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# **NGĀ KIRITEA MĀORI: WALKING BETWEEN TWO WORLDS.**

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

Current statistics illustrate the diversity of the Māori population in Aotearoa. Many Māori individuals do not necessarily ‘fit’ the narratives used in contemporary society of what it means to be Māori, and this may affect their identity as Māori. In particular, those who do not physically look Māori but who identify as Māori and who have Māori whakapapa. I have termed these people ngā kiritea Māori.

The research was grounded in a Māori centred qualitative research approach. Semi structured interviews were carried out with eight participants in order to obtain information around their experiences of growing up in Aotearoa and how these experiences helped or hindered them in their development of their Māori identity. In addition, the interviews drew out stories about what their Māori identity meant to them in today’s society.

These stories were analyzed using narrative analysis to explore some of the factors that affect Māori identity development. Five public narratives were identified: ‘Māori/Pākehā division’, ‘Māori as second class citizens’, ‘The ideal Māori figure’, ‘Māori as the sports hero’ and ‘Valorisation of Māori’. Within the personal stories there were four identified themes: ‘The desire to connect to things Māori’, ‘The importance of whakapapa’ ‘Painful and conflicting journey’s’, and ‘Positive Māori identities’.

The analysis reveals how participants drew on the public narratives as a way of explaining their own personal stories and how the public narratives contributed to the four personal themes identified. This research will not only contribute to the limited literature existing on ngā kiritea Māori identities but it will also provide a means for ngā kiritea Māori voices to be heard in Aotearoa.

## Acknowledgements

This has been an inspiring and exciting journey as I have investigated ngā kiritea Māori identities. As a kiritea Māori myself this was, and is, a personally invested topic. My main hope is that this thesis will enable the voices of ngā kiritea Māori to be heard throughout Aotearoa. Throughout this thesis, the realities and experiences of ngā kiritea Māori will be brought to light in what is hoped to be a positive and meaningful way. However, I cannot continue without first acknowledging those who were instrumental to me in this journey.

To begin with, I would like to whole heartedly thank the kiritea Māori who shared with me their stories, their experiences and their understandings about what it means to be Māori in Aotearoa. Thank you for your participation, for your stories and for so willingly sharing with me a part of yourself and your identity.

Secondly, to my supervisor Dr. Christine Stephens, who has listened, read and contributed to every aspect of this project. Your guidance, knowledge and support has provided me with the ability to complete this work and I appreciate it very much.

Also, to the many people who have supported me during this journey; the staff at Te Runanga O Raukawa, the staff, students and friends at Te Rau Puawai, my friends and my family; you have supported me the whole way and I wouldn't have been able to complete this research without your support.

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## Prologue

Ko Moehau te maunga  
Ko Owhero te awa  
Ko Ngāti Kahu me Ngāpuhi ngā iwi  
Ko Ngāti Rua te hapū  
Ko Te Tiriti te marae  
Ko Sarah Herbert tōku ingoa

This research has been a long time coming for me, as a kiritea Māori myself I have often struggled with my identity and am constantly challenging myself to become more secure in who I am as an individual in Aotearoa; a process that, I assume, is not an easy one for anybody.

My journey began a long time ago, but it never really came ‘alive’ until I began studying at Massey University in Palmerston North. In my first year there, I would have assignments which required me to write about health and well being in New Zealand. This field fascinated me and I found it easier to write about this topic by writing from a Māori worldview and holistic idea about health and well being. From there a passion was sparked within me, I wanted to learn more about Māori culture, Māori values, Māori ways of living and ways of being. At this point however, I was still unsure why. I knew I had whakapapa but it meant very little to me at that time.

As my journey at Massey continued it was like I found my niche; I had finally discovered what made me tick, what fascinated me and where I wanted to go with my future. When I completed my undergraduate degree in 2007 I gained employment at Te Runanga O Raukawa [TROR]. Based in Fielding, I had the privilege of working alongside several fine Māori health professionals in the Manawatu, Horowhenua and Taranaki regions. It was through my employment at TROR that my identity was strengthened because I was nurtured by the staff and by the people I was working amongst, and it was here that I really

began to embrace my Māori identity. As I learnt more about the Māori culture I realized my own world views, ideas and values were more closely aligned to Māori cultural values and worldviews.

It hasn't been an easy journey though, I feel the constant gaze of 'others'; those who do not believe I am Māori and those who do not accept that I am Māori. I have been challenged and questioned, insulted and ignored by 'Others' simply because they did not, they do not, believe I am 'truly' Māori. This may have something to do with my brown hair, my blue eyes, and my fair and freckly skin. It may also go deeper than that, it may be my limited knowledge within Te Ao Māori or my limited ability to speak Te Reo or it may simply be that I am merely a child in this journey which has only just begun. However, what the 'Others' don't realize is that I am Māori, I am grounded in the knowledge of my whakapapa and my tūrangawaewae and I will continue to grow and to develop as a kiritea Māori in today's society.

At this point it is important to talk about my other identity; my Pākehā identity. A lot of the time I feel I sit more comfortably in my Pākehā identity, I do not face the same challenges as I do when considering my Māori identity. My Pākehā identity is always assumed, never challenged and forever accepted because, for the most part, I have grown up 'Pākehā' yet I have always been surrounded and immersed within and around Māori communities and Māori people. This Pākehā identity is also what grounds me as an individual, it is what helps me to feel a sense of belonging in Aotearoa and it is as equally important to me as my Māori identity.

For me, this research is all part of a process in which I am not only learning about who I am and where I belong, but also, it is about learning of ngā kiritea Māori identities in Aotearoa and it is about sharing the stories of eight kiritea Māori in order to illustrate our challenges, our highlights, our uniqueness as people who have Māori whakapapa and who have formed a Māori identity but who do not fit the 'typical' physical mould of what it means to be Māori in Aotearoa.

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## Glossary of Māori Words

This glossary provides simple definitions to assist in the comprehension of Māori terms used in the thesis. Many of these terms have multiple meanings that are complex and not necessarily explained sufficiently or accurately in the English language. No translations are given for the proper names of tribes, places, individuals and organisations.

Aotearoa	New Zealand
Atua	God or supernatural being
Hapū	Sub-tribe
Hongi	Greeting, press noses
Hui	Meeting(s), gathering(s)
Iwi	Tribe
Kai	Food or drink
Kapa Haka	Māori cultural or performing group
Kaumātua	Māori elder
Kawa	Marae protocol and customs or the governing lore within specific iwi
Kōrero	To tell, say, speak, talk, have a conversation
Koro	grandfather, elderly man
Koru	Folded, looped or coil, Māori design
Kuia	Elderly women, grandmother
Mana	Authority, influence, prestige, power, spiritual power,
Māori	Normal, usual, ordinary, and indigenous or native people of New Zealand
Mātauranga Māori	The body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors
Mauri	Life force, source of emotions
Pākehā	A person of predominantly European descent or a New Zealander of European descent
Pūkāea	A long trumpet made of wood and bound with vine

Pūrākau	Ancient legend, myth or story
Tangata Whenua	Indigenous people of the land
Te Ao Māori	The Māori world
Te Reo	The Māori language
Te Tai Tokerau	The sea on the north side of the North Island (Far north)
Tikanga	Rules or customs, correct way of doing things
Tino rangatiratanga	Self determination
Tīpūna or tūpuna	Ancestor(s)
Tūrangawaewae	Place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship and whakapapa
Tūturu Māori	Real, genuine Māori
Urūpā	Cemetery or burial ground
Wairuatanga	Spirituality
Whaea	Mother, aunt, aunty
Whakapapa	Genealogy, lineage, descent
Whakawhanaungatanga	Process of establishing relationships
Whanau	Extended family
Whenua Tipu	Ancestral land