, I think, a recognition of the zeitgeist: the time is right” (Education Central, 2019, para. 9). Because Māori history was already part of the curriculum, the New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA) voiced their “bewilderment” about the calls for a curriculum. The NZSTA president claimed that the resources and curriculum were already available and all that was required was that everyone take responsibility to make it happen. (Kerr, 2019). Some foresaw that this type of learning had a power of its own: “History can light a fire. It shows the *how* of capital, and the injustices inherent in our society. It explains how stolen land enriched colonialists, and how old money has stratified and continues to stratify New Zealand” (Rowe, 2019, para. 12). History Professor, Michael Belgrave, also held the view that the government did not realise the task that was before it when the policy was announced (Long, 2019a). The question of which version, as if there is an optimal telling of history, was another concern that was raised (Hawkesby, 2019). The proposed change was certainly

polarising, some viewing it as a threat to their perspectives of history being represented in the way they would like, and they were happy to blog their disapproval (Newman, 2019).

The impact the announcement had on me has been described previously, as has the language used, so this will not be repeated. However, it is worthwhile at this point to revisit key sections of the announcement and identify the components that form the assemblage. The creation is a component of political choices and instructs the component of the Ministry and teachers to work with other component local experts (Māori iwi and hapū but also others) to deliver the changes in the component of the social studies curriculum. The components of schools and parents are also considered as are the broader component groups of community and mana whenua. Altogether, the forces at play take all these elements and weaves them together to produce an assemblage that will ensure the policy objective of teaching specific Aotearoa New Zealand history topics “in all schools and kura by 2022.” The policy announcement ensured that the way history is taught in the schools of Aotearoa New Zealand will change. However, the singularity of the announcement is one thing; to actuate these components to deliver the policy is something else. It is from this point that the emerging history curriculum started becoming visible as the tasks for implementing the policy began.

Act 3: Postannouncement—Assembling the Curriculum

In Act 3, I explore the varied responses to the announcement of the policy, at which juncture some sought to further the policy goals and some to change them. In discussing the contestations between different components, we can begin to see the faint outlines of the emerging curriculum assemblage.

The draft consultation content for what was now termed “Aotearoa New Zealand’s Histories” was released on February 3, 2021 (Cooke, 2021; Ministry of Education, 2021d). Almost immediately, it attracted commentary, some positive and some more critical. Professor Michael Belgrave, was a cochair of the Royal Society panel that reviewed the draft curriculum (Expert Advisory Panel, 2021). Earlier, however, he demonstrated his more nuanced view of the curriculum, emphasising how Māori, hapū and iwi, together with other groups should be considered in the histories being taught (Belgrave, 2019). The panel was described by one of its own members as “a group of subject specialists, people who have knowledge and who care deeply about what we know, and how we know our histories” (Macdonald, 2021, para. 13). The other cochair, Professor Charlotte Macdonald, considered that “big ideas” could encompass a wide range of topics, so social, economic, and political histories could also be taught. Meanwhile, Auckland University of Technology (AUT) historian Professor Paul Moon cautioned about finding balance where the emphasis on 19th century written sources or Pākehā accounts may take away from the oral traditions passed down by Māori (Collins, 2021). The interpretation of the concept of “balance” is likewise a subjective judgement. Other perspectives on racism were also taking shape in the wake of the zeitgeist of change. A restaurant in Akaroa named after a notorious slave trader, Bully Hayes, an “alleged rapist, murderer, paedophile and thief,” (Burrows & Henry, 2020, para. 1) was pressured to change its name. Scott Hamilton a historian as well as other academics had applied pressure on the owners, who were initially resistant to making the change “had a chance to reflect and we think that the time is right for a change” (Burrows & Henry, 2020, para. 4).

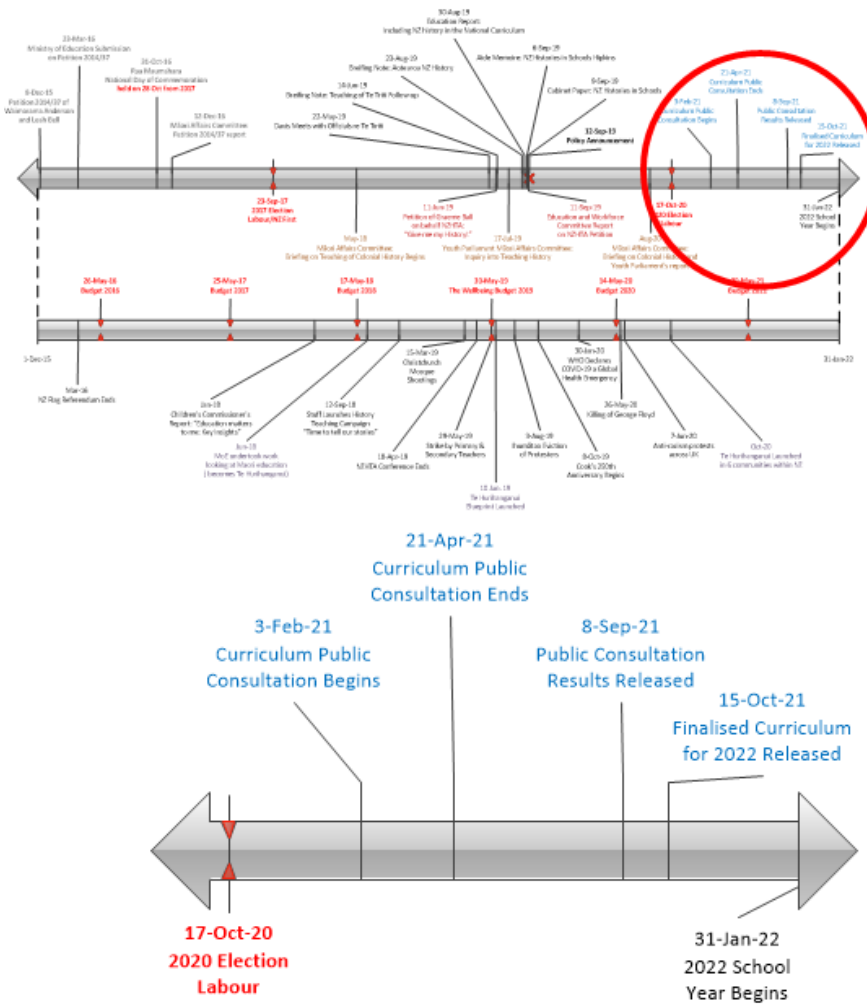
Educators and other researchers had already investigated the challenging topic of teaching difficult histories and how to approach this in the context of the history of Aotearoa New Zealand. Models from overseas provided clues and templates for how to approach such teaching, particularly models from other contexts where colonialism had left indelible marks

on the social landscape. These include Canada and Australia as well as research within New Zealand (Harcourt, 2020). However, rather than avoiding difficult histories, research by educators was pointing to the importance of recognising and accepting the role of emotion in the teaching of history, particularly around injustice (Harcourt, 2020). This teaching, therefore, relies on some social consensus about the injustice, which is not necessarily the case. This suggests that the intensities of the outcomes—resulting from the amalgam of the components of teaching and history—may well not be exhibited until later.

The (Ministry of Education, 2021d) produced a draft consultation document which included a survey, whose results were subsequently reported and incorporated into a final curriculum release, whose proximity with the events is illustrated within the timeline of Figure 11. The significance of the survey is that it provided a mechanism to demonstrate that the curriculum designers were not just slavishly pursuing the policy agenda but also, as is normal practice, consulting extensively on the proposed changes. Furthermore, instructions and guidance on such topics as development of local curricula (Ministry of Education, 2020b, 2020d) and partnering with mana whenua (Ministry of Education, 2020a) were released as part of the new pedagogical approach for history teaching. The local curriculum approach in particular attracted the attention of the consultation document writers. What was termed a “tool” was essentially an approach for building community relationships that develop “relationships with individuals and groups whose roles or expertise offer a potential resource for learning” (Ministry of Education, 2019b, p. 3) Entrenching the teaching of Māori history was being undertaken not only with acceptance of te ao Māori approaches but also involving the formal relationships entered into by schools, iwi, and hapū. Later, this would expand to the Crown and iwi. Kelvin Davis signed a covenant that “provides an opportunity for Ngāti Tuwharetoa, Raukawa and Waikato iwi to have input into what history will be taught in their schools” (*Educating rangatahi about their true Māori history*, 2021, para. 8). Why such a covenant may be necessary

is suggested by one of the speakers who supported its signing: “We have our stories, other iwi have theirs for their areas. These are stories to share to our leaders of tomorrow, our next generation” (*Educating rangatahi about their true Māori history*, para. 10). While the collective

Figure 11
The Visible Rhizome



term “Māori” may be a useful label with which to group the Indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand at times, it also serves to obscure the significantly different history between different iwi and hapū. These span centuries of interactions, which included both cooperation but also significant conflicts.

Therefore, to say that there is a Māori history narrative is as erroneous as saying that there is a single colonial narrative. Teachers of history will need to negotiate this just as they had negotiated the teaching of any other topics in the past. This will involve a norming process, coalescing in fits and starts with better and poorer exemplars, forever disclosing new perceptions of the past. Those will eventually become mythologised and subsequently challenged and debated, forming ever-changing vistas of what has been from the as yet unformed perspectives of future positions.

On the other hand, a number of various critiques were levelled. That the content was about “identity” and “identity politics” was a criticism made by Paul Goldsmith, the opposition National Party’s education spokesperson. The New Zealand Initiative⁹ argues that one of the challenges of centrally planned prescriptive curricula is they do not work in practice (Patterson, 2015). This group claims the Ministry of Education exposes itself to criticism, which is rekindled every time New Zealand’s test scores are unfavourably compared with other countries (Partridge, 2021). Groups also voiced their concerns through the public forum of the media. While initially hopeful about what the policy meant for Moriori, after the draft came out, the concern was raised that their story will be left out, its teaching isolated to the three schools located on Rekohu Chatham Islands (Gerritsen, 2021a). With historians sniping from their respective positions, the now-retired historian Jock Phillips expressed his personal view that “the past must not be endorsed uncritically” (Gibson, 2021, para. 27). Phillips was instrumental in setting up *Te Ara Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*. In doing so, he was aware that just as it was when he helped set up New Zealand’s national museum, Te Papa Tongarewa, there were existing tensions and entrenched views that needed to be negotiated in presenting historical material (Gibson, 2021). Confronting difficult histories is challenging for Pākehā and made even more challenging when family members, are perpetrators of the colonial enterprise within a lineage that when looked upon now, seem somewhat less like the hard-working colonists of the grand narratives but rather part of a “messy, complicated history of how Pakeha colonised this land” (Vincent O'Malley cited by Shaw, 2021b, para.24). Another significant gap in the curriculum for some historians was the Musket Wars. Temple (2021), argues that: “For our children, we do not need a curriculum that tiptoes through myths of goodies and baddies with the omission of whole tranches of history. They—indeed everybody—need a set of interwoven

⁹ Described in its 2020 Annual report as a “non-partisan think-tank... an association of business leaders, we are an evidence-based research institute, and we are independent” <https://www.nzinitiative.org.nz/reports-and-media/reports/2020-annual-report/>

truths we can all understand, relate to and accept” (para. 14). How such difficult histories would be taught to 5–14-year-olds without attracting a considerable reaction is yet to be worked out. Moreover, the interwoven truths that everyone can relate to and accept appear different to everyone, thereby making such a concept a fiction.

Not every immigrant perspective was mentioned or covered in the proposed curriculum. In releasing the consultation document with its focus on Māori history, a response was triggered from those concerned that by being relegated to “Other,” their immigrant history will be ignored (Ip, 2021; Wong, 2021). A Facebook group, Asians Supporting Tino Rangatiratanga, with over 4,000 followers, produced a response on the draft (Asians Supporting Tino Rangatiratanga, 2021a). Their paper, which included a critique of “silence ... [in the curriculum] ... on racism, capitalism and white supremacy in relation to colonisation, mobility and migration ... [as well as] ... the significance of transnational connections in Māori history and resistance” (Asians Supporting Tino Rangatiratanga, 2021b, p. 2) positioned their political agenda. They also raised the concern that the curriculum did not consider “cultural safety” although it was unclear whether this related to providing an environment that considered the cultural safety of just the students, or the teachers, or, even more broadly, the community that encounters the teaching and learning within the school environments. It nevertheless calls out the importance that multiple perspectives, like the multiple perspectives of history, compete to have their voices heard above the din of the discussion. The intent of the group was not, I think, to attack white involvement but rather to push back on a situation where white involvement becomes white supremacy, as characterised by the “global colonial project and as the key ideological justification for colonialism in Aotearoa New Zealand” (Asians Supporting Tino Rangatiratanga, p. 7).

Some perceived that “trouble” would arise from the new curriculum. However, the Ministry of Education was adamant that “Aotearoa New Zealand’s histories” will be taught in all schools and kura from 2022. A Ministry of Education spokesperson confirmed: “This means all teachers in primary schools and many teachers in secondary schools will be delivering this curriculum content” (Matthews, 2021, para. 79). Implicit in this assertion is that all schools will be prepared to undertake the teaching, irrespective of any delays or distractions resulting from COVID-19, funding for new resources, or preparedness of either teachers or mana whenua to engage with their local histories. The expectation that this will happen in the way that different people imagine seems ambitious. On the one hand, such a change requires a different approach to curriculum development, and, for many schools, it demands a new engagement model for the delivery of teaching about history. The relationships needed to develop and deliver this curriculum will take time to evolve, as will the creation of resources. The assertion that all schools *will* teach the curriculum in the prescribed way puts pressure on those schools and communities that need to work through the challenges of approaching the often-difficult histories at a level appropriate to the different age groups being taught. Some schools are well prepared already because they have close and enduring relationships with mana whenua. Others find themselves on the steep side of a learning curve and, in being rushed, can be pressured to present material in a way that risks dividing more than it would if time were taken to carefully consider how to implement the curriculum changes. Some work is proactively being undertaken within communities to prepare themselves for the introduction of local curricula (Jones, 2021). The interactions of the relationship of teachers and communities in developing curricula can be seen as creating new models of teaching, weaving together the voice of mana whenua with the voice of the teacher to better perceive the strata of the present from the echoes of the past.

Teachers as professionals also have a matrix of support and obligation to undertake personal learning and development (PLD) (Ministry of Education, n.d.-a). Such PLD hours are common

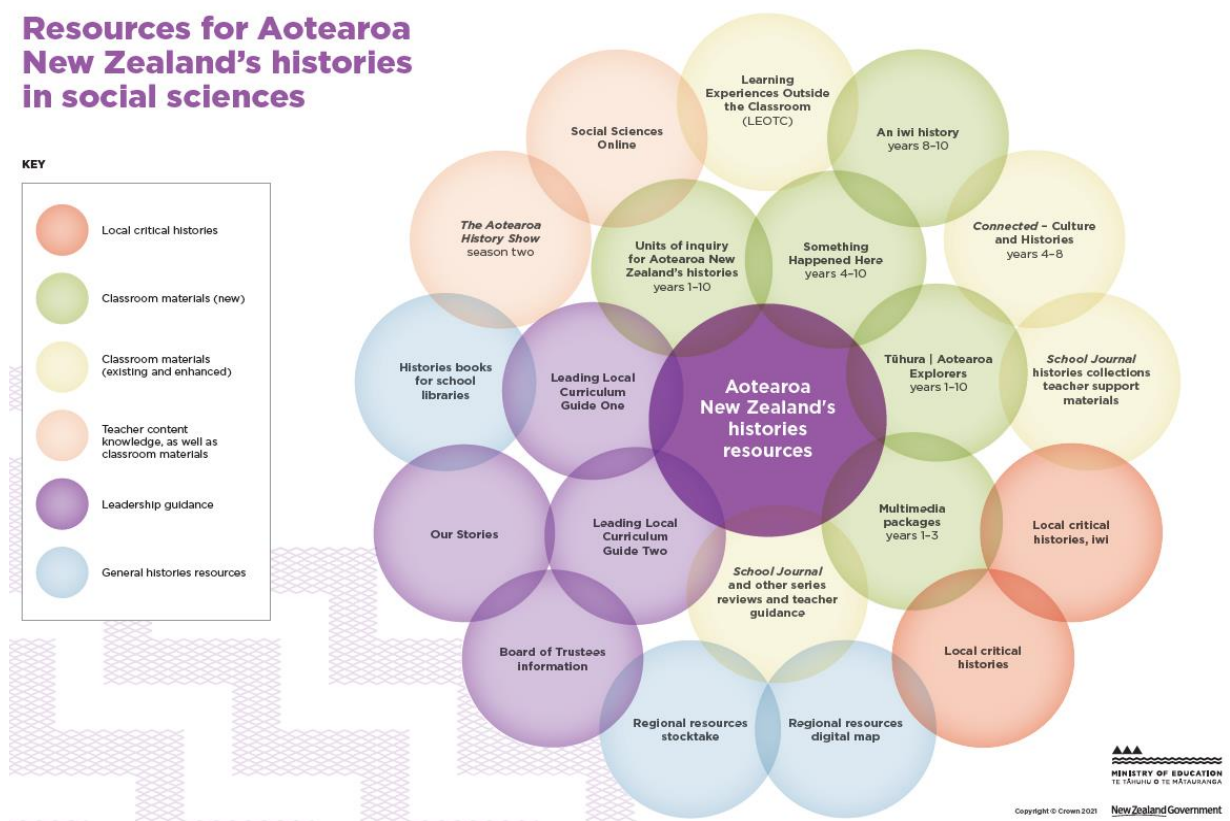
in professions and help retain individuals' capability. This is a component of the assemblage of teaching that is essential for the delivery of the policy. This is supported by education leaders and academics who provide insights from their experience or research to further the field of teaching history (Ministry of Culture and Heritage, 2021). The development of the curriculum was not just about the agreement of key individuals who support the teaching of Aotearoa New Zealand histories in schools. The effort also includes the support of other government agencies and organisations (Long & Mitchell, 2019). Funding for history comes from many sources. For example, the Provincial Growth Fund, a New Zealand First initiative designed to promote investment in rural areas, was used to develop a significant New Zealand Wars site (Mahuta & Jones, 2020). This is one example of an instance where unrelated components influence each other and produce an effect because of that interaction. In this way, the components and relationships within the assemblage configure themselves to self-sustain and grow. It is networks of relationships between teachers, academics, politicians, associations, media, and funding that assemble and work together to achieve the policy's aims.

Resources for teaching Māori history continue to be developed to support the enactment of the policy. Some resources had already been developed for Levels 1–5, meaning they potentially can be covered throughout Years 1–10 (Davis, 2021). To promote the introduction of the policy the Ministry of Education (2021f) invited schools to order up to \$200 worth of “high-quality history books for their libraries” (para. 1), ordered from the Ministry's catalogue. While the amount seems meagre, this information was being shared from May 2021, which allowed more time for assessments to be made about what adequate library resources should comprise. The content shaping of the new curriculum was becoming increasingly visible with the release of plans and resources. An interactive diagram on the Ministry of Education's website is used to provide information about each of the elements (see Figure 12), with hyperlinks to the resources and dates when those will be available. The overall package is supported by further links. This

seems to provide an assemblage of information that carries meaning and may be accessed as and when teachers and others are ready to do so and will be updated with content as it comes available. It is through such mechanisms and the debates and discourses that I have previously described that the content of the history curriculum and, therefore, New Zealand history, is actually being assembled.

Figure 12

Resources for Aotearoa New Zealand's histories in social sciences



Note: Diagram sourced from Ministry of Education (2021h, para. 2)

The findings of the public consultation were announced on September 8, 2021. At the time of the initial policy announcement, there was no knowledge of the impacts that would be brought about by the events of the COVID-19 pandemic. That black-swan-like event, though likely causing the Ministry of Education additional stress, did not change the consultation timeline. The Ministry received 4,491 responses from groups or individuals to the public survey, plus

488 submissions and conducted “90 workshops, fono, and hui” (Ministry of Education, 2021, p. 8). Analysis of the consultation showed that that most people were supportive of the content and perceived a strong link between curriculum content and “identity, culture and citizenship” (Ministry of Education, p. 9) This support extended to include Māori histories, but other groups, such as Asian and Pacifica respondents, wanted to see more of themselves in the content. The proposed partnership with iwi and hapu was supported but with resourcing and support as needed. It confirmed that people held different beliefs about the nature of history. People who held to a view that there was only *one true* version of history tended to be more negative in their responses. There was also concern that the project is highly reliant on the preparation of schools and kura as well as the capability of teachers to deliver the content and deal with any “difficult—and potentially painful—learning conversations” (New Zealand Council for Educational Research [NZCER], 2021, p. 2). Feedback to the survey from schools was also analysed. There was 70-80% agreement that the content was important, but this means that one quarter to one fifth of school respondents felt otherwise, so work is left to do in supporting the approach (Te Paetawhiti, 2021).

The discussion of responses of the key components (state-education, publics, educators, politicians, academics) to the policy announcement and the codes through which they made sense of and contested the policy show that while there is broad general agreement about the concept and broad sweep of the curriculum, there is less agreement and more anxiety the more the discussions deal with particulars. We can see through these responses some of the contours of the emerging history curriculum and the vital importance of the state-education component in influencing the form of the assemblage.

CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSIONS

This concluding chapter begins by adding a postscript to the detailed analysis of the assembling and emergence of the policy discussed in the preceding chapter. It does so by describing how the policy was fulfilled in the announcement that the new curriculum had been finalised and was ready for schools to use from 2023. I will address the main research questions I posed: why this policy now, and why a policy? I also answer the question in the title of this work: Was this a watershed policy or a policy watershed? Although the question is posited as a binary, the answer is more nuanced, describing how it was simultaneously neither and both. Neither because the moment had arrived for such a change to be made anyway and also, the progress of the policy, although taking its own unique path, was largely typical of the way that policy evolves. On the other hand, I also argue that it was a watershed policy as far as the government instructed the Ministry of Education to make extremely specific changes to the National Curriculum, thus overcoming any inertia for making the change happen. At the same time, it was a policy watershed because it prompted intense conversations about how the histories of Aotearoa New Zealand could, should, and would be conveyed to the students of the nation. Furthermore, the enactment of the policy changes through the changes to the curriculum were unusual because they broadly surveyed and involved the nation, not just educators or academics, in the discourses and therefore it prompted a national debate about identity.

Teaching and Learning History from 2023

Since the completion of the consultation process and the announcement that the curriculum would be taught from 2022, Aotearoa New Zealand histories (ANZH) had its own acronym, which signifies, perhaps, that it has been assembled to the extent that it is recognisable as a unique element or concept within the nomenclature of the technical language of the Ministry of

Education. The subtle pluralisation to “histories” signifies the intent of creating something other than a grand narrative. Furthermore, it was included as a component within what is known as the “refresh” of the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2022b) announced in February 2021. For Māori-medium schools, this means integrating the framework developed as *He Tamaiti Hei Raukura* (Ministry of Education, 2020c). The announcement that the finalised curriculum was ready, following consultation, feedback, and testing of the content, was made on March 17, 2022 (Chris Hipkins, 2022). Simultaneously, the Ministry of Education released a one-minute video of the Prime Minister expressing her excitement that the “new curriculum content is now available for Aotearoa New Zealand’s histories and *Te Takanga o te Wā*” (Ministry of Education, 2022a, 00:05). These announcements seem to close the policy work, fulfilling the promise of the policy announcement in 2019 to ensure the history of Aotearoa New Zealand was taught in all schools and kura and handing it over to teachers and schools to make it so. While this may not have happened by the time initially envisioned, there were good reasons for that.

COVID-19 had been a feature of the landscape of this research as much as the work of the Ministry of Education when developing the consultation documents, with the effects of the global pandemic impacting the rollout of the curriculum. When the policy was announced, there was no conceptualisation of the unpredictable event that would interrupt the usual way work is done. Despite adaptation of working and teaching practices, it was acknowledged that schools needed extra time to adjust after two years of disruption. Late in 2021, it was decided that ANZH would not be able to be taught from 2022. Instead “[s]chools and kura will now be expected to implement the new content from 2023” (Hipkins, 2021, parra. 12). What this announcement did is formalise the public release of ANZH and *Te Takanga o Te Wā* (or TToTW, in the Ministry’s shorthand) content early in 2022, so it could be implemented in schools from 2023. The potential change in dates was signalled as early as the NZHTA

Conference in July of 2021, with a change in the language. Instead of *teaching from 2022*, the wording around the implementation had shifted to *starting to teach from 2022*. This is unsurprising, given the unprecedented disruptions caused by the pandemic. It also demonstrates how contingent this policy and the zeitgeist of the time was on the various interactions outlined in Acts 1 and 2 of Chapter 4. I expect that had the pandemic developed globally six months before it did, then this policy would not have assembled in the way it did. The attention of politicians, officials, and teachers would have been on the political, economic, and social concerns around COVID-19 more than ANZH.

Research Problematics

Intellectually, I perceive the motivations behind the efforts to ensure that the encoding of the history initiatives equitably responds to the needs of everyone within Aotearoa New Zealand. However, personally, I still do not *feel* the intensities of the discourse after filling out the survey on the draft curriculum. I imagine this is because I do not have deep histories here in Aotearoa New Zealand and, therefore, I am not as invested in the intensity of the exchanges that express the way *our* histories need to be told. From my own experiences of encounters with history, I imagine that for some students learning about the difficult histories of their forebears may be akin to learning about the Holocaust in social studies. While for most people in New Zealand, the distance from the Second World War was so great that the Shoah has no meaning, for others, including the descendants of European Jews, it would likely have a greater emotional impact. Having considerable experience in the preparation of teaching materials, the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand (2018) has pursued its mandate to provide education on the subject. In so doing, it offers guidance and suggests caution when approaching the subject with junior school students. In particular, it invites teachers to carefully examine the purpose of teaching this topic

and provides teaching guides to navigate the content and its resulting issues, including assessment of whether the material is age appropriate. Perhaps such an elevated level of concern is not needed when talking of ANZH. However, in an environment where racism exists, it seems to me that significant emphasis needs be put on preparing teachers, schools, and parents for encountering difficult histories in appropriate ways. Over time, the evolving practice around how *best* to represent Aotearoa New Zealand histories, I think, will ultimately be assessed in the classroom. It will likely take time for exemplars to emerge, for best practice standards to be refined, and for preconceptions to change.

When analysing the discussions and the debates around the policy, I often wondered where the voices of the students were. There is little consideration in the material about the learning aspirations of the 5–14-year-olds, specifically around history. This is, perhaps, not surprising because the history curriculum is the outcome of what adults think students need to know and what they should be rather than this process being led by students, notwithstanding the Children’s Commissioner’s views that learning discussions need to involve young ones. Instead, much of the discourse focused on quite sophisticated understandings around identity and contested histories, without dwelling on the manifold needs of the students for whom this whole policy was designed. This perception may be because the discussions I focussed on were the components of media and teaching while such considerations were included in pedagogical approaches or practices and were not as visible to me. Nevertheless, the public debate involved numerous actors, utilising a variety of media channels and espousing views that are an amalgam of political, professional, and personal perspectives. I expect students did not feature as a significant part of this discussion for the same reason that they did not feature in my own thinking when I first encountered the policy and the draft curriculum. I was approaching the policy from my personal perspective and therefore reflecting on what it meant for *me*. If my research was instead to focus exclusively on what students were seeing and saying, then their

voices may have been more clearly represented. Granted, reporters and researchers cannot easily approach students for comment on such topics, at least not without getting permissions from schools and guardians as well as considering other ethical issues, but, for me, the silence of the voices of the students points to a void in this space.

That silence may be a good thing because it also offers the opportunity for researchers to enter that space in future to ask more questions of young people. Once students have transitioned through ten years of the compulsory school curriculum during which history is taught, learned, and experienced, their perceptions of the encounters with the policy and new curriculum will be able to be investigated.

Policy Answers

I aimed to address a number of questions in my research. The most basic questions were why *this* policy, and why *now*? I found part of the answer to this in the zeitgeist of the time as Graeme Ball best describes it. The cultural and political milieu, shaped by events such as media support, reaction to the Christchurch mosque shootings, the willingness of politicians from across the parliamentary spectrum to see change, a Labour Government with support from its strong Māori caucus, and its willingness to alter the course of Ministry of Education policies meant that the time was right. Collectively, the components orientated themselves through their mutual interactions, forming and reinforcing the intensities between components until the conditions were right for such a policy to emerge. All this happened because of the preceding attempts to change what history is taught in New Zealand schools. The Waimarama Anderson and Leah Bell petition, which prompted the NZHTA petition, The Children Commissioner's Report, and *Stuff's* campaign, not to mention the already-existing work by the Ministry of Education and

the NZHTA brought the issues into focus. The long policy trajectory of biculturalism was starting to gain traction in embedding Māori knowledges as central and essential parts of the education system.

The second question I sought to answer was why *policy* and not some other mechanism? The answer to this, I think, can be found in the personal history of Jacinda Ardern and the motivations of Education Minister Chris Hipkins and the Associate Minister responsible for Māori Education, Kelvin Davis. Kelvin Davis, previously a teacher and school principal and the MP for Te Tai Tokerau, began the policy work because it would have been important to him and his constituency. Chris Hipkins further developed the policy with Ministry of Education officials after the Prime Minister sensed the mood of the nation and moved to act with what I perceive to include a level of personal satisfaction about making such changes. Changing the curriculum by policy provided the political mechanism with which to direct the work, overcoming any administrative friction or inertia. This approach was further made possible because of the zeitgeist and the broad acceptance of, it seems, most New Zealanders that this was broadly the right thing to do. What was unusual is that by implementing the policy through changes in the new curriculum, a broad survey of public views as well as consultation with constituent groups generated a wide-ranging and quite long public discourse on ANZH. This process allowed the Ministry to get buy-in from the schools and educators but also identify what the public, sectioned into specific communities, thought. During this process, the public also broadly gave assent to the policy and bought into its broader or more fundamental aim of shaping an Aotearoa New Zealand identity that was less monocultural than it had been in the past. Young New Zealand citizens can be drawn into the assemblage and respond to what they are taught as *our* histories. This builds the sense of belonging to the “better New Zealand that we can all be proud of” (Ardern & Hipkins, 2019, para. 2), as expressed in the policy singularity,

which essentially reinforces Kaye's assertion that "It cuts to the core of national identity" (Jancic, 2019, para. 7). This policy is as much about nation-building as it is about teaching. Thinking about the emergence of this policy through the lens of assemblage was critical for the analysis. It allowed me to avoid producing a standard rendition, documenting the apparently benign processes of how policy is ideated and implemented. Instead, by thinking outside the black-box process in nonlinear ways, it allowed the exploration of previously invisible components, observing what they were trying to do as they engaged with other components at particular times. This was consistent with the methodological approaches (assemblage-as-methodology) proposed by Baker and McGuirk (2017). It seems that thinking of the policy as forming from a multiplicity of explanations and logics is a useful way of describing the zeitgeist from which the policy emerged. By viewing the policy on a timeline, the processuality was found to be a useful way of perceiving how and what arrangements of heterogeneous components orientated themselves in seemingly "promiscuous entanglements" (Ong, 2007, p. 5). In all these interactions, the efforts or labour used to create and sustain the assemblages is evident. Whether these be on the part of the politicians, the Ministry of Education, educators, academics, schools, and others, they combined to overcome the challenges to and challengers of the policy. It is this communal effort that provided the critical mass to perpetuate the project.

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of adopting this assemblage methodology is to convince readers that explanatory frameworks came as conclusions out of adopting the flexible approach of the methodology rather than arising from previously framed perceptions. I can attest, however, that whatever thinking I had at the start of approaching this research has been formed and reformed as I observed what was for me objects and interactions in an unfamiliar space. In this way, assemblage thinking allowed me to collapse and to bring into the same place elements from different domains and scales. For example, perceiving how Jacinda Ardern's history teacher, a petition by two students from a small-town high school, the existing Māori

curriculum—*Te Takanga o Te Wā*, Ihumātao, the work of Vincent O’Malley and Joanna Kidman regarding New Zealand’s difficult histories, my own history as a Polish migrant, and the histories of migrants in Aotearoa New Zealand provided the juxtapositions of these seemingly disparate and disconnected components that generated any insights I have.

I agree with Graeme Ball’s assessment that this policy emerged because of the zeitgeist of that time. The stars were indeed aligned. At first glance, it looks inevitable, like an evolutionary outcome—almost predetermined. However, in exploring this with assemblage thinking shows that what happened did not actually have to happen; it was contingent, and things could have just as easily been different. What if the Prime Minister was not inspired by her history teacher? What if Waimarama Anderson and Leah Bell at Ōtorohanga College had not been exposed in the way they were to their local history? What if Nanaia Mahuta not had the time to support the petition because of other electoral commitments? What if the 2017 election that brought in the Labour Government produced a different result? What if the leadership within the New Zealand History Teachers Association had not been already pushing for this, or *Stuff*, or academics like Vincent O’Malley and Joanna Kidman? What if an administrative approach to making these changes was adopted rather than a policy approach? Perhaps applying chaos theory could equally well add its own insights to such questions in its own deterministic way. Now, nearing the end and standing at the crossroads of policy and assemblage theory, I can look over my shoulder to remember from where I had travelled and how I arrived at this juncture. My experience of the challenges encountered in this research may be categorised as those related to any research effort, such things as time pressures, investigating theory and “the field,” and negotiating the mechanics of producing the final draft. However, what is more significant for me was the experience of reflecting on a policy that I expect will influence the future in as yet unimagined ways. This journey was, I think, enhanced by travelling in the company of assemblage thinking. It helped me map my course through the messy social and political

interactions taking place, not to end at a particular destination but, rather, to better appreciate the purpose of making such a journey in the first place.

A Watershed Policy or a Policy Watershed?

In this research, I posed the question of whether this is a watershed policy or a policy watershed. I see the need of a more nuanced answer that the either/or question implies. In ways, the New Zealand history policy is both a watershed policy and a policy watershed. It is a watershed policy in that it has set Aotearoa New Zealand on quite a different path with respect to how students will be taught about the history of the nation. Teaching of history was always going to be a contentious subject: what to teach and what not to teach. Such questions were answered in the new curriculum that emerged from this policy and therefore the policy was the watershed that produced that output. It is also a policy watershed because in deploying the policy as a tool in this manner, it reinforced the government's vision of what being a bicultural nation means for Aotearoa New Zealand. Historical knowledges were positioned to sit beside each other and not dominated by some sort of blended monocultural viewpoint. This watershed policy demonstrated the intent to expand the teaching model so that mana whenua and communities are encouraged to share their historical knowledge within their schools, not by exception but as the norm.

Simultaneously, the policy may be said to be neither a watershed policy nor a policy watershed. In researching how the policy came about and following the policy emergence, the need for such change could have been perceived. In hindsight, the tensions that created the zeitgeist that precipitated the work that led to the policy announcement produced the forces that influenced the trajectory of what followed. However, while unique, the public consultation followed a

typical pattern. Feedback was given and changes were made, but the end result was not markedly different from what was initially directed by the policy. The Labour Party's commitment to working towards greater partnership with Māori, as evidenced by the Labour Māori Manifesto (NZ Labour Party, 2020) , could be seen as simply building on the long-maintained relationship between the Party and its Māori constituencies. While some New Zealanders perceived this as a threat, the damage caused by not acting was also a perceived by other New Zealanders as a threat.

The contribution this research has made to the anthropology of policy arises from melding the established theory from the anthropology of policy with the methodological application of assemblage. I have demonstrated how this policy was “productive, performative and continually contested” (Shore & Wright, 2011, p. 1). Also, I showed how the policy found its expression through a series of events and how it created “new social and semantic spaces, new sets of relationships, new political subjects and a new web of meaning” (Shore & Wright, 2011, p. 1). In doing this, I showed that the language of assemblage can be used to describe how the policy emerged and situated it within the zeitgeist of its time. This was accomplished by imagining how the heterogeneous components interacted. By illustrating on a timeline, the respective relationships of events better fell into focus and provided clearer insights around when decisions were taken and when events took place. The policy is enactive of new relationships going forward. Relationships between teachers and students, schools and parents, and communities and places are changed because of this policy and the resulting curriculum. Like the initial singularity of the Big Bang, a policy causes new things to form and new worlds to coalesce. These changes were specifically brought about to symbolically promote national belonging and strengthen national identity as theorists had previously observed (Benei, 2011; Shore & Wright, 1997, p. 24). Whether the policy is successful in achieving that will likely only be seen at a distance, years from now.

Final Words

This research has been influenced by my methodological choices. Scope can be seen as a weakness, both in the selection of the components examined or those not recognised, and also the detail to which the component relationships were analysed. There was simply no possibility of tracing all the actors and factors that made up the cosmos of components of the assemblage. Perhaps if I took a more ethnographic approach, I may have been able to perceive different relationships through the eyes of my informants. However, given the predetermined sizing of this research and my inability to engage face to face with those people in the Ministry of Education who worked to develop the policy, be that as a result of COVID-19 or the reticence of Ministry staff to be distracted by researchers, I would have approached this research differently. However, whether that would have provided an altogether different conclusion is moot because that path was not taken. Like the policy itself, the assemblage of this research output focussed on those components that made their appearance at a particular time, within a field view. This research, like the policy, was crafted by taking those components and responding to the milieu of the environment within which it was created and producing something in a form suitable for its function. So, as expressed by Pontius Pilate:

*Quod scripsi, scripsi.*¹⁰

¹⁰ Latin: “What I have written, I have written.”

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APPENDICIES

Appendix 1: ANZH Policy Press Release–The Singularity

(Ardern & Hipkins, 2019)

12 SEPTEMBER 2019

NZ history to be taught in all schools

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern

Hon Chris Hipkins

Prime Minister

Education

New Zealand history will be taught in all schools and kura by 2022, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and Education Minister Chris Hipkins announced today.

“This Government is committed to a better New Zealand that we can all be proud of and which recognises the value of every New Zealander,” Jacinda Ardern said.

“We have listened carefully to the growing calls from New Zealanders to know more about our own history and identity. With this in mind it makes sense for the National Curriculum to make clear the expectation that our history is part of the local curriculum and marau ā kura in every school and kura,” Jacinda Ardern said.

The National Curriculum currently enables schools and kura to decide how New Zealand history is covered, but variation in delivery means too much is left to chance in the teaching and learning of New Zealand history, Jacinda Ardern said

“The curriculum changes we are making will reset a national framework so all learners and ākonga are aware of key aspects of New Zealand history and how they have influenced and shaped the nation.”

They will span the full range of New Zealanders’ experiences and are expected to include:

- The Arrival of Māori to Aotearoa New Zealand
- First encounters and early colonial history of Aotearoa New Zealand
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi and its history
- Colonisation of, and immigration to, Aotearoa New Zealand, including the New Zealand Wars

- Evolving national identity of Aotearoa New Zealand in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries
- Aotearoa New Zealand's role in the Pacific
- Aotearoa New Zealand in the late 20th century and evolution of a national identity with cultural plurality

Chris Hipkins said it is important for learners and ākonga to understand New Zealand history as a continuous thread, with contemporary issues directly linked to major events of the past.

“Our diversity is our strength, but only when we build connections to each other. We can move forward together, stronger when we understand the many paths our ancestors walked to bring us to today.”

The Ministry of Education will work collaboratively to develop a New Zealand history update, Chris Hipkins said.

“The Ministry will call on historical and curriculum experts, iwi and mana whenua, Pacific communities, students and ākonga, parents and whānau, and other groups with a strong interest in shaping how New Zealand history is taught.

“Once the updates to the curriculum are known, existing supports will be reviewed and an implementation package with teaching and learning resources will be developed ready for the 2022 school year.”

The package will allow schools and kura to include the new content and learning expectations in their local curriculum, working in partnership with their local communities and mana whenua.

Q and A

When will the changes be introduced?

The curriculum changes will come into effect in 2022. They will be gazetted during 2020 in order to give schools and kura time to prepare to implement them.

What year levels will be supported?

The changes will cover the entire breadth of the national curriculum. This means we would expect New Zealand's histories to be taught as part of the local curriculum and marau a kura throughout the compulsory curriculum.

The changes will include setting specific achievement objectives at each level of the curriculum that clarify the themes, events and perspectives that should be explicitly included in local curriculum and marau ā kura.

Learning areas, including Social Sciences and Tikanga-ā-iwi, are compulsory from years 1-10. From year 11 schools can choose which subjects their students are required to take.

Will this mean New Zealand's histories will become a compulsory subject?

We will expect New Zealand's histories to be taught as part of the local curriculum and marau ā kura at every level of the compulsory curriculum.

Will New Zealand's histories be included in NCEA?

Yes. The curriculum changes and NCEA change package will provide opportunities for New Zealand histories.

How much will this cost?

Initial work to be done in the 2019/2020 financial year will be funded through Ministry of Education baselines. This means that there is no initial additional funding required at this stage.

What effect will this have on the rest of the curriculum?

The curriculum is being updated to make explicit the expectation that New Zealand's histories are taught as part of the local curriculum and marau ā kura in every school. No other parts of the curriculum will be altered through this change.

Who will be involved?

The Ministry of Education will work collaboratively with historical and curriculum experts, iwi and mana whenua, Pacific communities, the sector, students and ākonga, parents and whānau, and other groups with a strong interest in shaping how New Zealand's histories is taught.

What will happen if a school decides not to teach the New Zealand history curriculum?

The curriculum changes will come into effect in 2022. They will be gazetted during 2020 in order to give schools and kura time to prepare to implement them.

The Ministry will review and adjust supports to help schools meet this expectation, so that a lack of knowledge or capability does not stop schools and teachers using the curriculum.

ERO reviews look at how schools reach positive learning outcomes – knowledge, skills, attitude and habits – for all children and young people. Their indicators include that students learn, achieve and progress in the breadth and depth of The New Zealand Curriculum and/or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa. Making expectations for New Zealand histories explicit within The New Zealand Curriculum and/or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa will support ERO to identify whether schools need to make improvements in this area.

What will be taught at each year level under the changes and how is it different from the status quo?

It is too early to say what will be taught at each level. Details of what will be taught and when will form part of the Ministry of Education’s discussions with stakeholders, including historical and curriculum experts, iwi and mana whenua, Pacific communities, the sector, students and ākongā, parents and whānau, and other groups with a strong interest in shaping how New Zealand’s histories are taught.

This will reset a national framework that ensures all learners and ākongā are aware of key aspects of New Zealand’s histories, and the ways it has influenced and shaped our nation.

This will include setting specific achievement objectives at each level of the curriculum that clarify the themes, events and perspectives that should be explicitly included in local curriculum and marau ā kura.

What happens next?

The first step is to collaboratively develop a New Zealand’s histories update to the National Curriculum with historical and curriculum experts, iwi and mana whenua, Pacific communities, the sector, students, parents and whānau, and other groups with a strong interest in shaping how New Zealand’s histories are taught.

Once the content for the updates is known, existing supports will be reviewed and an implementation package will be developed that will enable all schools and kura to include the new content and learning expectations in their local curriculum and marau ā kura, working in partnership with their local communities and mana whenua (Ardern & Hipkins, 2019).

Appendix 2: Information Sheet



Teaching New Zealand History: A Policy Watershed or a Watershed Policy?

INFORMATION SHEET

I am a Wellington-based mature postgraduate student, working on a Master of Arts degree in Social Anthropology at Massey University. For my thesis I will be researching the Government's policy of teaching New Zealand history in schools and kura from 2022. The aim of this research is to understand this policy's formation and its influence on the national discourse about the importance of history teaching and learning, within our Aotearoa New Zealand context.

The research will analyse publicly available documents, including mainstream and social media content, which preceded the policy implementation. I am also keen to speak with those policymakers, and others, who guided this policy into fruition, to get their perspectives on what needed to change and why this particular approach was taken. I would like to invite you to participate in my research, because I understand your contribution to the policy development was significant. There is some urgency with this because, with time, the memories of this policy work may fade, as emphasis moves to the implementation of the new curriculum, or other work priorities.

If you agree to take part in the research, I will ask to record our conversation from which I can produce a transcript. You will be given the opportunity to review the transcript, make corrections or clarifications, as needed, before its use for my research. The interview transcripts will be held in password protected digital formats, not shared with anyone, except for excerpts that are used in published material arising from this research. Primarily, that publication would be my thesis, but could also include journal articles, conference presentations or book chapters. It is assumed that research participants are speaking in their various roles as public figures or public servants, so anonymity is not guaranteed. However, if you prefer, the interview can be treated as coming from an anonymous source, even though there is no intent to discuss sensitive matters. This research and our conversations are covered by the Massey University policies and procedures concerning ethics and reinforced by the Code of Ethics I subscribe to by being a member of the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa-New Zealand.

Participant's Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation.

Should you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- Decline to answer any particular question.
- Withdraw from the study at any time before the thesis finalisation (expected in mid-2022).
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation.
- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher.
- Ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.
- Review our conversation via a written transcript after the interview.
- Be given access to a summary or final version of the project when it is concluded.

Project Contacts

Should you have any questions about the research or the intended approach, please feel free to contact the researcher or the researcher's supervisors:

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Ethics Statement

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named in this document is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact Professor Craig Johnson, Director (Research Ethics), email humanethics@massey.ac.nz

Appendix 3: Participant Consent Form



Teaching New Zealand History: A Policy Watershed or a Watershed Policy?

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read and I understand the Information Sheet included with this form. I have had the details of the study explained to me, any questions I had have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I have been given sufficient time to consider whether to participate in this study and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time prior to the final drafting of the thesis, expected in May 2022.

Please indicate preferences:

- I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.
- I agree that my interview and transcript will not be treated as being anonymous (if this is not the case, please cross this statement out and initial).
- I agree/do not agree to the interview being recorded.
- I wish/do not wish to have my recordings made available to me.
- I wish/do not wish to verify the transcripts of my recordings before they are used by the researcher.
- I wish/do not wish to be given access to a summary or final version of the project when it is concluded.

Declaration by Participant:

I, _____ [print full name] hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 4: Human Ethics Assessment–Notification

From: humanethics@massey.ac.nz

To: Wieslaw.Wernicki.1@uni.massey.ac.nz; A.Gallagher@massey.ac.nz; C.M.Morris@massey.ac.nz

Cc: humanethics@massey.ac.nz

Subject: Human Ethics Notification - 4000023900

Date: Wednesday, 26 May 2021 9:21:45 AM

HoU Review Group

Ethics Notification Number: 4000023900

Title: Mandating Teaching of New Zealand History in the School Curriculum: A Policy Watershed in Aotearoa New Zealand?

Thank you for your notification which you have assessed as Low Risk.

Your project has been recorded in our system which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas.

In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named in this document are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Craig Johnson, Director (Research Ethics), email humanethics@massey.ac.nz. "

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish require evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to complete the application form again answering yes to the publication question to provide more information to go before one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

You are reminded that staff researchers and supervisors are fully responsible for ensuring that the information in the low risk notification has met the requirements and guidelines for submission of a low risk notification.

If you wish to print an official copy of this letter, please login to the RIMS system, and under the Reporting section, View Reports you will find a link to run the LR Report.

Yours sincerely

Professor Craig Johnson

Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and

Director (Research Ethics)