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‘Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae - A Praxis of Māori Sovereignty  
Reclamation in a Community Space’

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

Master of Education  
in  
Mātauranga Māori

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## He Tuhinga Hakarāpopoto<sup>46</sup>

Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae was formerly opened to the public of The Hibiscus and Bays Communities in 2017. It is a community marae that was established by Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Incorporated Society as a cultural font of knowledge and resource for all Hibiscus and Bays community residents, regardless of age, ethnicity, or gender. In terms of a Māori position, it is a ‘community marae’ established by Māori for ngā hau e whā.<sup>47</sup> Concurrent with this inclusive philosophy, Mana Motuhake Māori<sup>48</sup>, Te Reo Māori me Wōna Tikanga<sup>49</sup> underpin all facets of its operation and day to day functions. Within this urban landscape, this translates as an educational marae, a praxis of contemporary Māori lifestyle today. It is a living, breathing, fully functioning marae, where the Māori language and culture are shared, taught and practiced daily. Despite being a relative newcomer to the terrain of urban marae, it has already proven itself to be a valid contributor to the Māori cultural education of the Hibiscus and Bays Communities. Administratively it has demonstrated itself as a financially sustainable marae model, with an organisational structure that continues to be effective in managing its daily operations, whilst dually honouring its cultural traditions.

From a Kaupapa Māori<sup>50</sup> theoretical underpinning, this writing will look to expound Māori Sovereignty Reclamation and its embodiments within the context of our community marae journey. Māori Sovereignty Reclamation hypothetically draws from an indigenous sovereignty position and draws from the fact that Rangatira Māori never willingly ceded sovereignty at either the signing of Te Hakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tireni<sup>51</sup>, in 1835 or Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>52</sup> in 1840. Within

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<sup>46</sup> Abstract

<sup>47</sup> all peoples from the four winds

<sup>48</sup> Māori Sovereignty

<sup>49</sup> Māori language and its related practices

<sup>50</sup> Initiative informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>51</sup> The Declaration of Independence

<sup>52</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

the journeying to become a marae I have learnt a number of valuable lessons that I hope to share in the prospect that it may find relativity to kindred Kaupapa Māori organisations<sup>53</sup> exploring their own self-determination struggle. The story about the establishment of this marae is a story that spans a period of forty years and has been a roller-coaster ride of experiences and emotions. I admit that I did not have all the answers prior to, and during the establishment of this marae, but suggest that my multiple experiences throughout the expedition has been a reliable tutor.

This piece of qualitative research involves a recounting of the marae story to lay a framework on which Kaupapa Māori methodology<sup>54</sup> will be applied to draw from that history, personal pūrākau<sup>55</sup> lessons. Some of these lessons will be critically examined through a transformative praxis lens with the goal of gaining a better understanding of what Māori Sovereignty Reclamation is, in terms of this organisations journey to establish a community marae.

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<sup>53</sup> organisations with Māori underpinnings

<sup>54</sup> A methodology informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>55</sup> Narrative methodology

## Ngā Mihi<sup>56</sup>

Pakia Iho au e te hauangiāngi, hau hakamāriho i ngā wai moana, he karere i rere mai ki ngā one, ngā one tai o Orewa e! (He whiti nō te Pātere a Te Herenga Waka o Orewa).

He hōnore, he korōria ki te Atua, he maungārongo ki te whenua, he hakaaro pai ki ngā tāngata katoa, korōria ki tōna ingoa tapu. E anga ana ahau ki tō tātou tomokanga marae a Emanuera, arā, ko te Atua ki a tātou. E tika ana me hakanui i ngā hakarawekehanga o wōna maihao i te mea, nō te Atua mai tēnei marae, ā, nōna te marae i tono. E pā, ko taku hakamīharo ki a koe, arohanuitia mai tonu.

I ahau e anga atu ana ki Te Tikapa Moana o Hauraki, ka anga tahitia te rohe pōtae me tōna tini whanaungatanga mai ki a mātou ngā mana o konei. E te Kīngi Māori, ko koe tēnā e kawē tonu ana i ngā wawata o tō iwi, o ō tūpuna heke iho ki a koe, ā mohoa noa nei. He mihi tēnei ki tō Makau Ariki a Te Atawhai rātou ko wā kourua tamariki, mokopuna. Toroa kau ngā raupā o Te Whare Kāhui Ariki, rire, rire hau, paimārire!

He roimata ka rerea mutunga kore, tai pari, tai timu. Ko koutou te hunga tūpuna i kākahuria e ngā whetū, moe mai rā. He tai aroha wēnei maumahara ki wōku mātua, ki wōku tūpuna i menea te pō. E Pāpu, ko koe tēnā, i takoto tuatahi mai ki Te Kākano hei rirohanga wharenuī te take. Nā tō mahi i marae mātou. Toroa ngā mate huhua o nāianeī, e te iti, e te mano. Ki tō tātou kaumātua nui nō Ngāti Whātua a Hāhi Walker, katahi anō tō hingatanga e te Totara nui. E Rango, e te Heru Hāpai, moe mai rā, moe mai rā, okioki ai.

Āpiti hono, tātai hono, ko koutou wēnā, kei te poho o te Atua, kei te pupurihanga o ō tūpuna. Haere atu, moe mai rā. Āpiti hono, tātai hono, ko mātou wēnei, e tangi hotu tonu ana ki a koutou kei te ao kōhimuhimu. Ko koutou kei tua i te ārai, e kore e warewarengia.

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<sup>56</sup> Acknowledgements

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E mara, te hakahua katoa i ngā ingoa tāngata i āwhina mai i ngā mahi hakatū marae, tē taea! Hoinō, me mihi, me mihi nui ahau ki a koutou katoa i hakatinana i ō koutou tautoko i ngā wā o mua tae ana ki tēnei wā tonu, He toki koutou! Ahakoa he iti ngā kupu Māori nei, he nui ngā hakaaro ki a koutou katoa.

He roa rawa tō mātou haerenga kia hakatū ai tō tātou marae. He tokomaha ngā whānau i haramai haere, puta noa tēnei hīkoi rangatira. He nui ngā mahi i oti i a mātou, ā, tāria te wā, he nui tonu ngā mahi e toe ana. Ko tētahi take o te tuinga roa nei, he tutukinga i taku whai, i te Tohu Paerua, he rangahau, he kōrero tara. Ko tēnā, tēnā! Tā te tirohanga Māori, he kōrero tuku iho tēnei. Ko te tuatahi, he taonga tēnei kōrero mō wāku tamariki, mō wāku mokopuna, me wōku whanaunga. Ko te tuarua, he kōrero tuku iho tēnei hei pupuri i te hītoria o te marae, mai i tāna tīmatanga, tae noa ki nāianei. Ka mutu, he kōrero tuku iho anō tēnei mō ngā mema marae, ehara i te Māori. He kōrero wēnei hei hakamana i ō koutou mema marae, ake tonu atu.

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I acknowledge the many whānau who supported the establishment of our marae (Pākehā mai, Māori mai, a wai atu, a wai atu) as volunteers or mema komiti throughout these past forty years. You, the nameless heroes and champions whose efforts have contributed to a thriving community marae today. Ngā mihi nui!

'Ki te tau o taku ate' or in Te Taitokerau dialect, 'Te putiputi o taku pūhā'. To my darling wife who has put up with all of my 'great ideas' these past forty years. Old love is the best mum! To my children, Hemi, Dee, Awatea, Hohua, Whitney and Pōtiki, who never really got a choice as to where they were going to be on the weekends... at the marae of course!. I pay special tribute to my youngest daughter who toiled tirelessly beside her father during the relocation and refurbishments of the marae buildings. E Pōtiki, ko koe tēnā, i hakatāne koe i a koe hei āwina i tō pāpā, nāu ngā mahi nui i pīkau. Ngā mihi nunui! Finally, to my mokopuna Te Kaea o te Pono, Atawhai, Kēnehi and Hārai. This story is your legacy, he koha nāku.

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<sup>57</sup> Massey University

Nō reira, huri noa i tō tātou marae nei, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

Nāku iti nei

Kereama Nathan (2023).

## Wāhanga 1 - He Kōrero Hakataki<sup>58</sup>

In the mid-1940's the major urban shift of Māori from their traditional rural settings to urban spaces began with impetus (Pool, 1991). The prospects of a fresh start, the potential of new jobs, new homes, and new communities accumulated in the steady migration of Māori from their places of historic location. This urban shift continued through out the 1950's, gaining momentum in the 60's and 70's as many more Māori whānau<sup>59</sup> joined the mass exodus to these new spaces. This era marked a national acceleration of Māori assimilation and one primary outcome resulted in pre-dominantly English speaking communities emerging (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2006, p.4). This included the available education in these new locations and over a relatively brief period many Māori households also became pre-dominantly English speaking as well. This juxtaposition of culture for Māori was not without its problems and as a consequence social maladjustment issues arose and as a matter of course, came under the close scrutiny of government and social services.

Initially, urban Māori needed to adapt their lifestyles in order to accommodate and retain their cultural traditions within these new domains. Although some Māori whānau remained strongly connected to their traditional haukāinga<sup>60</sup>, venturing there regularly with their whānau, the majority did not. The busy lifestyles in these urban societies, distance and costs also became deterrants. The emergence of urban marae was a direct response by Māori to growing social challenges that saw whānau Māori isolated from their traditional fortresses of cultural identity (George, 2010. P.159-162). These were some of the earliest 'by Māori' strategies at the time, to create a more Māori-centred approach to retaining traditions and practices. In the Tāmaki Makarau<sup>61</sup> area today, urban

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<sup>58</sup> Chapter 1 - Introduction

<sup>59</sup> families

<sup>60</sup> homelands

<sup>61</sup> Auckland

marae have become a bastion of contemporary society and are firmly imprinted in the annals of history (Kawharu, 2014).

Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae was formerly opened to the public of The Hibiscus and Bays Communities in 2017. It is a community marae that was established by Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Incorporated Society as a cultural font of knowledge and resource for all Hibiscus and Bays community residents, regardless of age, ethnicity, or gender. In terms of a Māori position, it is a 'community marae' established by Māori for ngā hau e whā.<sup>62</sup> Concurrent with this inclusive philosophy, Mana Motuhake Māori<sup>63</sup>, Te Reo Māori me Wōna Tikanga<sup>64</sup> underpin all facets of its operation and day to day functions. Within this urban landscape, this translates as an educational marae, a praxis of contemporary Māori lifestyle today. It is a living, breathing, fully functioning marae, where the Māori language and culture are shared, taught and practiced daily. Despite being a relative newcomer to the terrain of urban marae, it has already proven itself to be a valid contributor to the Māori cultural education of the Hibiscus and Bays Communities. Administratively it has demonstrated itself as a financially sustainable marae model, with an organisational structure that continues to be effective in managing its daily operations, whilst dually honouring its cultural traditions.

Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae is distinctive in terms of traditional marae. Traditional marae are centred on the shared relationships and genealogies to eponymous ancestors (Tangihaere & Twiname, 2011, p.107). These relationships are the catalyst for whānau, hapū and iwi<sup>65</sup> connections. In turn, these relationships form the basis of the unique rituals, practices, customs, and traditions of

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<sup>62</sup> all peoples from the four winds

<sup>63</sup> Māori Sovereignty

<sup>64</sup> Māori language and its related practices

<sup>65</sup> family, sub-tribe and tribal

each marae. In contrast, Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae shares a closer synergy with the more contemporary urban marae model located in and around the Tāmaki Makaurau<sup>66</sup> area. These types of marae exist in many cases outside the traditional lands of origin but retain rituals, practices, and traditions of their homelands (Gagne, 1975, George, 2014). Often, this fact translates to a more inclusive philosophy and a greater willingness to collaborate with non-Māori. Despite being urban marae, many have a mandate and support from iwi either through whanaungatanga<sup>67</sup> and or consensus of the urban Māori population they represent.

Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae is a marae that models Te Tiriti collaboration and inclusivity in practice thereby aligning to the intentions of Ngā Rangatira Māori<sup>68</sup> at the original Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>69</sup> signing. In the absence of iwi and central government support, our organisation chose to collaborate with our immediate Te Tiriti Partners, which in this case, was local government. The successful establishment of this marae suggests that this was a good decision and reinforces the ideology of Te Tiriti Collaboration<sup>70</sup> as a going concern, even today. Within this collaboration there was a reciprocal acknowledgement of our organisations individual mandates, our distinct positions within society, and our individual responsibilities to our community. In effect the establishment of Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae validated the benefit of a co-governance approach.

Regardless of our colonial history in which Māori Sovereignty was reduced to a shadow of its former self, the establishment of Te Herenga Waka shows promise for the future and an embodiment of recent progress towards Māori self-determination. More recently, Māori, academic induced

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<sup>66</sup> Auckland

<sup>67</sup> relationships

<sup>68</sup> Māori Chiefs

<sup>69</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

<sup>70</sup> collaboration based on a Te Tiriti o Waitangi underpinning.

discourses of counter-hegemony, decolonisation and Kaupapa Māori methodologies<sup>71</sup> are becoming more recognised as an academic field in their own right. They have emerged as powerful movements of Māori self-determination, making themselves present in the academic arena and overflowing into the amphitheatres of mainstream, community and government enterprise (Pihama, 2002, Smith, 2012, Tinirau, 2019).

From a Kaupapa Māori<sup>72</sup> theoretical underpinning, this writing will look to expound Māori Sovereignty Reclamation and its embodiments within the context of our community marae journey. Māori Sovereignty Reclamation hypothetically draws from an indigenous sovereignty position and is based on the fact that Rangatira Māori never willingly ceded sovereignty at either the signing of Te Hākaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī<sup>73</sup>, in 1835 or Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>74</sup> in 1840. Within the journeying to become a marae I have learnt a number of valuable lessons that I hope to share in the prospect that it may find relativity to kindred Kaupapa Māori organisations<sup>75</sup> exploring their own self-determination struggle. The story about the establishment of this marae is a story that spans a period of forty years and has been a roller-coaster ride of experiences and emotions. I admit that I did not have all the answers prior to, and during the establishment of this marae, but suggest that my multiple experiences throughout the expedition has been a reliable tutor.

This piece of qualitative research involves a recounting of the marae story to lay a framework on which Kaupapa Māori methodology<sup>76</sup> will be applied to draw from that history, personal pūrākau<sup>77</sup> lessons. Some of these lessons will be critically examined through a transformative praxis lens with

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<sup>71</sup> Methodologies with Māori cultural underpinnings

<sup>72</sup> Māori initiative

<sup>73</sup> The Declaration of Independence

<sup>74</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

<sup>75</sup> organisations informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>76</sup> A methodology based on a Māori world view.

<sup>77</sup> Narrative methodology

the goal of gaining a better understanding of what Māori Sovereignty Reclamation is, in terms of this organisations journey to establish a community marae.

### He Tuapapa Kōrero Nōku<sup>78</sup>

My connection to the story of the marae journey begins about 40 years ago. Recently married at the time, my wife and I decided to relocate to Whangaparāoa to raise a young family and to be close to her retired parents. I was born in an area better known to Māori as Te Kaokao Roa o Patetere<sup>79</sup> and more specifically in a small town called Putaruru. This is the tribal area of Ngāti Raukawa and previously, Ngāti Kahupungapunga. Alongside my five siblings we were raised and grew to adulthood in the nearby town of Tokoroa. Tokoroa takes its name from a chief of Ngāti Kahupungapunga, who were the first tribe in the region known as the Tokoroa plains.

On my fathers side, my tribes are Ngāti Whātua, Te Roroa and Ngāpuhi. My hapū<sup>80</sup> is Ngāti Torehina. On my mothers side, my tribes are Ngāti Porou and Ngāti Maniapoto. My hapū are Te Whānau ā-Hinerupe and Ngāti Rangitahi. I grew up outside my haukāinga<sup>81</sup> in an urban setting and so my practical haka<sup>82</sup> experience was limited to interactions with close whānau<sup>83</sup> members from both sides of the whānau<sup>84</sup> and the annual excursions to whānau<sup>85</sup> marae. All of my traditional learning in that period of my life was through involvement on marae and informal oral transmission in the kāuta<sup>86</sup>. This included my knowledge of Te Reo Māori<sup>87</sup> and the formal processes on my marae.

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<sup>78</sup> My brief background

<sup>79</sup> South Waikato

<sup>80</sup> sub-tribe

<sup>81</sup> home land

<sup>82</sup> genealogical

<sup>83</sup> family

<sup>84</sup> extended family

<sup>85</sup> family

<sup>86</sup> cooking shed

<sup>87</sup> Māori language

My father was a carpenter by trade and had a thriving construction business back in the 60's, employing many of his whanaunga<sup>88</sup> from both his and mum's whānau<sup>89</sup>. In Tokoroa we were surrounded by my mums whānau as her parents re-located from their papa kāinga<sup>90</sup> in Taumarunui, to live closer to the majority of their children and mokopuna<sup>91</sup>. As a matter of course I forged a closer affinity with my mums whānau than I did with my dad's. My dad was a kind man who never failed to help anyone in need, even if we couldn't afford to. I have fond memories of him returning home from work on pay day with armfuls of twisties, peanuts slabs and treats for us kids. In his early forties he suffered a chronic asthma attack and as a result of ongoing ill health was unable to continue running his business and or work full-time. This never stopped him from working for koha<sup>92</sup>, when his health allowed.

Now koha is not just limited to monetary exchanges which is the predominant transaction we participate in today. Koha is based on the traditional principal of reciprocation and as such easily fulfilled barter requirements. Despite the financial challenges, my dad and mum never failed to feed or clothe us, even if the clothes came from the hoko shop!<sup>93</sup> In terms of food we always had a garden which meant there was plenty of vegetables all year round. That also meant that there was always work related to gardening for us kids, all year round! Te hōhā nōki!<sup>94</sup> My dad had lived off the land all of his life so the bountiful kaimoana<sup>95</sup> on the east-coast was a huge draw-card to him. Prior to getting sick, he had purchased some land in a place called Tirohanga, which is just outside of Opotiki. He had already completed and closed in the shell of the 2 storey building by then. Every weekend after school finished we stayed at Tirohanga so dad could continue building and of course,

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<sup>88</sup> relatives

<sup>89</sup> family

<sup>90</sup> homestead

<sup>91</sup> grandchildren

<sup>92</sup> monetary love offerings

<sup>93</sup> 2nd hand store

<sup>94</sup> what a pain!

<sup>95</sup> seafood

gather all of the local kaimoana<sup>96</sup> delicacies such as ika, kūtai, kina, pipi, tuatua and tūangi<sup>97</sup>. We always returned home with a trailer load of kaimoana which he would barter for seasonal fruit and meat from orchard owners, whānau<sup>98</sup> and friends. ‘Nā PapaTai ahau i whangai’!<sup>99</sup>

My mother was a ‘ringa raupā’<sup>100</sup> and stepped in when my dad got sick, working as a cleaner to help make ends meet. She was also the main disciplinarian in the house and a staunch advocate of sport as a necessary means to keep us out of mischief. I have lucid memories of fitness training day and night, regardless of weather conditions. Further to this, my brother and I played every sport she could afford and fit in, during school, after school and on weekends. If we weren’t playing sport than we were working in the garden, building with our father or doing daily chores. Looking back I am thankful to my parents for instilling in all of their children the discipline of routine, resourcefulness and a great work ethic.

We were baptised and raised in the Mihingare<sup>101</sup> faith. Having said this, I don’t recall my parents being particularly active believers. Both swore like troopers and liked to bet on the horses and the occasional party or two. As for myself, church visits lacked any depth and were inconsistent at best. I do recall one particular time in our childhood where we regularly attended the local Mihingare church, but I think that this was my dad’s attempt to see us follow in the faith of his whānau<sup>102</sup> and partly pressure from his kaihanga<sup>103</sup> who was an Anglican Chaplain in the army. My own personal

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<sup>96</sup> Seafood

<sup>97</sup> Fish, mussels, sea Urchin, pipi, tuatua and cockles

<sup>98</sup> extended family

<sup>99</sup> I was fed by Papatūānuku and Tangaroa.

<sup>100</sup> hardworker

<sup>101</sup> Anglican

<sup>102</sup> extended family

<sup>103</sup> cousin

relationship with Karaiti<sup>104</sup> developed later in my adulthood but has remained a consistent source of strength and inspiration since.

Although my father could speak Māori he never did in general discussions around us, and his conversations in Māori were confined to his kin or people that addressed him in Te Reo Māori<sup>105</sup> in passing. He was also hard of hearing and wore hearing aids as a result. I presume that this fact, made him a bit self-conscious around fluent speakers. My mother on the other hand was not a speaker and had an inferiority complex because of it. She would often tell people 'she was not a Māori' and often feigned that she was from Venezuela because of her complexion. Both of my parents grew up in a time when it was not advantageous to be Māori and like many Māori of the time, chased the urban dream and left their papa kāinga<sup>106</sup>, whanaunga<sup>107</sup> and Māoritanga<sup>108</sup> behind.(George, 2010). For my mum, I think it was a deep regret that she was not fluent in her own language and some of her outlandish remarks simply concealed the underlying hakamā.<sup>109</sup> Having said this, tikanga Māori<sup>110</sup> was a normal practice growing up in our household, especially principles of tapu<sup>111</sup> and noa<sup>112</sup>. These contributing factors dictated that learning to speak Māori was never a priority that was impressed upon us as children. I recall the debate that ensued in our household when my brother took Te Reo Māori as an option in high school. My father much rather preferred that he take classes in carpentry or technical drawing instead.

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<sup>104</sup> Christ

<sup>105</sup> Māori language

<sup>106</sup> homestead

<sup>107</sup> relatives

<sup>108</sup> Māori lifestyles/practices

<sup>109</sup> embarrassment

<sup>110</sup> Māori process

<sup>111</sup> restricted processes

<sup>112</sup> unrestricted processes

I did well in school during primary and intermediate and had an unquenchable love of reading, nurtured by my mother who was the main educator in the whanau<sup>113</sup>. She was also the main disciplinarian and although small in stature could put the fear of God into you with whatever weapon was at her closest disposal and of course an arsenal of coarse expletives. I would describe myself as a compliant child in general and never made a big fuss for attention or the spotlight. I do however have a stubborn streak and once I set my mind to doing something, it is pretty much impossible for anyone else to change my mind, or my course of action!

However, when I hit my teens I chose to collude with peer pressures and as a matter of course became a try hard gangster who often rebelled against the wishes of my parents. Much of this rebellion came from the culture of the town and the influence of friends and whānau<sup>114</sup> whom I revered. There was a macho culture of work hard, play hard and demean women in order to prove your manhood. Many of my whānau were patched members in the local gangs and it was normal for me to be seen associating with them weekly. This was also complicated because we had three main gang at that time. There was the Black Power, The Mongrel Mob and The Hūhū's. I had whanaunga<sup>115</sup> and hoa<sup>116</sup> in all of them! I remember vividly my parents urging me to remain in school but at that stage, I was deaf to any reasoning. So I left school and started working life at the manly age of 14.

Only in later life with a dependent whanau,<sup>117</sup> did I realise the mistake I had made in regards to education. Having no academic qualifications, I was reduced to labouring jobs for the most part. I am indebted to my parents who gave me a great work ethic and no labouring task, regardless of how

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<sup>113</sup> family

<sup>114</sup> extended family

<sup>115</sup> relatives

<sup>116</sup> friends

<sup>117</sup> family

difficult, ever proved too much for me. I was fortunate enough to possess enough resourcefulness to be able work my way steadily from labouring jobs to machine operator, truck driver and then through various sales and management roles in the retail and trade, building industry. I have also run my own company for the last 20 years and managed to retire over 13 years ago in order to lead the establishment of our community marae. This represented the earliest beginnings of my own self-emancipation from a hegemonic western system. In short, I was the 'man in charge' .... when my wife wasn't at home!

Knowing the mistakes I had made in my youth, I often preached the importance of education to my children, their friends and anyone who would listen. One day, I heard the words that were coming out of my mouth and I felt like a hypocrite. So in my late 30's, I did my Bachelor of Education in Full Immersion Māori, Adult Teaching through Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi. That took me three years and in the ensuing year, I completed my Bachelor of Honours at Wikitoria. After a period of approximately 10 years, I am back struggling through my 'Master's and even contemplating a 'Doctorate' before I lose my marbles all together. In retrospect 'kua oma kē ngā hōiho'. <sup>118</sup>

### **He Iwi Marae Kore**<sup>119</sup>

"He iwi marae kore ehara, he marae iwi kore, he moumou".<sup>120</sup> (Henare cited in Haami, 2018).

There is no doubt in my mind that this hakatauāki has both represented and represents the underpinning aspirations of our organisation. It was our chant, our takutaku<sup>121</sup>, our mantra, that guided, directed and refocussed us towards achieving our ultimate goal. Forty years ago, the realisation of a

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<sup>118</sup> it could possibly be too late already, in that regard.

<sup>119</sup> People Without a Marae

<sup>120</sup> 'A people without a marae are nothing, a marae without people, is a waste'

<sup>121</sup> recital

community marae was just a whim, a dream, a wish, and not much more. At times these kupu<sup>122</sup> served as a constant reminder to the futility of the struggle. And yet at oft times, this verse was a powerful tool of affirmation, of endorsement, of substantiation and encouragement, in terms of charting our progress within this expedition.

Like the navigating star Tautoru<sup>123</sup>, it was the resource that we used to find our bearings in terms of how close or far we were away from achieving our goals at the different space-time continuums in history. Like the stars it remained a constant reminder to us of what we were trying to achieve. In our excursion we were exemplary of both a people without a marae, and a marae without people. In our struggle, we were practically contextualising the essence of this hakatauāki and the hakatauāki was coercing, challenging and motivating us onwards. Today, the two halves of this hakatauāki serve to set the scene for the following historical account about Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae, he marae nā te Māori, mō te katoa<sup>124</sup>.

### **The Hibiscus and Bays Communities**

In the early 1980's the Hibiscus and Bays Community consisted of a strong Pākehā demographic with many of the population soon to be and or at retirement age. This area was part of the Rodney Council which originally was quite an expansive area that included both the western and eastern coastal towns from Wainui to Wellsford. Batches littered the shores of the local east coast beaches of Orewa, Waiwera and Whangaparāoa, and the general atmosphere was relaxed and friendly. There were very few whānau Māori<sup>125</sup> residing here when I first arrived. Having grown up in a Māori-Pacific majority populace, I immediately noticed the culture change and began experiencing

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<sup>122</sup> words

<sup>123</sup> Orions Belt

<sup>124</sup> a marae created by Māori for everyone

<sup>125</sup> Māori families

moments of isolation and withdrawals due to the new and unfamiliar terrain. This took some time for me to come to grips with and begin to manage on my own terms. Fortunate to be a part of a big whānau<sup>126</sup> network in the local Tāmaki<sup>127</sup> area, I took every opportunity to connect with them weekly as a security measure and self-affirmation. In terms of community, I was particularly drawn to community groups and or events where Māori were present such as sporting clubs, kapa haka and church.

This physical shift from my cultural norms did not just challenge me internally but included numerous experiences of race discrimination, which appeared both in every day community life and my places of employment. Thoughtless acts of name-calling and derogatory cultural inferred inuendo were the chief conspirators but societal race-based classifications of employment were also a nemesis of the time. My background at that time included several years of experience in the forestry and sawmilling industry. Looking for a transition, I applied for jobs in the construction field. There was a general expectation by prospective employers that the jobs I was better suited for were various assortments of labouring roles and although I applied, was never considered for any management roles within my field of expertise. (Calman, 2012, Naylor, 2006 , p.18). Interesting to note that my first career break in sales came from a manager who was not Pākehā.

Whether discrimination in this community occurred as a matter of ignorance or whether it was intentional is not the point here. The fact that it happened to me and although it upset me, I allowed it to continue with minimal resistance. This unhealthy relationship with discrimination and perpetrators of discriminatory practices is similar to the unconscious dependencies formed between a victim of abuse and their offender or an addict and their drug addictions. This handicap is difficult

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<sup>126</sup> extended family

<sup>127</sup> Auckland

to overcome, but conscientisation of your dependency and its inadequacies is the initiation of your personal self-awareness, your response, and your decision to act. I know there are many Māori that can relate to my story, but I am convinced that we must refuse to conspire further in practices and belief systems that work against us, and begin to push-back.

Things changed for me somewhat. when I discovered a local kapa haka rōpū<sup>128</sup> 'Nga Iwi o te Pūtorino'.<sup>129</sup> It was an instant breath of fresh air, a taste of home. I and my whānau<sup>130</sup> joined the kapa instantly, reaping the benefits of the familiar culture. Kapa Haka practices and whanaungatanga<sup>131</sup> became a part of our regular weekly routine. Our grand performances were limited to mostly appearances at local pubs for drunken audiences or a spattering of token public occasions. Regardless of this, it was the familiar environments and the whanaungatanga that were the true value of the time. Finding consistent venues to practice was always a challenge at that time and we were often confronted with last minute venue changes depending on what was made available, or not. It soon became apparent that our particular group was not a priority for the local community spaces. This was one of the reasons our organisation moved towards the alternative of creating our own space, such as a marae.

I can recall the initial spontaneous meetings attended with the goal of planning the establishment of a local marae. It was during these session that an agreement was reached in regards to its affiliations. The majority of our kapa members were not Mana Whenua<sup>132</sup>, therefore the decision was made that the marae would be a Pan-Tribal Marae<sup>133</sup> for everyone, including non-Māori (Te

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<sup>128</sup> Māori culture group

<sup>129</sup> People of the nose flute (traditional Māori instrument)

<sup>130</sup> family

<sup>131</sup> kinship

<sup>132</sup> Local Iwi of the area

<sup>133</sup> inclusive of all Iwi

Herenga Waka o Orewa Feasability Report, 2013, p.9). The ensuing two decades saw the incorporation of Te Herenga Waka Incorporated Society, the establishment of a Kōhanga Reo<sup>134</sup> and also the dis-establishment of the same Kōhanga Reo. During this period, I was frustrated at how slowly the process was moving and promoted a more aggressive approach to achieving our goal. I wasn't opposed to the ideas of occupation or protest as possible ways of getting our message accross. Unfortunately, the kaumātua<sup>135</sup> and leaders of that time did not agree so I left the committee on amicable terms, returning to support events when required.

In the ensuing years, my wife and I did our best to normalise Te Reo Māori me Wōna Tikanga, Te Ahurea Māori and Mātauranga Māori<sup>136</sup> in our home. As a matter of course my wife and I would often find ourselves challenging the mainstream schools that our tamariki<sup>137</sup> attended, to prioritise Te Reo Māori.<sup>138</sup> During this time, Te Herenga Waka Incorporated Society saw four successive Mayors come and go with no tangible progress in terms of land for a marae. Although numerous promises of support were made by Mayor and Councillors, there was still insufficient support in general. It was mostly at the critical times that these non-events fell flat on their faces. These trials and tribulations are definitely an interesting consideration for another day. Finally in 2007, Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Incorporated signed a lease to occupy a recently vacated school site in Te Wie-ti<sup>139</sup>. Suddenly, a new landscape had presented itself!

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<sup>134</sup> Māori Language Nest

<sup>135</sup> elders

<sup>136</sup> Māori language, culture and knowledge

<sup>137</sup> children

<sup>138</sup> Māori language

<sup>139</sup> Silverdale

## He Hakawāhi i te Arotake Tuhituhinga<sup>140</sup>

In the ensuing literature review, I will investigate some of the key impacts on Māori Sovereignty caused as a result of Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>141</sup> agreements and detrimental legislative measures spear-headed by the then, Crown and Settler Governments. Furthermore there is an intent here to move away from the more generic model of Literature Reviews to establish some theoretical framework to broker understanding around how Māori Sovereignty was impacted negatively, and therefore begin the discussion around what Māori Sovereignty Reclamation is. This study will show how in a relatively short period of time how Māori Sovereignty was systematically stripped of its autonomous authority and replaced by a new western version that legislated a swing of power to a democratic central government-led model instead. This review will include some of the ideas drawn from an article written by Margaret Mutu (2020) about Māori Sovereignty called Mana Māori Motuhake<sup>142</sup>, Māori Concepts and Practice of Sovereignty. These ideas will form the pou around which my reasoning on Māori Sovereignty Reclamation will be built. Mutu has a prestigious portfolio as a published academic, including her numerous roles working for her own iwi (Mutu, 2004, 2012a, 2012b, 2018). Her article is insightful in terms of Māori Sovereignty and is located from an indigenous perspective.

In the following chapters, I intend to investigate both loreful and lawful justifications for the practice of Māori Sovereignty in today's society. This research will show us that these two legal positions are often at opposite ends of the spectrum. This is largely due to the preference shown by successive Aotearoa governments to an accustomed, legislative infrastructure based on a hegemonic

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<sup>140</sup> Prelude to the Literature Review

<sup>141</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

<sup>142</sup> Indigenous Sovereignty

westernised form of democracy. Within this infrastructure, a western-based interpretation has had a major part to play in this discourse.

These different perspectives continue to create debate, even today. One recent, local topic of contention in Tāmaki Makaurau<sup>143</sup> lies around the co-governance debate in regard to the Hauraki Gulf Management Board structure (Ward, 2022). This board will ideally be responsible for the decisions and management of the Hauraki Gulf resource for all Councils included in the domain. The proposed co-governance structure automatically offers a representative of each of the five iwi from the Hauraki Gulf region a seat on the Board. Many of the non-Māori Councillors throughout the region believe that this move is undemocratic and privileging to offer iwi a seat at the table without adherence to a democratic election process. This is an interesting stance given a history of government acts and legislations that usurped land and power from unsuspecting Māori. All of this in the guise of democracy but wrought with pre-meditated power mongering and Crown/Settler government agenda. The Jury is still undecided on the Hauraki Gulf Management Board matter, but I continue to watch this drama with interest.

This is one of the numerous reasons why Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>144</sup> debate is critical in terms of its mechanism in the historic empowerment of non-Māori and the disempowerment of Māori. It is also imperative that I present this history in its multiplicitous barrage of lawful acts and legislation that informed the basis of our own Māori responses to practice the reclamation of Māori Sovereignty in today's rapidly changing political and multi-cultural societal landscape. It is plain to see that these cultural and societally juxtaposed perspectives underpin core issues in the debate around power, Crown partnership and Māori Sovereignty debates, even today. This scrutiny will focus on some of

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<sup>143</sup> Auckland

<sup>144</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

the key era that contributed to the erosion of Māori Sovereignty both in the prelude and earlier pusuant years following the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

## **Wāhanga 2 - Arotake Tuhituhinga**<sup>145</sup>

On December 3, 2020, the maiden speech of Rawiri Waititi resounded through the chambers of Parliament announcing the formidable return of Te Pāti Māori<sup>146</sup> to the ‘House of Representatives’. During his speech, he clearly affirmed his position as a person of Māori descent, fluent in ‘te reo Māori me wōna tikanga’<sup>147</sup>, eloquent in English, a representative for his Waiariki<sup>148</sup> people, his whānau and future Māori generations. ‘Has Te Tiriti o Waitangi been honoured for Māori?’. This was the gambit that launched his assault on the Crown, followed by a number of historical illustrations to the contrary. In closing he vowed to remain ‘a pebble in the shoes of the Crown’, a change agent for the recognition of ‘the kahu Māori’<sup>149</sup>. ‘Seeking parity and recognition of mana Māori in the Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership according to the articles of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Young and Chen, 2020). Following the recent 2023 elections, Te Pāti Māori<sup>150</sup> has won six seats in Parliament which is the most seats any Māori Party have ever won, in their history of politics (Shepherd, 2023). Time has stood witness to the purity of his convictions. He and Te Pāti Māori<sup>151</sup> continue to challenge the Crown to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>152</sup> and acknowledge Māori as sovereign partners in the co-governance of our land.

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<sup>145</sup> Chapter 2 - Literature Review

<sup>146</sup> Māori Party

<sup>147</sup> Māori language and its cultural processes

<sup>148</sup> Bay of Plenty

<sup>149</sup> Māori flag

<sup>150</sup> The Māori Party

<sup>151</sup> Māori Party

<sup>152</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

And yet, here I am also, in 2023, one of the multitude of change agents contemplating still another synopsis on Te Tiriti o Waitangi. I am intimately aware of the numerous academics who precede me on this contentious topic but remain resolute that mine is a unique discourse from an equally distinctive position. It has been argued that Te Tiriti o Waitangi quickly transformed the fabric of Māori Sovereignty and over a relatively short period of time became the catalyst for the complete socio-economical dis-advantage of the Māori (Busbridge, 2016, Stephenson, 2001). Despite the Crown's undeclared agenda, the appearance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi intimated a unification of two peoples, two autonomous authorities, two countries, being legally bound by the premise of a shared-governance model for the peaceful settlement of this land and its inhabitants (Ruru and Morris, 2020).

I acknowledge that this is a broad and rather idealist statement but the stark reality remains that at the time rangatira Māori<sup>153</sup> signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Māori were still the sovereign authority and people majority in this land. Orange (1976) states “in fact, for some years after 1840, New Zealand would be British in name but continue to be largely Māori”. It can be further argued that it was at this particular junction in history, that Māori first chose to collude with the Crown, sowing the seeds in the unwitting beginning of their own undoing. The trials and tribulations that followed are evidence enough. The annals of history are checkered with examples of how the newly proposed power-sharing model of governance was indeed detrimental to their sovereignty status as an indigenous peoples. The culmination of time, assimilation policies, acts, legislation and pre-meditated, agendarised beauracracy have continued to successfully erode and dislocate Māori as a collective, from the valid practice of their rightful Māori Sovereignty. “The Treaty is the shared touchstone and starting point of “official” Māori/Pākehā interaction. Its place in the New Zealand

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<sup>153</sup> Māori Chief

scheme of things, like the place of the Māori community, has been largely defined by the Pākehā” (Jackson, 1988).

It is important at this point to declare that the perspective of this argument must be observed through the lens of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and not that of its western counterpart, The Treaty of Waitangi. I suggest that it is this clear re-positioning, that restores a measure of balance to the historically biased argument. It is from this location that the debate strongly suggests an existent parity of power and thereby further contextualising the impetus of this approach. This discussion adopts the view that the translation of the English version of The Treaty of Waitangi is clearly different from the translation of the Māori version (Orange, 2021, Walker, 2004). This anomaly camouflaged the true agenda of the crown in its determination to extend the borders of its own sovereign lands (Orange, p.92).

Te Tiriti o Waitangi in contrast, imbuing the aspirations of Maori leaders at that time, seeking a solution to the then lawlessness that prevailed whilst retaining the sovereign rights over their lands and an indigenous governorship of its entirety thereof (Department of Internal Affairs, 2017; New Zealand Constitutional Advisory Panel, 2013; Orange, 2012; Orange, 2021; Walker, 2004). “To many Māori people, the terms of The Treaty provided the ultimate protection for their way of life, their institutions, and their culture: they were mechanisms to protect their taonga” (Jackson, 1988, p.48). These oppositions form some of the basis of the juxtaposition that is ‘The Treaty/Te Tiriti debate, today.

Mutu (2020) states that “Sovereignty is a cultural construct that develops from the value systems of the society and culture in which it is embedded, thus Māori Sovereignty and Crown Sovereignty are very different”. Therefore, the sovereignty power-shift in Aotearoa was instigated by the

mechanisms of a westernised government system that was under-pinned by the culture and values of the newly formed government. In modern terms it could be suggested that this cultural preferencing was nepotistic, a direct conflict of interests and disproportionately unfair to Māori. I only have to return to the debate around the Hauraki Management Board to see how easily democracy can be presented to appeal to a western proposed agenda.

It would be idealistic to return to former times when Māori were the preeminent authority. In such a space, Māori would have no need to justify their practices, their way of life, either assimilate to the culture of the other, or argue over deeds, titles and ownership of land. In spite of the notion, it would be overly optimistic to attempt to regress present society as I know it in order to restore my perceived former glories. Especially given that it has taken over 200 years of colonial history to arrive at our present location as a country. However, in terms of the Māori Sovereignty Reclamation discussion, this vein of inquiry is worthy of further exploration.

Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae is a community marae and as such was established by a sovereign Māori minority, for everyone. Iwi did not formally support the marae during its struggle and this is one of the reasons the marae has never acknowledged itself in any particular iwi capacity and or authority. This fact compelled Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae to explore its own sovereignty potential as a Māori organisation. Part of this stance included finding an authentic self-determining position of power within the context of Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>154</sup> debate. As a Kaupapa Māori organisation, Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae has chosen to align itself with the sovereign intentions of Rangatira Māori at the original Te Tiriti o Waitangi signing. One distinction of this position is the active practice of Māori sovereignty in relation to the discretionary powers of a Kaupapa Māori organisation to operate, and make defining decisions, at a community and regional

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<sup>154</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

level. This sits easily within the legal jurisdiction alluded to by article two, of Te Tiriti o Waitangi that guaranteed Māori as iwi, hapū and individuals, the absolute application of authority over their lands, forests, fisheries, including all of their treasures (Kawharu, 1989, p.317). It can be argued whether our organisation has a lawful precedence for this position however, there does remain a loreful justification. I will clarify this position more, during the methodology section of this research. Despite the ensuing debate, Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae is already operating as such today. The question proffered is, are there legitimate grounds for other Māori organisations to follow in our wake.

The fact remains that Crown sovereignty and its ministrations have illegitimately usurped the sovereign rights of Māori on multiple occasions throughout history. Mutu (2020) argues that the political mandates of the Crown were in fact illegal. This comprised of all Crown constructs of power including central government that were enforced following the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. According to Mutu, these practices were outside of the terms agreed to (by Māori) in Te Tiriti o Waitangi (p.275). This does not pardon the fact that Māori themselves either directly or indirectly condoned these Crown practices through either assimilation, concession and or collusion. Whilst I can acknowledge naivety as a consideration of that era, there exists little reasoning today that supports the need for Māori to continue to collude with practices that persist in dis-empowering Māori and thereby sustaining the erosion of our Māori sovereignty status as either iwi, hapū<sup>155</sup>, organisations and individuals.

This pattern of resistance by Māori is worthy of some scrutiny as it relates directly to the basis of the Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae sovereignty argument, as a strategically positioned Māori

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<sup>155</sup> tribes, sub-tribes

organisation. We have made a conscious choice within the realms of what is lawful today, to resist some of these social and political norms as a daily practice. In principle, making decisions on our own terms and agenda, weighted by our own intrinsic underpinnings, ontological and epistemological values and perspectives. Whilst I deem it overly optimistic to expect a miraculous transition nation-wide, either as individuals or individual Māori organisations, I endeavour to present a more palatable and achievable solution towards the restoration of Māori sovereignty in community spaces today.

### He Whaihakaarohanga<sup>156</sup>

*‘Ka kitea te kōkonga o te whare, e kore e kitea te kōkonga o te ngākau’<sup>157</sup>*

“The term *Mana Māori Motuhake*<sup>158</sup> is an overarching term, which emphasises that the mana of the Māori people is distinct and ensures we always remain the *tangata whenua*, the original people of the land. *Mana Māori Motuhake*<sup>159</sup> is our form of Indigenous sovereignty” (Mutu, 2020).

I would concur with this description in terms of Māori Sovereignty and comply with the spiritual connotations and intrinsic underpinnings she refers to. Mutu (2020) also suggests that there is an existent equilibrium between mana<sup>160</sup> and rangatiratanga<sup>161</sup> that rightfully validates the independent right of Māori to practice Mana Māori Motuhake. There is a deliberate intent by Mutu to position this definition within the parameters of Māori epistemological and ontological reasoning. This is also evident in her explanations on the dynamic and multiplicitous nature of mana. Its ability to traverse the social, political, and spiritual domains within the multiple arenas of Mana Māori Motuhake. She

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<sup>156</sup> A reflection

<sup>157</sup> ‘It is easy to see the corner of a building but difficult to see the intentions of the heart’

<sup>158</sup> Indigenous Sovereignty / Māori Sovereignty

<sup>159</sup> Indigenous Sovereignty / Māori Sovereignty

<sup>160</sup> Authority/power

<sup>161</sup> Chieftainship Rights

draws on other examples of indigenous sovereignty to show a cultural commonality with Māori Sovereignty but also reiterate its uniqueness from the Crown model (Alfred, 2005; Barker, 2005; Coffee and Tsosie, 2001; Lee, 2017; Moreton Robinson, 2007, 2015).

In contrast she acknowledges a very different paradigm in terms of western sovereignty. Likening the western definition of sovereignty, to a more absolute power such as those of a King or monarchy. This form of power forms a hierarchal context of power and extracts the rights of sovereignty and civilisation from everyone that they consider to be uncivilised. It was this ideal of sovereignty that was imported within the preface of Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership to this land post 1840. This Crown perspective presented a stark and hostile difference in terms of sovereignty within the Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>162</sup> dialogue. The hangover of what was always going to be a potentially disastrous cocktail, still exists, in many indigenous nations discourses today.

The following passages will explore Māori Sovereignty within some of the key historical accounts in and around the time Te Tiriti o Waitangi was initially signed. A specific focus of this literature review will be placed on the 50 year period in approximation to the signing. This study suggests that it was within this period that most irreparable changes occurred to the then Māori Sovereignty status quo. It is imperative to the authenticity of this debate that I review some of the key Māori-led responses in order to further validate the fact that there were numerous Māori that never willingly relinquished their sovereignty. According to Harawira (2012), The Ngāpuhi nation is firm in its belief that our tūpuna did not cede sovereignty' (Healy, Huygens, Murphy and Parata, 2012, p.1) In fact a growing number of academics concur that Māori did not cede sovereignty to the British crown (O'Sullivan et al., 2021; Walker, 2004). This is affirmed by the Waitangi Tribunal as well (Waitangi Tribunal, 2014, 2021).

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<sup>162</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

### **Te Hakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tireni<sup>163</sup>**

Prior to the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>164</sup>, Aotearoa was an independent state made up of sovereign tribes but with no recognised central leadership or governance. This led to much uncertainty (for non-Māori) in terms of affairs of state and decision-making processes. Under the directions of James Busby, the status of Māori Sovereignty underwent its first transition via the establishment of Te Hakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tireni<sup>165</sup>, in 1835. Of note was his ulterior motive to nullify the aspirations of Baron Charles de Thierry, who had designs on becoming ‘Lord and Governor’ of New Zealand. (Wishart, 2012, p.21). In theory this confederation of tribes proposed a positive transition towards Māori amalgamation as well as declaring Aotearoa an independent society. It also marked the formation of initial collaborations with the monarchy of England, their formal processes, and legal infrastructures. Two key outcomes were addressed that directly impacted the interactions of both Māori and non-Māori in Aotearoa. The first, acknowledged the sovereign rights of the Māori signatories as representatives of their tribes and their associated lands within New Zealand. This formally recognised Māori mandate in terms of the law. The second, acknowledged these sovereign tribes as a collective and in essence a singular political body (Kingi, 2005). Interesting to note that it was also the pre-requisite for the introduction of a more acceptable governance system for non-Māori.

### **Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>166</sup>**

Partly due to a growing colony, continuing land disputes and threats of annexation by other offshore interests, Captain William Hobson was despatched to the shores of New Zealand to spearhead a solution. “Hobsons primary task was to secure sovereignty for Britain, by treaty, if possible, but above all in a peaceful manner” (p.32). Within a very short timeframe Te Tiriti o Waitangi was

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<sup>163</sup> The Declaration of Independence

<sup>164</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

<sup>165</sup> The Declaration of Independence

<sup>166</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

written, translated, and then signed. Of particular interest to this argument, Hobson was to ensure that all signatories of Te Hākaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tīreni,<sup>167</sup> were made to sign Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2001). This can be interpreted as a strategic move to nullify the legal implications of the previous document. In fact, “Today the Declaration is considered by the courts to be of no legal effect in New Zealand” (p.27). It is easy to see that even from this early intervention, unassuming Māori were being coerced to conform to a political agenda, not of their making (Walker, 1999). It is reasonable to suggest that the speed of these enactments can account for several resultant misunderstandings. The inconsistent translations occurring from the English language version of Te Tiriti o Waitangi to the Māori language, is one of the main perpetrators of these ambiguities. Furthermore, history shows that Te Tiriti o Waitangi was a significantly influential vehicle in persuading naïve Māori leaders to conform with the determinations of the Crown (p.5). “The treaty was presented in a manner calculated to secure Māori agreement” (Orange, 1976, p.33). At this juncture I can see the infant beginnings of a division of purpose that started to dictate the eroding sovereign position of Māori. This movement became more and more apparent as new agreements were reached with some, but not all iwi. The original Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>168</sup> was signed in 1840 by only some of the northern chief and excluded many of the southern tribes. Many iwi leaders signed in retrospect. Once again, I can highlight a vulnerability for Iwi Māori<sup>169</sup> caused by the urgent manner that Te Tiriti o Waitangi process was managed. I would also go as far as to indicate that this ‘divide and conquer strategy’ has been gainfully employed by the government since the 1840’s. Of special note, is that Tainui did not sign Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Today, Tainui is one of the successful iwi in terms of Te Tiriti o Waitangi Settlements in general and of course their historic, Raupatu Claims<sup>170</sup> (Fisher, 2016, Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2021). It could be validly argued that instances of resistance such as Tainui’s were the right decision at the time. Several iwi discovered retrospectively

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<sup>167</sup> The Declaration of Independence

<sup>168</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

<sup>169</sup> Māori people

<sup>170</sup> Claims against unlawful acquisition of land

the fallibility of their decisions to sign, resulting in protests and land wars. In Tainui's case, this included a number of physical encounters with the colonial troops and resulted in the unlawful confiscation of prime Tainui lands. "Matters came to a head towards the end of the 1850's with the formation of the Māori King movement and the outbreak of fighting in Taranaki. The core issues were mainly related to land, authority, and sovereignty" (Orange, 1976, pg.3).

So, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1840, Te Tiriti o Waitangi was signed and sealed, a symbol of a binding partnership agreement between Rangatira Māori and the Crown. A testament to some of the reservations held by Māori at the time, remains in the words of Nopera Panakareao. He said that *"the shadow of the land will go to him (the Governor), but the substance will remain with us."* (as cited in Thomas & Nikora, 1992, p.2). In contrast, the significance of the signing for the Crown was illustrated by the uttered catch cry of Hobson, 'He iwi kotahi tātou' and the issuing of two blankets and some tobacco to each signatory (Kingi, 2005). This monetary gesture was perhaps a sign of things to come for Māori. Interesting to note that Governor Grey employed gratuities as one of his strategies to assert Crown Sovereignty over Māori Sovereignty (Stephenson, 2001, p.6).

### **Ko te Ātikara Tuatahi**<sup>171</sup>

"Ko nga Rangatira o te wakaminenga me nga Rangatira katoa hoki kīhai i uru ki taua wakaminenga ka tuku rawa atu ki te Kuini o Ingarani ake tonu atu - te Kawanatanga katoa o o ratou wenua"

([www.tepapa.govt.nz](http://www.tepapa.govt.nz)).

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<sup>171</sup> The First Article

Therefore, Te Tiriti o Waitangi became the catalyst for numerous changes to the previously uncontested social, political, economic, and traditional Māori society. In the first article of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, it appears that Māori did agree to give the rights of governance and custodianship to the Queen of England and to this as well the right of pre-emption of such lands as the Māori wished to sell (Orange 1976). This in principle, gave the Aotearoa-based government the authority to manage the affairs of state for the benefit of both peoples. One salient benefit for non-Māori was the right to be in New Zealand, to own land and therefore valid citizenship in this country. It is clear to this argument that Māori did not truly understand the underlying limitations implied by the English version of Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>172</sup> at the time. One idiosyncrasy was, that “Te Tiriti is not enforceable unless it is incorporated into legislation” (Durie, 2003, p.192). The conscious exclusion of Te Tiriti o Waitangi from incorporation into legislation by successive governments since 1840 shows a blatant disregard for the empowering principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi for Māori and, is another prominent contributor to the disagreements between the Crown and Māori today.

### **Ko te Ātikara Tuarua**<sup>173</sup>

“Ko te Kuini o Ingarani ka wakarite ka wakaee ki nga Rangatira ki nga hapu - ki nga tangata katoa o Nu Tirani te tino rangatiratanga o o ratou wenua o ratou kainga me o ratou taonga katoa. Otiia ko nga Rangatira o te wakaminenga me nga Rangatira katoa atu ka tuku ki te Kuini te hokonga o era wahi wenua e pai ai te tangata nona te wenua - ki te ritenga o te utu e wakaritea ai e ratou ko te kai hoko e meatia nei e te Kuini hei kai hoko mona” ([www.tepapa.govt.nz](http://www.tepapa.govt.nz)).

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<sup>172</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

<sup>173</sup> The Second Article

Article two guaranteed Māori as iwi, hapū and individuals, the unqualified exercise of chieftainship over their lands, forests, fisheries, and all their treasures (Kawharu, 1989, p.317; Temm, 1990, p.18). Further to this, the Crown was given pre-emption rights over lands that Māori were willing to sell. This article has been the singular contentious part of Te Tiriti o Waitangi dividing Crown and Māori in terms of understanding the validity of Te Tiriti o Waitangi claims, land settlements and government legislations. However, from a purely Māori position it is the most empowering article in support of Māori Sovereignty rights at the time of the signing and equally today. In terms of the Te Herenga Waka o Aotearoa position, this article is the basis for the practice of Māori Sovereignty Reclamation within the auspices of its local domain of service namely, Hibiscus and Bays. Furthermore, mine and other members, genealogical ties to Ngāti Whātua, adds impetus to our collective location.

#### Ko te Ātikara Tuatoru<sup>174</sup>

Hei wakaritenga mai hoki tenei mo te wakaetanga ki te Kawanatanga o te Kuini - Ka tiakina e te Kuini o Ingarani nga tangata maori katoa o Nu Tirani ka tukua ki a ratou nga tikanga katoa rite tahi ki ana mea ki nga tangata o Ingarani ([www.tepapa.govt.nz](http://www.tepapa.govt.nz)).

In Article Three of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Queen of England promises to protect Māori and guarantees they will have the same rights and privileges of her British subjects (Kawharu, 1989, Pg. 318). Whilst the concept of this article was to protect the rights of Māori, its manipulations within the ministrations of the early governments saw little intent to actively honouring this article. In fact, a number of the early legislative acts saw Māori human rights deferred on the premise of a more

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<sup>174</sup> The Third Article

civilised western ideal. The introduction of 'Native Schools Act' in 1867, amongst an historic string of legislations, were in direct contradiction to this article. I suggest that these, and numerous other instances throughout our country's history, excluded Māori from having all the rights of an English citizen.

### **Proclamation of Crown Sovereignty 1840**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1840, Hobson proclaimed Crown Sovereignty over New Zealand (Kingi, 2005, p. 11, Orange, 1978, P.92). Barely three months after the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi,<sup>175</sup> this was the first open attack on the then status of Māori Sovereignty and true Crown agenda. This proclamation heralded the introduction of the western, centralised, ministrations of governance whilst dually ignoring existent Māori Sovereignty position and their pursuant rights to participate in the governance of the state as the accorded Te Tiriti o Waitangi partner (Shields, Bishop & Mazawi, 2005, p. 244). The introduction of policies and legislation based on the western model of governance contributed to the task of gradually but steadily de-constructing and subverting Māori Sovereignty. Two major shifts happened because of these ministrations. Firstly, a two-tiered society emerged with the Crown partners enjoying a position of domination and Māori the position of subjugation (Walker as cited in Ormond, 2018, p.20). The second saw the infrastructure of Te Tiriti o Waitangi being methodically eroded through legislation to reflect the conventions of a local settler government. This meant that the colonists were now in an unethically usurped position of power. From this position they were easily able to prioritise and agendarise their own needs. In accordance with these measures, it is easily admissible to state, that this was a pre-meditated attack on Māori Sovereignty and in turn, Māori land ownership and independence.

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<sup>175</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

### **Land Claims Ordinance 1841**

It was obvious that land was a primary motivator for the Crown in terms of the colonisation of Aotearoa, so legislations were quickly passed following the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This ordinance established the 'Native Protectorate Department' who directed the 'Old Land Claims Commission' to investigate the sales of Māori lands prior to 1840. Whilst some benefits arose for Māori in terms of the annulment of fraudulent land claims this masked other ulterior Crown agenda. One example was that it allowed the Crown to retain the difference between the land claimed and land awarded to European buyers (Taonui, 2012). This scenario awarded land to the Crown and benchmarked the lawful government ownership of lands and therefore government accumulation of land and natural resource.

### **Native Land Purchase Ordinance 1846**

The European demand for land saw a sharp increase in 1840 as settler numbers swelled. However, under Article Two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Māori land could only be legally bought by the Crown. Governor Robert FitzRoy altered this rule in 1844, thus permitting settlers to make direct purchases from that point in time. In 1846, however, Governor George Grey enacted the Native Land Purchase Ordinance which revoked the option for direct sales and tasked the Native Land Purchase Commission, representing the Crown, with buying as much Māori land as possible. The controversial strategies employed by the commission to convince sellers to part with their land included targeting weaker members of tribes, using military threats to coerce sales, buying from individuals rather than from groups who held collective land rights, and purchasing from non-owners. Furthermore, the commission would promise to reserve land for Māori on tracts sold by them, but would often fail to deliver on these promises, providing reservations that were smaller than guaranteed, or were located on unsuitable land. (Taonui, 2012).

## **The Affirmations of Western Policy and Legislation in New Zealand 1852**

The 1852 New Zealand Constitution Act established the New Zealand parliament, provinces, and electoral system. Many of the principles underpinned in this document seriously disadvantaged Māori. One example was the provincing of the country which saw six new provinces created with their own respective councils (Cox, 1992; New Zealand Constitutional Advisory Panel, 2013; Wilson, 2015). Although there was provision in Section 71 for self-governing Māori provinces, none were formally implemented (Cox, 1992; New Zealand Constitutional Advisory Panel, 2013; Wilson, 2015). Although some Māori interpreted this particular provision as an acknowledgement of their sovereignty, the clause was largely unrecognised by the Governor and as an aside, all levels of government. Another example saw voting rights extended to any individual who owned land, property and or rented. The catch for Māori, was that traditionally they were collective owners of land and therefore automatically disadvantaged (Cox, 1992; Wilson, 2015). The strength of the Māori vote was effectively removed from the democratic processes of government meaning that new legislations on land, power and authority were easily passed by a hegemonic western majority with little or no opposition from Māori. Finally, the establishment of a Settler Government saw a substantial swing in decision making power from the original Crown partnership identified by Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>176</sup> to that determined by a European settler population instead (Durie, 1998, p.297). This was a pivotal decision and meant that the new settler government now dictated the Te Tiriti o Waitangi relationship with Māori on their own terms. Further to this, due to distance and limited support from the Crown, decisions were primarily made based on local agenda as opposed to Crown principles as set out in Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

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<sup>176</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

### **New Zealand Settlements Act 1863**

This act determined that the land of any tribe determined by the government to be engaged in rebellion against the government, could be confiscated (Boast & Hill, 2009). This was just legal jargon and afforded another legal loophole for the government to secure more land for settlement purposes (Durie, 1998). This approach saw the loss of a considerable portion of Māori land, with some tribes losing more land than others. The confiscation of land from the Middle and Lower Waikato Kingitanga tribes<sup>177</sup> is a clear indication of how effective this policy was in dispossessing Maori of their ancestral lands. Additionally, Orange (1990) notes that this process was unreliable at best. In summary, the confiscation of Māori land in colonial New Zealand was arbitrary and inconsistent based on colonial settlement and its suitability, rather than the rightful ownership of Māori lands (Keenan, 2017a; Keenan, 2017b).

### **The Compensation Courts**

As a direct result of the New Zealand Settlements Act in 1863, the 'Compensation Courts' were established to hear complaints and claims against the confiscation of lands by the Crown. These courts were adjudicated by the same judges who heard claims in the Native Land Courts which was established in 1862. I have cause for concern as to how this system of adjudication could not be perceived as a conflict of interest. Instead of helping Māori with their claims this system continued to contribute to the growing loss of Māori lands. Conditions of appeal set by the courts often colluded against the chance of success of these Māori land claimants. For instance, time was often a contributing factor in the legal loss of lands. In some cases where the dispute process was prolonged and the land in contention had already been legally on sold, Māori were compensated with inequitable or barren lands. Cases also occurred where lands were returned to the wrong owners. 530,000 hectares of land was returned to Māori through this court. However, all land that was

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<sup>177</sup> Tribes under the dominion of the Māori Kingship

returned was returned under individual titles which further dispossessed iwi and hapū of their traditional land ownership rights. Numerous unlawful sales by armed settlers saw many vulnerable, individual, Māori land owners illegally stripped of their lands at gunpoint (Taonui, 2012, p.2).

### **New Zealand Lands Acts 1862 and 1865**

As I mentioned previously these Acts contributed directly to the establishment of the Native Land Court. The Native Land Court was the mechanism that spearheaded the transition from traditional tribal/collective ownership of Māori lands into smaller group titles as dictated by the '10 owner rule' which granted ownership of lands less than 5000 hectares into the title of a maximum of 10 owners regardless of any other valid claims. Combined with the growing individual land titles being awarded to Māori as a consistent outcome of these court adjudications, the traditional Māori land ownership model was being deviously undermined. This resulted in making it easier for settlers to purchase land directly from naïve and vulnerable individual Māori land owners. In 1873 the '10 owner rule' was abolished however descendants were automatically included as owners thereby further fracturing the power of the original land owners and resulting in the tining of shares.

Of great concern is the general disregard of basic human rights by the then Justice Minister Henry Sewell who described the aims of the native courts as 'to bring the great bulk of the lands in the Northern Island ... within the reach of colonisation' and 'the detribalisation of the Māori – to destroy, if it were possible, the principle of communism upon which their social system is based and which stands as a barrier in the way of all attempts to amalgamate the Māori race into our social and political system (Taonui, 2012). These sentiments were echoed by MP Robert Bruce who declared that 'we could not devise a more ingenious method of destroying the whole of the Maori race than by these land courts. The natives come from the villages in the interior, and have to hang about for

months in our centres of population ... They are brought into contact with the lowest classes of society, and are exposed to temptation, the result is that a great number contract our diseases and die.' (p.3).

#### **Public Works Lands Act 1864**

This act enabled the Crown to take land for the purposes of government projects such as roads. This was amended later to include railways, airports and even schools. Māori land was preferred by the government because it was more equitable requiring little to no compensation. According to this act lands no longer required for the original purposes had to be offered back to its original owners. This part of the agreement was often overlooked by the Crown. One such recent example was the 'Raglan Golf Course'.

As an interesting aside, the land that our marae was first located (under a temporary lease) was classed as vacated educational land therefore under the Public Works Act, the land had to be offered back to its original owners. In my enquiries I discovered that the original owners meant legal title-holders not the original indigenous land owners (Associate Minister of Education, 2012). I later discovered that a football field included in the school land envelope was not part of the land owned by the title-holders. Definitely a case of shifting boundaries!

#### **Native Lands Rating Act 1882**

This act established rates on Māori lands that were termed as having numerous owners. The rates were exorbitant rising up to 300% of the rates charged for the equivalent European owned lands. Māori owners living on these lands found it increasingly difficult to pay the rates. The management

of unpaid land rates eventually reverted to local bodies who had the right to legally seize lands based on unpaid rates. This practice was active until 1978.

### **He Hakautu Māori**<sup>178</sup>

According to Orange (1978) “All Māori, regardless of commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>179</sup>, were suspicious of government intentions”. Te Hākaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tireni<sup>180</sup> was an early attempt by mainly Northern Māori to assert their sovereignty and formally recognise the mandate of their collective in an attempt to protect the lands and rights of the people within their respective districts. As a formally recognised body they could continue to legally address and influence social challenges represented by contact with settlers, strengthen the partnership with the Crown and validate their authority to the world. However, non-Māori perception of their role overlooked its effectiveness at a local and national level.

With the limited success of Te Hākaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tireni, Te Tiriti o Waitangi represented an opportunity to bring law and order to the land under the governance and protection of the Crown (Durie, 1998). In addition it offered Māori a further benefit of dual governance, a partnership. The right to continue to apply their sovereign authority over their inherent assets. This misconception was short lived as illegal land sales and land alienation soon followed despite Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Although the first signatory of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Hone Heke quickly became disillusioned with the inconsistent actions of the Crown and its ministrations. His frustrations grew as his numerous appeals to government were falling on deaf ears. His protests became literal and resulted in the four assaults on the flag poles at Kororareka. Following the last attack on the flag

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<sup>178</sup> Māori Responses

<sup>179</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

<sup>180</sup> The Declaration of Independence

pole, a battle broke out in Kororareka that resulted in the British Army escaping to their ships and shelling the town, setting it on fire. In response to this occurrence the British pursued Heke inland and attacked him at Puketutu. Hone withdrew to Te Ahuahu. Te Ahuahu was taken by allies of Nene, but Heke later attacked and reclaimed the pā however, not without numerous fatalities including being seriously wounded himself (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2019).

### **Te Kingitanga**<sup>181</sup>

In the 1850's Māori nationalist movements gained momentum forming Te Kotahitanga and in 1858 the King movement (Walker, 1999). The motto of Te Kingitanga was 'Te Mana Motuhake'.<sup>182</sup> The emblems of the sovereignty of the Māori King included his own flag (Te Pahi a Matariki) and his own form of parliament 'Te Kauhanganui'. Te Kotahitanga which was a collaboration of tribes not affiliated to Te Kingitanga, became formalised as the Māori parliament in 1892 (p.165). In 1884, King Tawhiao travelled to England to petition the Queen to formally recognise Māori Sovereignty as accorded by Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Furthermore to reiterate that, this status could not be undermined or changed by any action of the New Zealand Government (Harris, 2010).

### **He Pakanga Whenua a Tainui me Taranaki**<sup>183</sup>

The First Taranaki War erupted in Wairau due to a stand-off between Māori and the then Governor Browne over a land sale of a 240 hectare block. The Governor went ahead with the sale and attempted occupation of the land despite knowing beforehand that his actions would potentially lead to a conflict. Over three thousand imperial troops were imported from Australia to deal with the uprising. In 1863, an armed force led by General Duncan Cameron invaded Waikato (Ministry of

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<sup>181</sup> The King Movement

<sup>182</sup> Māori Self Government

<sup>183</sup> Tainui and Taranaki Land Wars

Culture and Heritage, 2021). This invasion was pre-meditated by first constructing 'Great South Road' to grant easy access for troops and armoury to access the Waikato region where fighting broke out. Numerous pitched battles were fought resulting in major conflicts at Rangiriri and Orakau. The Waikato campaign resulted in numerous losses on both sides. One adverse result of the Tainui wars was the confiscation of 12000 km of Waikato land under the 1863 Land Settlements Act. This was later duplicated during the next Taranaki wars, which saw 4000 km of land seized by the government.

### **He Hakautu Māori nō ngā Whitu Tekau**<sup>184</sup>

In terms of more recent Māori responses , the 70's saw a prolific amount of both land and human rights protests. Māori challenged the government processes that saw the unlawful acquisitions of numerous Māori land parcels and the marginalisation of our language and culture.

### **Te Hīkoi Whenua Māori**<sup>185</sup>

In September, 1975, Whina Cooper and Te Rōpū Matakite led a 1000 km protest march from Te Hapua in the far north to Wellington. The protest was against historic land loss by Māori due to government legislation that resulted in diminished Māori land, ownership rights. The spirit of the hīkoi was encapsulated in Whina's catch cry of 'not one acre more'! Starting with a mere 50 supporters, the march quickly gained support building to an approximately 5000 strong contingent when they arrived at the steps of parliament. In the truest sense of passive resistance Whina demanded that the hīkoi be above reproach so alcohol and drugs were prohibited(King, 2000). The movement inspired many other Māori leaders to rise up and join the debate.

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<sup>184</sup> Māori responses from the 70's

<sup>185</sup> Māori Land March

### **Te Karapu Hauporo Whāingaroa**<sup>186</sup>

During World War One, wāhi tapu<sup>187</sup> belonging to Tainui Awhiro was seized under the Public Works Act for the purposes of an airport and bunker. However, when the war ended, the government did not return the land to iwi according to the Act, instead codifying the Act to retain the land in government possession. In 1967 the government sold the land to the Raglan Golf Club without consultation with iwi.<sup>188</sup> As a result, more wāhi tapu<sup>189</sup> were desecrated and numerous Māori whānau were evicted as the golf club developed the sixty three acre golf course. Although the government offered payment for the land, iwi rejected it on the basis that the land was not returned to the rightful owners, in the first place. In 1972 Eva Rickard started her campaign to protest the continuing desecration of wāhi tapu<sup>190</sup>. Her work continued with a series of organised occupations, with the biggest one being in February, 1978. Although many arrests for unlawful trespass were made during the occupations, no formal charges were made. In 1982 the government returned the land to the Iwi.

### **Takaparawhau**<sup>191</sup>

In direct protest to the planned sale of prime iwi lands at Orakei for commercial gain, Joe Hawke, iwi, hapū<sup>192</sup> and The Orakei Māori Action Committee, occupied the land known by Ngāti Whātua as Takaparawhau. They occupied the land for a period of 506 days before being forcibly removed by the Army and Police in 1978. Ten years later, the Waitangi Tribunal accepted that the Ngāti Whātua claims were valid and returned most of Takaparawhau with some other lands and compensation. Interesting to note, in 1873 The Native Land Court deemed that Takaparawhau had been classified

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<sup>186</sup> Raglan Golf Course

<sup>187</sup> Sacred land

<sup>188</sup> The local tribe

<sup>189</sup> Sacred lands

<sup>190</sup> Sacred lands

<sup>191</sup> Bastion Point

<sup>192</sup> The tribe and sub-tribe

as ‘inalienable land’. Takaparawhau and surrounding lands were later confiscated under the ‘Public Works Act’ for the purposes of defence. When the defence force was finished with this land, it was not returned to Ngāti Whātua as the Public Works Act specified.

### **Ihumātao**<sup>193</sup>

In 2019 an occupation was held at Ihumātao in Manukau. The protest was led by SOUL<sup>194</sup> in protest of a land sale in 2016, which would eventually result in a housing development by Fletcher Properties. Soul started their protest in 2015 and tried numerous avenues seeking a solution prior to the full and final occupation of the land. Numerous arrests were made and a stand-off between Police and protestors eventuated for a period of time. The original land was confiscated under the 1863 New Zealand Settlements Act, was acquired by the Crown in 1867 and then sold to the Wallace family in 1869. As a direct result of the protest, the government purchased the land back from Fletchers, in 2020.

### **He Hakaaro anō Nō Muri Mai**<sup>195</sup>

As I reflect on the numerous responses by Māori prior to and during the pursuant years following the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>196</sup>, I gain a greater sense of what Māori Sovereignty Reclamation was all about in these earliest exemplars. In fact, their actions offer further validation to reinforce the point, that at no time during the signing of either Te Hakauputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī<sup>197</sup> or Te Tiriti o Waitangi, did our Rangatira Māori cede their Mana Māori Motuhake<sup>198</sup> to the

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<sup>193</sup> The Nose of Mataoho / Mangere

<sup>194</sup> Save our Unique Landscape

<sup>195</sup> Afterthought

<sup>196</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

<sup>197</sup> The Declaration of Independence

<sup>198</sup> Indigenous Sovereignty

Crown. These statistics show that Māori were unafraid to struggle against injustices relating to the loss of their land, dignity and authority. Therefore, I suggest that one possible interpretation of Māori Sovereignty Reclamation today, is the struggle against injustice. It is the melee to restore the land ownership, dignity and authority of our Māori tūpuna to its former state. It is the battle for recognition of Māori Sovereignty within the auspices of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and thereby validating the legal jurisdiction for Māori to be equal partners in the governance of this country. These thoughts and more, substantiate legitimate grounds for Māori organisations to follow in the wake of our Māori tūpuna, as we determine our futures, on our own terms.

### He Hakataki i te Kōrero Tara<sup>199</sup>

In the following paragraphs, I will endeavour to specify the narrative stance that best reflects my Māori voice in the vernacular and cultural conventions best suited to the re-telling of our marae story. As I contemplate the task at hand, I cringe at the thought of an over-use of personal pronouns and struggle with the concept of this language, being very un-Māori. This chapter will also inaugurate some personal historical context which validates my symbiotic relationship with the marae and equally locates me within the context of the journey to date. The later chapters involve a brief historical account of the Hibiscus and Bays communities as a pre-requisite to the re-telling of the marae establishment story.

A big part of telling our marae story, requires me to re-tell my perspective of this story through my experiences and understanding at the given times. This is difficult in terms of my lived practices as a Māori who has grown up with the perception that there is 'no I, in we'. There is a well-known hakatauki<sup>200</sup> that appropriately illustrates my position here. 'Kāhore te kūmara e kōrero mō tōna

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<sup>199</sup> Introducing the narrative

<sup>200</sup> proverb

reka'. One literal translation is 'A kūmara does not need to boast about its own sweetness' but rather through the process of the eating its nature will become validated. I concede that some of my apprehension comes from my own upbringing and personal practice of humility that reflect those of my parents and in turn their own and so on. I do not discount that perhaps there is some reluctance here, borne from a lifetime experience of societal marginalisation based on my race-based station as dictated by a westernised hegemonic society. Regardless of the accurate origins of my hesitation, it is the over-arching message that is the impetus that commands this piece of literature. I do not plan for this research to be discounted as a soliloquy, or a biography of sorts but rather an authentic attempt to join an academic discourse in support of decolonising methodologies, self-determining initiatives, and the valid reclamation of Māori Sovereignty in community spaces. ***Therefore, the use of 'I' in this thesis is not intended to discount the valuable contributions of everyone else who participated on this journey, but rather an acute self-identification with the task at hand.***

Having established the grounds for the overarching narrative, I think it is also important to acknowledge that there exists another valid context for my location of myself as the māngai<sup>201</sup> or the I, me, in this discussion. I was an active participant throughout every critical stage in the historical struggle to realising a marae and I am also still present here in this space and time today. Many of the concepts I am discussing have a part to play in the synergies of the space time continuum that was our marae in former days, and is our marae organisation today, as will be the under-pinnings of our marae in the tomorrow. This location reminds me that although our organisation has achieved many positive outcomes to date, we must resist complacency and continually re-position ourselves within this perpetual discourse of experiences, including the concurrent landscapes and locations that present themselves. This is important in terms of remaining at the cutting edge of radical community changing initiatives, such as ours. Smith (2021) warns against domestication of theory and the annulment of cause or struggle (P.11). This train of theorising combined with active

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<sup>201</sup> Conduit

participation, becomes the catalyst to assist our organisation in resisting any new self-made hegemonies and practices, that objectify our development and limit our progress.

Whilst I understand the importance of objectivity in academic writing, I suggest that our story deserves to be told in a culturally genuine manner, including the raft of emotions the journey entailed and its culturally unique vernacular. Pūrākau<sup>202</sup> is a culturally appropriate convention to describe our distinctive journey, whilst simultaneously able to capture a more accurate essence of the story in conjunction with the relational culture of the telling. This resonates with me personally and aids me in accepting a form of this narrative as a sufficient reflection of my voice and experiences. In the following chapter, I will examine some existing research on pūrākau in order to authenticate the appropriateness of this methodology as the co-editor in the overarching narrative of this thesis. Secondly, to establish the linguistics basis, form and acceptable vernacular that will be utilised to construct this discussion. Finally, to determine whether the adoption of the personally preferred term of 'kōrero tara' would detract from the authenticity of the original concept.

### **He Pūrākau, he Kōrero Tara Rainei?<sup>203</sup>**

In recent times Māori academics lead the assault on existent eurocentric strongholds of understanding around the use of pūrākau<sup>204</sup>. Firstly, to dispel historic claims that pūrākau<sup>205</sup> reside only in the fictional realm (Lee, 2009; Pouwhare, Mcneil, 2018). Secondly as a valid research tool and methodology that explores the unlimited possibilities proposed by its culturally-borne synergy with Māori culture, emerges from within Māori culture and is unequivocally fundamental to Māori culture. Its distinct form of self-expression draws on Māori epistemology and ontology underpinnings, that are not dictated by a singular narrative form and is holistic, fluid, and timeless.

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<sup>202</sup> Story telling

<sup>203</sup> A Tale or a *Tale*?

<sup>204</sup> Story- telling

<sup>205</sup> Stories

My understanding of these terms (holistic, fluid, and timeless) is quite simple. It is the universal application of pūrākau and its ability to connect people through stories, environment, culture, and language. Its subsequent lessons find relativity to the struggles of other indigenous peoples and is not determined by time constraints. Thirdly, the application of pūrākau contributes to the unique voice of Māori within burgeoning decolonising methodology discourses and promotes a distinct space for Māori within academic and research domains.

“Pūrākau, a traditional form of Māori narrative, contains philosophical thought, epistemological constructs, cultural codes, and worldviews that are fundamental to our identity as Māori” (Lee, 2009, P.1). According to Breheny, Forster and Ware (2018) “Indigenous narratives explain their origins, locate them physically, socially, environmentally, culturally and spiritually; and often transcend time and space” (P.46). They go on to say that pūrākau is a narrative that helps to locate the voice of the researcher in a relative physical space and time period.

“Pūrākau guides us to speak in a language that draws on our own ways of seeing, speaking and expressing ourselves in order to bring “to life” .  
the issues and complexities of our experiences that may be  
culture specific and local and/or more universal in nature.  
(Breheny, Forster and Ware, 2018).

Pūrākau are also vehicles that store, transmit, reflect, and compare traditional knowledge. “The transmission and dissemination of Māori knowledge was organised, constructed, and expressed through various traditional oratorical mediums such as pūrākau (Mikahere-Hall, 2017). Mikahere-Hall goes on to suggest pūrākau as a valid yet dynamic research methodology. She illustrates this in her 5 step data analysis methodology model. The stages are,

1. Te Atatū Pūrākau

2. Pēwheatanga and kanohi ki te kanohi
3. Ngā Patapatai and Ngā Rangahau Pātai
4. Kanohi ki te Kanohi and Hui katoa Interview Processes
5. Manaakitanga: Sharing the Caring (P.7-10).

Pouwhare, Mcneil include pūrākau as a part of their artistic practice-led research methodology. This draws on pūrākau as a part of the creative Māori arts finding synergy with hakairo<sup>206</sup>, pūoro<sup>207</sup>, tukutuku<sup>208</sup>, raranga<sup>209</sup> me hoahoanga whare<sup>210</sup> (Pouwhare, McNeil, 2018).

Pūrākau<sup>211</sup> is therefore a narrative form that translates the indigenous voice of the researcher, considers the interests of the researched and their connections in its multiple relationships with the indigenous researcher. It is culturally collaborative and draws on the distinct nature of the key-stakeholders in the research in accordance with the relatable agendas and or discourses. Pūrākau is able to validly reflect the often-ambiguous voices of the indigenous researcher within an academically acceptable construct. Pūrākau offers a versatility of narrative that can translate modern concepts whilst dually reflecting on its traditional underpinnings. If I were to estimate the overarching narrative of my piece of research, I would term it as a reflexive narrative. This offers the flexibility to refer to either the past, current, and future contexts, and spaces of discussion to compile relevant data required to fulfil the objectives of this research. This concept relates to my earlier discussion on the holistic, fluid, and timeless nature of pūrākau and its ability to convey stories that link the past, present, and future locations of self at the same time.

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<sup>206</sup> Carving

<sup>207</sup> Music

<sup>208</sup> Lattice-work, woven panels

<sup>209</sup> Weaving

<sup>210</sup> Architecture

<sup>211</sup> Story-telling

Pūrākau portrays my indigenous voice with integrity throughout the re-telling of the marae story. This does not detract from the power of the written word in its more traditional western forms, as another convention of recording events in time. I concur that this has its place in terms of contemporary Māori society but deliberately elect a more authentic location of indigenous voice with my own choice of narrative style to reflect my unique cultural character. This includes the incorporation of 'Te Reo Māori' as a narrative partner in the conveyance of my message on my terms. I make no apologies for the resultant complications that may arise for less fluent readers but will utilise 'footnote' frequently to offer 'clarification at a click'. Why not just write it in 'English' in the first place, some may argue? My response would be that I should be writing this whole thesis in Māori, but the message is **too important** for only the **few** to understand.

I am warmed that pūrākau<sup>212</sup> is not an individual pursuit of this country's indigenous alone but is reciprocated by all indigenous peoples whose language contains historical underpinnings in oral transmission. (Aldama, 2001, Alton-Lee, 2003, Alteo, 2003).

"In Australian children's literature, "Aboriginal legend," "Dreaming," and "Dreamtime" stories are commonly used terms, which loosely refer to traditional Indigenous stories" (O'conor, 2022).

Stories may be expressed as oral narratives through Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge or TEK (Pierotti & Wildcat, 2000).

"There might be a tree where our father, our grandfather, our great-grandfather, our great-great-grandfather would go to this tree in times of mourning, in times of turmoil, and through the spiritual embrace of that tree regain their balance. The trees remember every experience they've had since they sprouted". (Cited in Jennings, 2006)

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<sup>212</sup> Story-telling

This global concept is also relative in terms of local tribal applications, regardless of synergies, there still exist obvious differences. For instance, pūrākau is not a word that I would personally use in terms of my own dialect. This form of narrative is better known in my region as a pakiwaitara. In our own tribal vernacular, we have hybrid versions of pakiwaitara such as kōrero paki or my personal preference, kōrero tara. “Pakiwaitara share a similar synergy of meanings with pūrākau, in principle” (Breheny, Forster and Ware, 2018). For myself, I suggest that one eccentricity that exists between pūrākau and kōrero tara is the intrinsic connection of kōrero tara to my distinct tribal affiliations. These nuances are reflected in the tribal dialect engaged with the re-telling of stories, including our unique perspective, vocabulary, phrases and idioms. This includes our historical places, the individuals portrayed, references of genealogy, proverbial sayings, idioms and a good dose of our distinct, cynical, northern humour.

For these reasons, I am comfortable to use my preference, ‘kōrero tara’ in the place of ‘pūrākau’ to describe this narrative form, from here on in. Engaging kōrero tara as the primary narrative form in this discussion is therefore a deliberate strategy on my part. Firstly, I want to further endorse, acknowledge, and create a greater awareness around the concept of pūrākau as a valid narrative, methodology and research tool in terms of academic literature. Secondly, to promote Te Reo Māori as the culturally appropriate conveyance mechanism to deliver narratives for Māori by Māori. Finally, it is a choice in methodology I make, to resist existing westernised academic conformity, as I search for my own unique voice and location within today’s perpetual decolonising discourses.

### Wāhanga 3 - He Hakataki i te Ara Rangahau<sup>213</sup>

As someone who has participated in the establishment of a marae, I confess that it was not achieved by way of a well thought out plan but rather a series of investigative determinations, a few coin tosses and an extra hail Mary for good measure. In retrospect, I had no previous experience to draw on. Therefore, I am confident that sharing the story of the marae establishment history will resonate with other Kaupapa Māori<sup>214</sup> in similar circumstances. I have selected kōrero tara as the appropriate methodology to deliver our story. Furthermore, kōrero tara will be employed to extract Māori Sovereignty Reclamation lessons, from the marae story.

As a fledgling Kaupapa Māori organisation we were excluded from access to any formal support by recognised expertise within iwi, community and local government for the most part. Despite these barriers we are a marae today, 'rongonui kei Te Wei-ti'<sup>215</sup> In regard to the cultural aspects of our initiative, including the definitions and practice of kawa and tikanga marae, these were mainly exercises in self-determination based upon my own personal beliefs, cultural knowledge, experience and reasoning. The truth is, there was no one else with the relevant experience either within or outside of the organisation, that had the same invested interests as myself.

I therefore have no doubt that there were also things I could have done a tad better. In terms of history, I acknowledge the fact that our organisation is a very recent addition to the urban marae landscape in Tāmaki Makaurau and therefore our journey of self awareness, emancipation and praxis still remains in its infant stages. This piece of research represents an opportunity for me to begin to analyse and critically examine some of the key achievements of our organisation in terms of

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<sup>213</sup> Chapter 3 - Introduction to the Research Methodology

<sup>214</sup> Initiatives informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>215</sup> World famous in Silverdale

its establishment, its praxis today and the prospect of its future-proofing for tomorrow. It is indeed an opportunity to reflect on some of the experiences that helped to transform a groups aspirations into the the marae organisation we are at present.

Kaupapa Māori Research<sup>216</sup> is now an accepted field within the landscape of mainstream research and has created its own space within the academy. Significant inroads have been carved into this previously inalienable terrain by a plethora of Māori academics advocating for Māori-led solutions to concrete hegemonic bias in research practices of non-Māori in research on Māori. Māori directed research and practice has established its own reputation. “More recently there has been a burgeoning of both literature and practical activity based on Kaupapa Maori<sup>217</sup> aspects emerging from other University sites. Maori researchers and community interest groups across New Zealand” (Smith, 2005, P.30). Amidst this movement emerged the ‘holy trinity of Māori-led approaches. Kaupapa Māori<sup>218</sup>, Kaupapa Māori Research and Kaupapa Māori Theory<sup>219</sup>.

Kaupapa Māori describes the symbiosis of Māori groups, organisations, and initiatives to their intrinsic, Māori cultural values. According to Henry and Pene (2001) “It literally means the *Māori* way or agenda, a term used to describe traditional *Māori* ways of doing, being and thinking, encapsulated in a *Māori* world view or cosmology”.

Kaupapa Māori is the term used by Māori to describe the practice and philosophy of living a ' Māori ', culturally informed life. It has a political connotation in that it also invokes the stance of identifying with and proactively advancing the cause of ' being Māori' (not wholly assimilated) as opposed to 'being Pākehā' (fully assimilated). (Smith, 1997, P.453)

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<sup>216</sup> Research informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>217</sup> Māori cultural underpinning

<sup>218</sup> Initiatives informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>219</sup> Theory informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

'Kaupapa Māori speaks to the validity and legitimacy of being and acting Maori; to be Māori is taken for granted. Māori language, culture, knowledge, and values are accepted in their own right (Smith, 1997, P. 400). He also states that Kaupapa Māori is not just a theory but also a transformative praxis. Kaupapa Māori is informed through its organic symbiosis with the dynamic characteristics of Māori culture therefore, it is fluid and changeable.

Kaupapa Māori Research <sup>220</sup>locates the Māori researcher in an empowered position as indigenous whose inherent values within the contexts as dually the researched and researcher brokers a more culturally appropriate approach by Māori for Māori. Therefore, Kaupapa Māori Theory<sup>221</sup> can be viewed as the theory of social change that argues and validates these new positions of power in political, societal, and organisational context as well as the research field. In short, Kaupapa Māori Theory has already distinguished its inclusion as a valid theory within both mainstream and Māori medium discussions, particularly in education. Smith (1992, 1997) further stresses that kaupapa Māori is not limited to any one sector but is relevant to all aspects of society, and that kaupapa Māori projects, including schooling projects share common elements of the cycle of conscientisation, resistance and transformative praxis.

Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae easily finds space under a Kaupapa Māori umbrella. Firstly, as a Māori organisation that embraces its Māori cultural underpinnings, is Māori led, is continuously evolving and self-determining. Secondly, as the advocating subject of this self-reflective research study as well as sharing an internal location as the researcher. Finally, our organisation as a bricoleur of Māori Sovereignty Reclamation in a community space. Therefore, the sum of this organisation's lived experiences during its struggles to establish a 'community marae', empower and inform the

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<sup>220</sup> Research informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>221</sup> Theory informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

organisation as it continues to develop its Māori Sovereignty Reclamation identity. This includes its various locations and pertinent transformative actions.

### **Kaupapa Māori Theory**<sup>222</sup>

As I have already alluded to, Kaupapa Māori Theory is intrinsically linked to Kaupapa Māori Research and Kaupapa Māori<sup>223</sup>. The DNA of kaupapa that is Māori presupposes a collective body of thought and praxis, established on an ontological and epistemological framework which in turn determines what it is to be Māori, yesterday, today, and tomorrow. I will suggest that its dynamic form makes it the ideal candidate to underpin the different threads of Māori society and its transformational practices. From here on in, I refer to these threads in general as Māori cultural underpinnings. This includes its ability to continue to inform and influence the variety of kaupapa Māori initiatives in mainstream spaces today, including Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae.

It was this form of self-reflection and analysis combined with Māori cultural underpinnings that first launched the discourse that empowered Māori struggling to find location as researchers within the mainstream academic research field. Kaupapa Māori Theory<sup>224</sup> consists of a series of theoretical elements based on the synergy between analysis, action, and critical evaluation. The perpetual synergy of analysis, action and critical evaluation is therefore essential to the appropriate application of Kaupapa Māori Theory in its multiple interactions with Kaupapa Māori<sup>225</sup>. Kaupapa Māori Theory extends a genuine argument in support of de-constructing traditional western theories whilst dually maintaining the cultural integrity of Kaupapa Māori as it performs its roles in its relevant spaces. This includes but is not limited to the cultural, political, historical context of education in Aotearoa (Pihama, 2010). Kaupapa Māori Theory was borne out of community struggles of Māori to realise a

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<sup>222</sup> Theory informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>223</sup> Initiatives informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>224</sup> Theory informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>225</sup> Initiatives informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

better, more culturally appropriate educational convention for Māori, and in direct response to the dominant, westernised mainstream theories of the time. According to Smith (1997), “it embraces the dialectical and oppositional meanings embedded in the notion of resistance” (P.249). It declared a new space within the field of education and research with a uniquely Māori perspective. Whilst simultaneously highlighting the underlying importance of traditional Māori knowledge, culture, and societal values as the mandatory pre-requisites for Māori learning.

Smith (2003) suggests that Kaupapa Māori Theory has its origins in two intellectual influences. These being the validity and legitimacy of Māori language, knowledge, and culture, and critical social theory. These elements are intrinsically linked to the radical transformational potential of kaupapa Māori and in the absence of either element an imbalance is imminent (p.12).

It suggests that Kaupapa Māori as a concept, has been underpinned by two differing, sometimes competing theoretical perspectives. One is Critical Theory, which comes from the Marxist/socialist grand theoretical tradition seeking to challenge and transform oppressive structures. The second is constructivism, where knowledge is validated through a social construction of the world, thus is located and specific. (Eketone, 2008, P.1)

Renowned critical theorist Paulo Freire (1971) whose discourse in ‘The Pedagogy of the Oppressed’ informed and influenced Smith (2003, 2012) during the early developmental stages of Kaupapa Māori Theory. Although Freire’s original discourse targeted the hegemonic imbalance of power in terms of pedagogical conventions in his space in time, there is no doubt that the original concept easily translated itself through multiple political and societal discourses to date.

Pivotal to the praxis of Kaupapa Māori Theory is conscientisation, the self-liberation of Māori thinking in terms of their historical and hierarchical positions in society as the ‘oppressed’. This

involves promoting Māori indigeneity and related kaupapa to achieve certain political, educational, and social objectives. These are deemed in most cases to be a direct response to unrequited oaths of inclusion and equality.

Cho and Lewis (2006) summarise the crux of this statement very effectively:

oppression has an existence in the unconscious such that those who are oppressed form passionate attachments to the forms of power that oppress them. Indeed, such a problematic is not flattering for all who are concerned with forms of social oppression, but we contend, that unless this problem is recognized and worked through, no real liberation is possible. (P.313)

Oppression is subjective to the oppressed. The point of this statement is that unless we are able to recognise the unconscious and unhealthy dependence that we have with our location within the state of oppression we will never be able to escape. The conscientisation of our location as the oppressed and its multiple complexities becomes the catalyst for the relocation and transformation of ourselves, as self-determining and empowered.

According to Barclay (2005):

Māori first had to reify (the nation). In the end they had to reify their oppression, they had to reify their 'other' and declare them colonisers. They had to be prepared to reify themselves, their subjectivity as Māori before anyone would listen. (as cited in Hoskins, 2012, p. 86).

Finally, a well-known statement by Paulo Freire (1971) offers support to these precepts, "first free ourselves before we free others" (as cited in Smith, 2003, p.3).

Conscientisation clearly locates Kaupapa Māori<sup>226</sup> in particular environments of change leading to important self-determining actions taking place. The first step in the enactment of change is the resistance of former circumstances and in particular unhealthy, unproductive, subjective relationships with and within social and political organisations of authority. Often this involves new definitions of power within these relationships favouring the empowerment and emancipation of Kaupapa Māori from its former subjective positions to ones favouring equality and or shared governance attributes.

Smith (1997) contends that “resistance actions have ... developed strong counter-hegemony and practices, which focus on critique of the assimilatory influence of dominant Pakeha cultural, political, and economic interests within the taken for granted 'mainstream' education and schooling system” (p. 249).

Founded on cultural movements of self-determination such as human rights, culture and education, strategic essentialism sits comfortably as an associate partner to Kaupapa Māori Theory. According to Hoskins (2010):

Strategic essentialism involves temporarily promoting Māori ethnic/cultural identity as authentic, homogenous, and stable-the simplification of group identity to achieve certain political and social goals. Assertions of profound difference are evoked to achieve political recognition and the re-distribution of authority and resources within the prevailing liberal political economy-usually because promises of equality and inclusion within the nation-state have failed to deliver justice (p.85).

As liberating as these actualities have been for Kaupapa Māori Theory,<sup>227</sup> a caution must remain in relation to strategic essentialism and the political orthodoxies that arise. Kaupapa Māori Theory

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<sup>226</sup> Initiatives informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>227</sup> Theory informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

must remain vigilant that the political stances do not become filtered away from conscious and present strategies.

Another theorist that influenced Smith during the development of Kaupapa Māori Theory was Jurgen Habermas (1960). One key point he made, was that people often judged their political progress by measuring the success of the overarching goals instead of celebrating the small daily victories. “I think we need to hold on to aspirations and utopian visions, but the everyday enactment or practice is the incremental stuff that is equally if not more important (Smith, 2012, p.12). This thought process fits with Kaupapa Māori which intrinsically focuses on the immediate need of the collective, as often, mitigating circumstances pre-determine this fact. Therefore, to experience increments of progress dictates the need to re-focus on the new priorities. By celebrating these smaller successes, our organisation had begun to gradually realise their overarching goals. This fluid approach to celebrating success contributes directly to the confidence-building and therefore the self-determining capacity of the organisation.

‘Determinate Negation’ is another fundamental of critical theory that clearly illustrates several key points incorporated in Kaupapa Māori Theory. According to Smith (1989):

“The logic of ‘determinate negation’ is the principle of development which exhibits the movement from one category or form of consciousness to another. It constitutes a method of moving from one stage to another that is not externally imposed...The logic of determinate negation has both a critical and a constructive aspect. It is critical because it does not merely accept what a body of thought, a philosophical system or even an entire culture says about itself, but is concerned to confront that thought, system or culture with its own internal tensions, incoherence’s, and anomalies. It is constructive because out of this negation or

confrontation we are able to arrive at ever more complete, comprehensive, and coherent bodies of propositions and forms of life” (p.188-189).

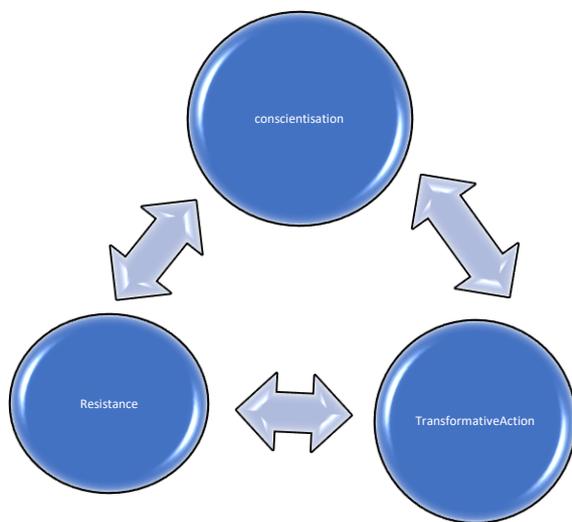
‘Determinate negation’ proposes the need for a perpetual and self-reflective critique that if scrutinised through a constructive lens, proves to be beneficial and progressive for any movement. It also protects from complacency and creating new bastions of collusion and or returning to former non-productive relationships and or inactive societal positions.

### **Transformative Praxis**

“In this sense the real revolution of the 1980s was not so much the language revitalization programs (although these are important in their own right), but the revolution in Māori critical thinking and the realization by Māori that they could make change for themselves. While this has been generally referred to as the Kaupapa Māori revolution, more recently (in recognition of its powerful ability to mobilize Māori community resistance and to develop transformation) it has been more definitively described as Kaupapa Māori Theory and Transformative Praxis” (Smith, 2005, P.35).

All of the idiosyncrasies of the interwoven theories I have discussed previously are found in both Kaupapa Māori Theory and ‘Transformative Praxis’. Transformative Praxis observes the intrinsic duality and synergy between the ideas of self-awareness, reflection, analysis, and action. Three key domains exist in perpetual motion within the constructs of the transformative praxis model. These are conscientisation ‘revealing the reality’, resistance ‘oppositional actions’, and transformative action ‘reflective change’ (Smith, 1997, p.38). These elements form an organic resistance mechanism that “respond simultaneously to multiple formations of oppression and exploitation’ (P.12).

In my experience, the level of potential for change is dictated by the level of assimilative influence that either empowers or disempowers the Kaupapa Māori's<sup>228</sup> internal ability to make self-determining decisions. These determinations also influence the organisation's capability to utilise the Transformative Praxis framework for the benefit of the organisation. Although the original western model of praxis explains the progression of the transformation in a lineal development, the holistic nature of Kaupapa Māori dictates a less predictable progression.



*Hakaahua 1<sup>229</sup>-Transformative Praxis Model (Smith, 2005)*

### **He Anga Arohaehae<sup>230</sup>**

Transformative praxis is an internally determined conscientisation, resistance and transformation measure and this is clearly shown by the existing diagram. It reflects on the multiple discourses related to an ongoing internalised struggle of an individual or collective within a domain of hegemonic subjection. During the struggle to establish our marae, I became more very aware that our internal struggle as an organisation was often influenced by external sources such as,

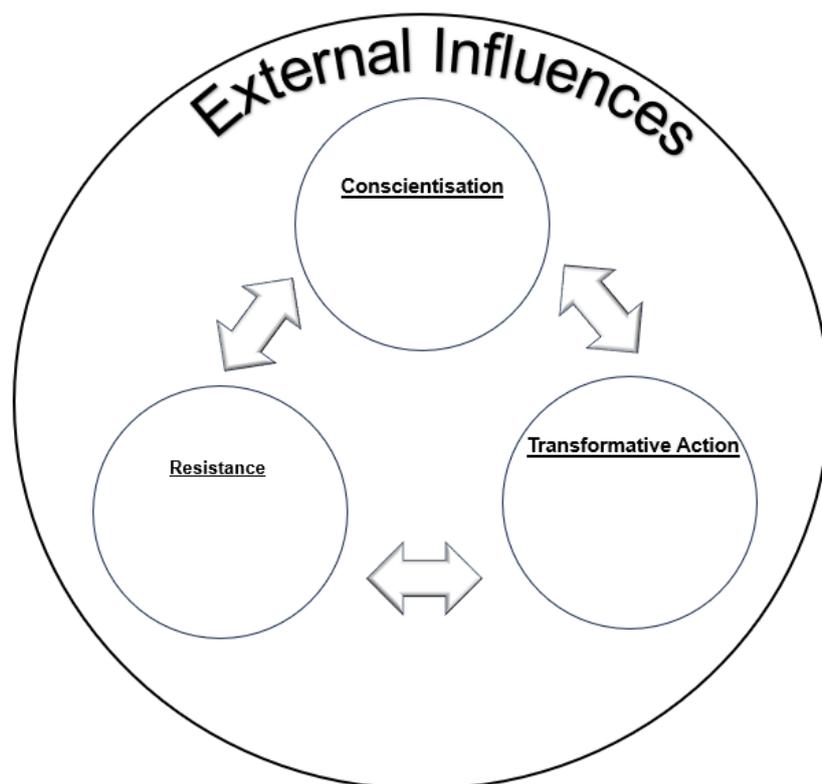
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<sup>228</sup> Initiative informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>229</sup> Diagram 1

<sup>230</sup> The Analysis Approach

community, local government, government agencies, and Mana Whenua. Although Transformational Praxis works internally towards the emancipation of the individual and or the organisation, I cannot discount the influence that these external groups had and continue to have on our rōpū<sup>231</sup>. Therefore, I suggest that external influences are a valid consideration in any application of Transformative Praxis and propose a minor amendment to the diagram designed by Smith, in favour of the following model.



Hakaahua 2<sup>232</sup>-Amended Transformative Praxis Model

Smith further advocates a series of six principles as crucial change factors in Kaupapa Māori praxis (Pg. 35 - 38). From here on in I will refer to them as 'the principles of change'. They are.

1. The principle of self-determination or relative authority

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<sup>231</sup> group

<sup>232</sup> Diagram 2

2. The principle of validating and legitimating cultural aspirations and identity
3. The principle of incorporating culturally preferred pedagogy.
4. The principle of mediating socio economic and home difficulties.
5. The principle of incorporating cultural structures which emphasize the collective rather than the individual, such as the notion of the extended family.
6. The principle of a shared and collective vision/philosophy.

As an educational marae we share a synergy with all of these principles of change but do note that some have a more significant relevance to the overarching goals of our organisation than others. Therefore, I suggest that the bearing of these principles of change is influenced by the core business of the Kaupapa Māori<sup>233</sup> that they are applied to. For instance, if the Kaupapa Māori was not educational but a business model, the relevance of the principles (3 and 4), the approaches and its applications would be different in some cases. It is important that these principles of change remain at the forefront of a Kaupapa Māori organisations' cultural underpinnings and identity. Another important fundamental to the transformational potential of the organisation is its ability to plan, strategise and act. I will endeavour to show how these aspects of change can be applied utilising a Transformative Praxis lens in the following analysis.

For the purposes of this research, I have chosen to employ Kōrero Tara<sup>234</sup> as the narrator of the story about the marae establishment. Its dual role will be to identify key stages during the journey that shifted our organisation through self-determined transitions towards Māori Sovereignty Reclamation. This data will be extracted and filtered through a Transformative Praxis Lens. I propose to utilise core fundamentals of Transformative Praxis as the lens of my critical and constructive

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<sup>233</sup> Initiative informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>234</sup> Narrative Methodology

analysis tool. This approach draws on the synergy between our organisation as Kaupapa Māori<sup>235</sup>, its struggle to establish a marae and its transformation through its different stages of praxis.

The first paragraphs will review the formative years of our organisations struggle, from the early 1980's up to 2007. It is interesting to note that during this term, the organisation was oblivious to the concept of Kaupapa Māori and Transformative Praxis. Having acknowledged this, one objective of this portion of study is to consider the capabilities of the Transformative Praxis, as a critical reflection tool. The second part of the study will look at the marae establishment story beginning in 2009 up to 2017. More specifically, how the aspects of conscientisation, resistance and transformative action related directly or indirectly to certain stages of the marae journey, and in turn its implications to the Reclamation of Māori Sovereignty practice. My personal involvement in this stage of our marae development helps me to establish a more accurate and robust context around this time. You will notice a distinct use of my narrative voice in the first-person. One reasoning for this is to maintain objectivity for individuals and organisations who I am writing about indirectly, that may not agree with the points I am making. In contrast, it is also a narrative form that includes individuals and organisations who concur with my experiences. Finally, I will apply the analysis tool to a few key self-determining attributes of the marae today. The goals being firstly, to observe a working model of Māori Sovereignty Reclamation in the now. Secondly, to understand the correlation between struggle, self-determination, and Māori Sovereignty Reclamation. Finally, to perhaps glimpse into the marae's potential for future sovereign developments.

### **He Tau Tīmatanga – He Marae Iwi Kore**<sup>236</sup>

In the 1980's as Auckland City grew and expanded northwards, the Hibiscus and Bays became prime destinations, resulting in thriving housing developments. The coastal location and promise of work

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<sup>235</sup> Initiative informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>236</sup> The Early Years - A marae without people

was one of the main considerations for many Māori whānau<sup>237</sup> that relocated to the area. Like others, I relocated for whānau reasons and quickly took advantage of the abundant job opportunities locally. Many of our whānau had plenty of experience in civil construction, housing construction, roading infrastructure and general labouring. We also had some professionals who worked in education, health, social services, and government agencies. The added benefit was location, location, location! In my case it was, kaimoana, kaimoana, kaimoana!<sup>238</sup> Beautiful east coast beaches, a readily accessible smorgasbord of kaimoana for seasoned hunters and gatherers like myself, what more could a Māori ask for! I admit that at the time, I was definitely invested in realising the kiwi dream of a whanau, house, car, and a boat. Many of our whānau had relocated from the big smoke<sup>239</sup> but some like myself, had come from more rural locations around Aotearoa. Having come from a small town with a strong Pacific Island and Māori population, the relocation to the Hibiscus and Bays was definitely a culture shift. Regardless of this, I loved the coastal environment and decided to live here with my young whanau.

The one draw-back of my new community was that there was very little Māori language and or culture anywhere to be seen or experienced. The strong non-Māori, retirement-age demographic make-up of the community can account for much of the resistance to Māori cultural pursuits. I became much more aware of this fact as my tamariki started kindergarten and then primary school. The lack of Māori cultural knowledge available to my children at school also caused growing concern.

The mid 1980's was a truly transitional era for Māori marked by the launch of numerous Māori language revitalisation initiatives such as Kōhanga Reo, Te Ataarangi, Kura Kaupapa and Whare Wānanga (Smith, 2005). Many Māori individuals, organisations, hapū and iwi were becoming

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<sup>237</sup> families

<sup>238</sup> seafood!

<sup>239</sup> Auckland City

informed, empowered and mobilising to join the rapidly growing movement. Although my tamariki were in mainstream education, I still wanted them to have the opportunity to experience their language and culture. My attempts to promote the Māori cultural movement locally were often met with hostility and ignorant comments from many local non-Māori. Both my wife and I strongly believed that this was a local issue that needed pursuing so continued challenging educators. Meanwhile we did all that we could do to maintain their cultural identity in our home and whānau lifestyle.

A kapa haka rōpū (Ngā Iwi o te Pūtorino) was established for whānau in 1982. The leaders of the group became aware that there were a spattering of Māori tamariki in the local schools and wanted to attract the various parents to join a collective that was Māori (Whangapirita, Personal communication, 2019). This is definitely the case for myself, and the reason why my whānau readily joined the group. Finding a consistent venue for our kapa haka was an issue and late changes in times, or new venues became common place. At that time our Māori leaders were content to trust in the good-will of whānau, local community organisations, schools and local government for support. This status contributed to the eclectic nature of our practices and transient venues. While there was some genuine support from individuals within the community, there was still strong resistance on many other fronts. This realisation birthed the concept that our kaupapa needed a Māori space that was not dictated externally. Despite the ideology, for the next two decades our collective goals remained 'below the radar' in terms of community priorities.

The incorporation of Te Herenga Waka in 2000 was a step in the right direction, and was an indication that by creating a more formal infrastructure, the organisation was preparing for the future. It was also around this time that our Kōhanga Reo<sup>240</sup> was established, and kapa haka was initiated in a couple of schools, as an after school programme. Riding on the wave of a national

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<sup>240</sup> Language Nest

language revitalisation movement, these were potentially fantastic strategic moves. Unfortunately, the Kōhanga Reo ended up being dis-established after only a few years. Although there was genuine intent at the start of the initiative, it soon became apparent that the organisation lacked the internal support mechanisms and expertise at all levels of management and operation.

There were a number of attempts in this period to secure land and facilities for marae purposes, however, all efforts came to nought. Finally, in 2007, Te Herenga Waka signed a temporary lease to occupy a recently vacated school site in Foundry Road, Silverdale, with the premise of this being a prime location for a marae (Chairmans Report, 2007, Hibiscus Matters, 2007, North Harbour News, 2007).

Although progress had been slow organisationally, it was still being made. Of special comment is the fact that during this period of organisational development, the transitional outcomes of praxis were mostly incidental. Whānau were also making a cultural difference through their individual professional roles and relationships within the community. One example saw our organisation offering cultural advice and services to Local Government, Social Services, Community Organisations and Schools. This consultative practice remains in place today.

### **He Arohaehae Kōrero Tara – He Marae Iwi Kore<sup>241</sup>**

Whānau Māori<sup>242</sup> moved to the Hibiscus and Bays communities for a number of different reasons and quickly settled into a community routine revolving around work, whānau and recreation. Our people came from several regions in both cities and towns. They came with their own lived experiences in terms of the Māori culture and knowledge. For instance, we had some individuals

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<sup>241</sup> Analysis of the Narrative

<sup>242</sup> Māori families

who were fluent in Te Reo me Wōna Tikanga<sup>243</sup>, we had some whānau<sup>244</sup> with a general knowledge and we also had whānau with little to no knowledge of their Māori identity. This is an important point because it leads me to suggest that these differences in cultural knowledge, experience, understanding, and practice were enacted differently by different groups of whānau at different stages of conscientisation, all at the same time. These qualities did have a bearing on how quickly or slowly conscientisation occurred for individuals. In those early days the concept of the marae had not yet been conceived therefore, our location as a collective in relation to Transformative Praxis (From here on I will often refer to this in general as praxis), was at a pre-conscientisation stage. This in turn had a direct influence on our Māori Sovereignty Reclamation practice, which was dormant.

This research has led me to consider that there were actually two cycles of praxis in play at the same time. The first related to Māori whānau as individuals and this praxis connected to the identification of individuals (from here on I will refer to this as individual praxis) with their Māori cultural identity and the synergy of this to their cultural emancipation. The second related to Māori whānau as a collective (from here on I will refer to this as collective praxis) which related to the identification of the collective with the marae establishment concept and the synergy of this to their Māori Sovereignty Reclamation. I include all of the fundamentals (conscientisation, resistance and transformative action) within praxis because they are connected within the cycle and continue to influence and inform each other during the various stages of metamorphosis. This includes the ability of the ‘individuals’ praxis’ to inform and influence the ‘collectives’ praxis’, and vice versa.

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<sup>243</sup> The Māori language and its processes

<sup>244</sup> families

## Te Taiao Hapori<sup>245</sup>

It is important to understand the landscape that Māori had to contend with at the time. In particular a community that consisted of a majority non-Māori population, set in its hegemonic, western values, practices, and processes. In this domain Māori cultural values were marginalised and there was little flexibility to readily include Māori culture or its practices. This was the environment that we struggled culturally in, both individually and collectively. The impact for myself was felt across a broad spectrum of locations within community society and included religion, education, politics, sports and recreation, ethnicity, gender, and privilege. The epiphany of this reality led to my own conscientisation within this space. I do pay homage to some of our non-Māori that were genuinely receptive to Kaupapa Māori and readily participated at every opportunity given. It can be suggested that conscientisation with Māori culture was also happening for non-Māori as well and this proposes an interesting discussion for a later study.

The Kaupapa Māori revolution of the 1980's was a key influence of the decade, opening frank discourses in the educational, academic, and research fields, creating new space for Māori within educational institutions and a broad sphere of society. The previous decade of Māori protests against the illegal loss of lands and Māori rights set a dynamic platform for Kaupapa Māori to build on. In short, by the 1980's it had generated enough interest to become an influential movement for Māori in all walks of education and mainstream society.

In response to the hegemonic culture of the community I purposely sought out and located myself as part of inclusive groups where I felt better about being Māori. For instance, church, sports, recreation, whanau groups and related community events. After giving it some thought, I acknowledge that in the first instance, this was a response of opposites. For example, the rebuttal to isolation as an individual is to look for acceptance in a collective. There is also grounds here for an

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<sup>245</sup> The Community Environment

unconscious move on my part to restore an environment or domain that was my cultural preference, like a security blanket. My responses to racist remarks at the time were a mixture of passive aggressive behaviour which often resulted in me beating myself up, for not responding directly enough, or kicking myself for responding terribly. I decided to join the Kaupapa Māori movement. One primary purpose for my resolve was that I easily realised the benefit of a Kaupapa Māori approach in terms of my former behaviours. In short, it was empowering, and it helped me to understand and contextualise many of my lived experiences as a Māori individual. Another important reason was that I wanted a better choice in education, for my tamariki. This included access to their language and culture in our local mainstream schools. Throughout my primary and intermediate days, I have no recall of any Māori culture in school. I did have te reo as an option in high school, but my father persuaded me to take technical drawing instead. He had grown up in the generation where he was punished for speaking te reo Māori in school. I think his decision was partly protection and partly due to his own assimilation. As a result of my making decisions on subject options that I didn't really want to take in high school, I never engaged fully, waggled most of the first year and then left. My attempts to join the Kaupapa Māori movement<sup>246</sup> locally, led to numerous other experiences of praxis.

Applying the praxis lens to this particular experience I can see the dynamic interactions at play between conscientisation, resistance and transformative action (praxis). For instance, understanding the dominant culture of the community and my subjective location in it birthed my conscientisation of reality (one of them). This led to thoughts of resistance and change (conscientisation of resistance). This vein of thinking led to the formulation of a response strategy exploring solutions to exclusion and isolation, such as joining a local sports group (resistance). Once the plan was seated this led to a responsive action, such as physically joining the sports club (resistance). The benefits and positive experience of joining the sports club led to transformational thinking (resistance,

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<sup>246</sup> Movement informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

transformation). This involved reflecting on my former position of isolation and comparing it with my current location and experiences within the new space (resistance, transformation). This in turn stimulated new critical thinking like, what can I do to maintain this type of environment, or, do other similar domains already exist (resistance, transformation). The active physical pursuit of these new locations, or the new experiences themselves, become the foundation for new self-determining constructions. One example could be deciding to join a whānau rōpū <sup>247</sup>at one of my tamariki's schools.

Transformational Praxis can apply in multiple realities. For instance, it can be a transformation that applies to an individual or collective and relate to a certain reality of that individual or collective. As an example, 'the feeling of isolation' in the 'Hibiscus and Bays Communities', in the '1980's'. Praxis is not just limited to a physical action but is premeditated throughout the cycle by conscientisation of action, resistance, or transformation. Therefore, thinking can be transformed from former thoughts of subjectivity to becoming empowered'. Anō, anō, anō!<sup>248</sup> The perpetuation of this praxis cycle as the individual and collective develop in their separate praxis, in relation to their individual and collective goals, becomes a movement of empowerment and self-determination.

Decision making is an important ingredient in the praxis cycle. If a decision is not reached, action will not eventuate. Within the cycle of praxis, action, resistance, and transformation in and throughout the cycle of praxis movement, is critical. One result of indecisiveness is that the cycle of praxis will stall, which in turn resists transformation and the construction of new domains of praxis. Therefore, I suggest that the decision to act is empowering, alternatively the decision to leave it for another day is another form of subjectivity or assimilation. 'She'll be right' is not good enough in terms of the praxis! Time does not dictate the speed of the transformation. Transformational action is dependent

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<sup>247</sup> Parent group

<sup>248</sup> Etcetera, etcetera, etcetera!

on the development of conscientisation, the will to change and make defining decisions either individually or as a collective.

The establishment of the kapa haka rōpū<sup>249</sup> shows me that there were other Māori whānau engaged in praxis on a similar level of understanding to my own. In terms of my own praxis, the discovery of the kapa haka rōpū was a significant moment of personal transformation. My individual conscientisation, resistance and transformative action led me to explore alternative domains of cultural inclusivity and security. The decision to join the rōpū initiated a new cycle of praxis namely praxis within a Kaupapa Māori<sup>250</sup>. The kapa haka rōpū represented a collective approach and therefore more empowering to myself as an individual. Here we see the transition from my former location of 'isolation' to a new space of 'inclusion'.

Within our new collective there were whānau at several levels of conscientisation. However, the determinations of the leadership influenced the levels of conscientisation, resistance and praxis of the collective movement. The main leaders of our kapa worked in Māori domains, had grown with Te reo māori me wōna tikanga<sup>251</sup> and had retained a strong sense of their cultural identities. This didn't discount less knowledgeable whānau but strengthened the common resolve overall as a collective. The concept of Māori leadership is an interesting one and for Māori it has its roots in the hierarchy of a tribal peoples. For instance, concepts of tuakana and teina, tohunga, chiefs or an eponymous ancestor. Mutu (2020) refers to this aspect as mana tangata (p.270). The Māori concept of leadership is not dictated by an imperial western model of a single monarch but is flexible to acknowledge collective rights of seniority and leadership through reputation, haka papa and ohu.<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> Cultural group

<sup>250</sup> Initiative informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>251</sup> Māori language and processes

<sup>252</sup> Genealogy and group with a particular role (i.e. war party, hunters, gatherers)

This leadership model can be incorporated within all levels of traditional and contemporary Māori society.

The decision to start the rōpū was influenced by the idea of creating a Māori collective that would continue to practice culture through haka, pātere, mōteatea and waiata. I know that I enjoyed the kapa haka space and felt included. As a direct result I became dedicated to the group as did many others. This included some of our non-Māori whānau who ended up more committed than some of us Māori. We became a whānau, a body of people with a collective goal. I do suggest that by experiencing culture this way, we could freely develop our conscientisation as both individuals and as a collective, without pressure. Despite this, as a marae organisation, we were still at a pre-conscientisation state.

Twenty years later our societal challenges remained the same but as a collective movement, and in terms of praxis, we had evolved. Conscientisation was at the forefront of our critical thinking, resistance and actions. A resolute hegemonic culture and society continued to oppose our endeavours despite a greater community awareness in general. Initially, the challenge of finding a consistent venue for kapa haka conceptualised new thinking around creating a Māori specific space, such as a marae. Many of these past years had been expended in championing this cause and establishing a new movement. Conscientisation of the marae establishment had begun.

The incorporation of Te Herenga Waka in 2000, was a defining moment for our organisation in praxis terms. Although fostered by conscientisation and a practical resistance measure on its own, this was clearly a transformative action that proposed a greater potential for our collective goals scaffolded by this new infrastructure. It was a move to become a more organised body with a formal framework that reflected those of a growing number of Kaupapa Māori organisations. Te Herenga Waka Incorporated Society became the vehicle of resistance that empowered our organisation to

begin to make change on our own terms. New domains of resistance were created, and significant transformational actions took place such as, the establishment of a Kōhanga Reo<sup>253</sup> or 'kapa haka and Te Reo Māori in schools'. There were a number of attempts in this period to secure land and facilities for marae with no success. In 2007, another noteworthy transformation took place. Te Herenga Waka Incorporated Society signed a temporary lease to occupy the old Silverdale Primary School grounds for the purposes of marae.

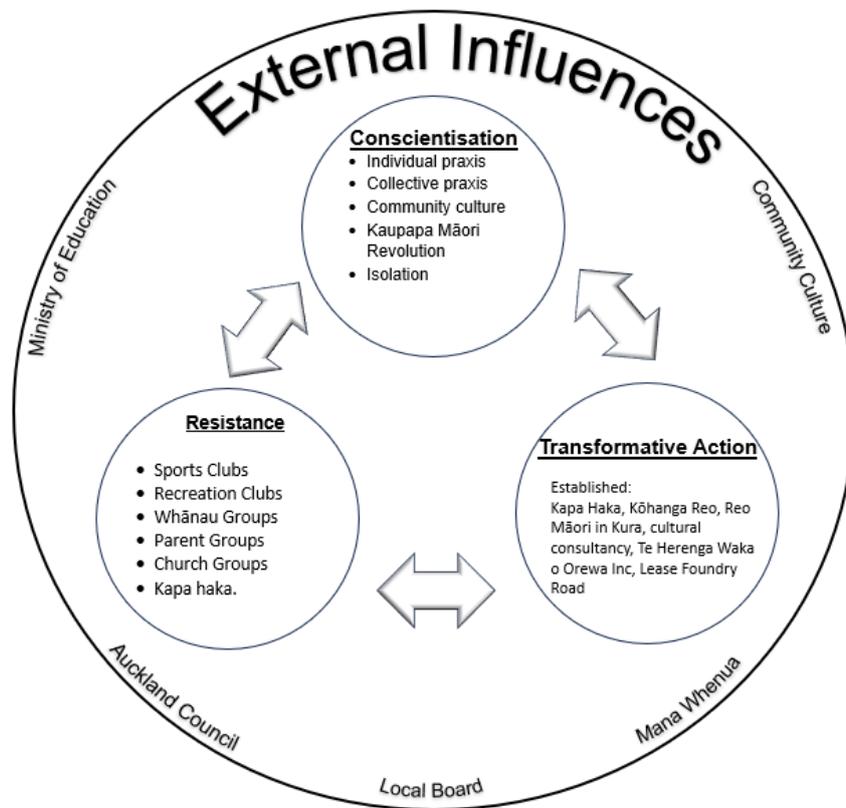
During this 20-year period we had:

- Established a community kapa haka rōpū.
- Established kapa haka rōpū at various local kura.
- Established The Herenga Waka o Orewa Incorporated Society.
- Established Te Aroha Kōhanga Reo.
- Established an itinerant Te Reo Māori Tutor at various local kura.
- Established Te Reo Māori classes for beginners at the marae and various local kura.
- Providing cultural consultancy to local government, police, social services and kura.
- Negotiated and managed a lease for a potential marae site.
- Established Te Herenga Waka Resource Centre.

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<sup>253</sup> Māori language nests

The diagram below shows a snapshot of some of the praxis of our organisation from its beginnings in the early 1980's up to 2007.



*Hakaahua 2<sup>254</sup>-Transformative Praxis Model of Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Inc, 1980 – 2009 (change back)*

As I reflect on some of the achievements of our collective during this period through a praxis lens, I begin to understand the complexities involved in the struggle to achieve the marae establishment. For instance, through a praxis lens each task on the list is its own cycle of praxis. This draws on the understanding that individual praxis is happening at different times and speeds. Remembering also that individual praxis included several levels of development. The stages of praxis (conscientisation, resistance and transformative action) activate in close proximity to each other and often interlap in intentions. This is the fluid nature of praxis at work. These cycles of praxis were involved in the informing and development of individual and collective conscientisation at the same time. The

<sup>254</sup> Diagram 2

collective conscientisation of our rōpū<sup>255</sup> motivated a movement which provided the intelligence to develop and inform the overarching objective of the organisation, which was to establish a marae.

### Ā Muri Mai - He Marae Iwi Kore<sup>256</sup>

In 2007, Te Herenga Waka Incorporated Society signed a temporary lease to occupy a recently vacated school site in Foundry Road, Silverdale with the premise of this being a prime location for a marae. Two years later, I was asked by the then Deputy Chairperson, to return to the organisation and lead the establishment of the marae. I will admit that I felt inadequate in terms of spear-heading the establishment of a marae, having had no previous background. I was however, accustomed to standing up for Māori rights in our community. So with a puku<sup>257</sup> full of fire and a willingness to put everything on the line, I took the leap of faith! Prior to being accepted back onto the committee I made a point that no significant progress had happened over the previous 20 years. If the committee wanted my help, then it would be my way and on my terms. It was obvious to me that our organisation needed to try a different approach.

In May, 2009, at the organisations AGM, I was elected Chairperson (May AGM Minutes, 2009). At that time my initial opinion of the organisation was that it lacked drive and purpose, the members were worn-down and there was no firm future goals established. The facility definitely had potential but the buildings were run-down, grounds were poorly maintained and had few initiatives in operation onsite. It was becoming alarmingly apparent that there was little evidence to substantiate the community demand for a marae and that this could possibly account for the lack of support for its establishment. Secondly, the site was more widely known as a Te Herenga Waka Resource

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<sup>255</sup> group

<sup>256</sup> The Sequel - A marae without people

<sup>257</sup> Stomach

Centre. In my view this naming was to the detriment of marae development and became a key barrier to the organisation becoming known as a marae.

### **Te Komiti Matua**<sup>258</sup>

Prior to the 2009 AGM, I had encouraged new members to stand for election. This was a strategic move to firstly bring in fresh ideas and energy onto the komiti<sup>259</sup>. Secondly, it was important to have sufficient support for formalising the organisational changes I was hoping to implement. I was fortunate that there was already a general consensus to move in this new direction from the majority of existing mema komiti<sup>260</sup>. One thing I had learnt from my previous experience as the Heamana<sup>261</sup> of The Sharks Sports Trust was that it didn't matter how big or small your committee was, as long as the members were passionate and dedicated to collectively achieving the organisations overarching goals.

The first changes involved the organisational infrastructure starting with the komiti and its meeting processes. It was important for members to understand their constitutional responsibilities and accountabilities as both a collective and then their individual roles as komiti members. This exercise involved some training but for the most part required a consistent commitment of volunteer time to execute individual contributions each month. I also implemented a concerted drive to canvas for more volunteers to support ongoing maintenance and future kaupapa. Further to this the organisation monthly meetings were organised and progressive which meant the outcomes were subject to action minutes. This ensured continual development was achieved by monthly increments. I then created portfolios targeting specific areas of the organisation including the

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<sup>258</sup> The Executive Committee

<sup>259</sup> committee

<sup>260</sup> Committee members

<sup>261</sup> Chairman

overarching goals. Portfolios included essentials such as funding, education, maintenance, marae development, profile and kaitiakitanga.<sup>262</sup>

With a background in funding I volunteered to take on the funding portfolio. This resulted in a barrage of funding applications purposing to establish as much cultural activities at the marae as possible. It wasn't long before the resource centre became a hive of activity and were operating most days of the week. Facility hireage, Te Reo Māori classes, wānanga reo, rāranga, waiata, marae experiences and professional development became common place at the centre and contributed to the financial sustainability of our organisation. Interesting to note, these are still our core services today.

### **He Mātauranga Māori**<sup>263</sup>

From the beginning, it was a priority to me that as a Kaupapa Māori<sup>264</sup>, Te Reo Māori me wōna tikanga<sup>265</sup> underpinned all facets of the centre as I worked towards achieving and developing our marae aspirations. This was also based on the understanding that many of the local haukāinga<sup>266</sup> marae were becoming depleted of fluent speakers at the passing of elders. It didn't make sense to establish a marae and have no existing Te Reo Māori experts. As it was, our community had only a few fluent speakers of te Te Reo Māori and maybe five of these were native speakers. This is one reason why I chose to implement kawa, tikanga and Te Reo o Te Taitokerau<sup>267</sup>. Te Reo Māori classes under-pinned the operations of the marae coming from the viewpoint that in order to perpetuate the cultural practices of a marae I needed to build its language capacity. I personally delivered the

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<sup>262</sup> Environmental care

<sup>263</sup> Māori Knowledge

<sup>264</sup> Initiative informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>265</sup> Māori language and its cultural processes

<sup>266</sup> homebased

<sup>267</sup> Processes, practices and the northern dialect

first Te Ataarangi Pōkaitahi Reo classes onsite and as the demand increased in the following years, was supported by my whānau<sup>268</sup>. It was an important decision but clearly a long term goal given the length of time where language loss became apparent to Māori. Truth be known Te Reo Māori classes and wānanga<sup>269</sup> were the first consistent contributions to the financial sustainability of our organisation. In fact these initiatives remain the core business of the marae today!

### **Ko ngā Tau Puku Mahi**<sup>270</sup>

2009 was proving an industrious year seeing numerous community events held onsite as an effort to promote the need for a marae as well as swell the meagre membership numbers. These events were targeted at the key Māori celebrations such as Waitangi Day, Matariki and Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori. Interesting enough, many of the attendee (both Māori and non-Māori) had no idea that there was a Māori organisation in the community, let alone a potential marae. Whether these comments came from a place of ignorance or not, It was obvious that a greater awareness of the kaupapa<sup>271</sup> needed to be achieved if I was to help to realise our ultimate goal here. This instigated a community drive to promote the proposed marae and its unique kaupapa<sup>272</sup>.

As I became more familiar with the organisation, I began researching the status of the licence to occupy the site, held by Te Herenga Waka Incorporated Society. It became quickly evident that the site was in the process of being sold by The Ministry of Education. I quickly rallied our supporters to develop strategies that would prevent the sale. Formal letters seeking support were sent to Central Government, Local Government and Iwi seeking validation and support for our initiative. I am

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<sup>268</sup> family

<sup>269</sup> Māori cultural seminars

<sup>270</sup> Busy years

<sup>271</sup> initiative

<sup>272</sup> purpose

ashamed to say that at the time, noone thought that this was enough of a priority in order to get involved formally.

All but one politician responded to our calls for formal support. He was an MP for Te Taitokerau at the time and founder of a new Māori political party. He met with us a number of times in the following years offering his time, guidance and advice for free. For this display of manaakitanga<sup>273</sup>, I am forever indebted to him and as such continue to reciprocate his actions by advising and scaffolding other local Māori organisations. One piece of invaluable advice that he gave me was that ‘if I wanted to establish a marae, then I should set a date and open it formally. This was an epiphany to me and encouraged me to step out in faith and set the date (October Minutes, 2009, Chairman Report, 2010).

Another supporter who appeared on the scene was a well known Ngāti Maniapoto wahine who had already established an urban marae in Mangere. As her and I discussed the similarities of our struggles, she mentioned something that struck a note in my subconscious. “I have never seen anyone move a wāhi tapu”(K.Nathan, Personal Communication, 2009). Moreso she intimated that if our organisation had a ‘wāhi tapu’ that this could be the ideal vehicle to dispute the sale.

Due to illness our Deputy Chairperson retired soon after our AGM, but his health continued to decline and in the pursuant months finally succumbing to eternal rest in October of 2009 (November Minutes, 2009). Whilst it was indeed a sad occasion the words of our whaea from Maniapoto were still resounding in my head, ‘I have never seen anyone move a wāhi tapu’! I had hatched a new plan of attack! I respectfully asked his daughter if the whānau would consent to him laying in our whare

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<sup>273</sup> care and hospitality

before we returned him to his own marae at Waiotaha, for burial. I explained to her my train of thoughts and as it turned out the whānau wanted to give the community an opportunity to pay their respects to him anyway. Because he had lived in this area for over forty years, the community turned out in force for his final farewell. This included local Mana Whenua<sup>274</sup> leaders. Interesting to note, that the building I designated to be used for the hui mate<sup>275</sup> was previously a kindergarten. In traditional terms it would have been seen as the last selection, as a whareniui<sup>276</sup>. Truth be known, I had little choice at that time in regards to appropriate spaces for traditional Māori practices such as hui mate.<sup>277</sup>

Following the hui mate<sup>278</sup> of our rangatira, preparations began to transform the building I held the hui mate in, into a whareniui<sup>279</sup>. This was no easy feat given that our organisation had very limited finances available at that time. I set about applying for funds to assist us in the reparations. The primary goal being for all intents and purposes to facilitate the site as a marae. During this time I registered Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae with Te Puni Kōkiri (November minutes 2009). I will admit, I was unsure if this was legally possible. It was done moreso to find some form of validation to refer to if anyone official should ask. In retrospect, not one of my brightest ideas but at least our kaupapa<sup>280</sup> was a marae on paper!

In November 2009, our organisation received our first vacancy notice from the Ministry of Education Licence Managers, explaining that the land had been offered back to the original land owners who had requested vacant possession. We were given notice that the licence would be terminated early

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<sup>274</sup> Local iwi

<sup>275</sup> funeral (Te Taitokerau)

<sup>276</sup> Meeting house

<sup>277</sup> funeral (Te Taitokerau)

<sup>278</sup> funeral

<sup>279</sup> meeting house

<sup>280</sup> initiative

in 2010 (November Minutes, 2009). This resulted in a flurry of emergency meetings and communications being sent far and wide seeking a possible solution for us to remain on the site. The short story is, there was no formal solution offered from government or iwi. This was a blow to our ego and I will admit, led to moments of soul searching and despair. 2009 was a mammoth year for our organisation, I set my jaw and purposed to continue to stand and fight for our marae.

2010 came and went with little change to our location status. It was mainly a paper trail of requests and submissions to iwi, Local and Central Government Departments, searching for validation in terms of halting the sale of the land and retaining it for the purposes of marae. Although nothing changed in terms of the land status during this year, our organisation was put on a 1 month notice if the Ministry of Education decided to vacate the premises. I was forever on tender-hooks, it was unnerving. I do note that the organisational structure had definitely become more developed and as a result more financially sustainable than the previous year.

In July, 2011 we formally opened Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae. I recall it vividly because some of our komiti members were still working on the finishing touches at 4am of that morning (July Minutes, 2011). That and the fact that it was raining cats and dogs! The opening involved a blessing and dedication ceremony for our newly unveiled whareniui, Te Kākano<sup>281</sup>. I named it 'Te Kākano', meaning 'The Seed of the Beginning'. At the completion of the blessing a special karanga was sent out to call in some of our local kawē mate<sup>282</sup> who would remain as tūpuna<sup>283</sup> for the whare. It was a big affair and signalled to the local community that there was a new organisation on the block, it was a marae and it was Māori!

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<sup>281</sup> The Seed (of the Beginning)

<sup>282</sup> photos of marae whānau who had passed away previously

<sup>283</sup> ancestors

In September 2012, our organisation received another vacancy notice from the Ministry of Education Licence Managers. One pre-condition of the land sale was the creation of a subdivisions that also included providing access to to a rear piece of land that was not part of the land envelope sold (Chairmans Report, 2012). We were given notice that the licence would be terminated early in 2013. It was becoming apparent that we were losing our battle to remain on the site and so we set about petitioning support to secure an alternative marae site from everyone we could think of. We sent correspondence to Central / Local Government, Mana Whenua<sup>284</sup> and Community Organisations with meagre outcomes. This was a frustrating time for me personally because it was evident that although there was a lot of discussion, there was little practical support forthcoming from any avenue.

That same month, I was invited to present our case to the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board. 20 years of history in an allotted time of 10 minutes, no pressure! (October Minutes, 2012). The Council chambers in Browns Bay were packed with our numerous marae supporters as a sign of solidarity for the marae establishment. Our people were everywhere in the building, from the boardroom to the waiting room, down the stairwells and overflowing to the outside areas.

I must admit that I was inspired by the community and approached the presentation like it was my last supper before execution on death row. History shows that the presentation went well and was considered by a very receptive Local Board. On the spot, the Local Board Chairperson gave a clear undertaking that she and her team would do everything in their power to help find us a site for the marae. In fact, they became our true Te Tiriti Partners and helped us navigate Council processes,

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<sup>284</sup> Local iwi of the area

negotiate funding streams, co-manage, and advise throughout the entire marae relocation process. They remain a primary partner in our marae objectives, even today.

As providence would have it, in order to create the access to the rear piece of land, the contractors would have to relocate our wharenuī, which was sitting right smack dab in the middle. Talk about ‘good fortune favouring the brave’. At this particular juncture we were gifted leverage and for the very first time our organisation had an opportunity to negotiate terms. This provoked a new communication with The Ministry of Education requesting a meeting with all the key stake-holders to discuss this situation at length. In the same communication I posed a question for the Māori experts in their organisation. How would they propose to move, relocate a wāhi tapu?<sup>285</sup>

The pōhiri for The Ministry of Education was a big affair from our account, and our organisation threw all our meagre resources and kiwi ingenuity into ensuring that it was picture perfect. The marae whānau turned out in force both young and old in another community display of unity. At the close of the hui, it was clear to both parties that there now existed a new arena for us to continue the discussions. For the first time in our history, we were speaking from a relative position of authority. Despite this, I felt motivated to continue amicable negotiations with The Ministry of Education to facilitate the relocation of the wharenuī.<sup>286</sup>

Anxious to speed the sale along, the new owner/developer became involved in the process because the sale of the property included all the buildings on the site. His solution was to gift the wharenuī to our organisation if we agreed to vacate the site. My initial response was to decline his offer on the

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<sup>285</sup> sacred space

<sup>286</sup> meeting house

basis that we would ultimately require associate buildings to complete traditional processes such as pōhiri<sup>287</sup> and hui mate<sup>288</sup>. This of course meant that our organisation could not leave the site in uncertain terms. As the buildings held little re-sale value to the developer in terms of the overall value of his project, under duress, he agreed to gift a further three relocatable buildings for our new site.

For the first time in our organisation's history, we were beginning to push-back against circumstances that previously dictated our status and location. Further to this, we were seeing and experiencing the direct benefits of our resistance measures and the empowerment of making decisions and acting on our own terms.

The acquisition of the buildings was a fantastic outcome for our organisation but now we were facing a new dilemma. We had nowhere to relocate our buildings to! Whilst our anxieties were enhanced due to Ministry of Education Licence Managers constant pressuring to vacate the property, we continued to negotiate our exit from a relative position of power. Our first response was a statement that we had nowhere to relocate to, and it would not make sense to move the buildings until we were able to move to a new long-term site. The Ministry of Education Licence Managers reply was to suggest that we allow them to relocate our Wharenuī so they could start developing the access road. Our response to that request became a cultural wormhole for The Ministry of Education negotiators. Our reply intimated that we would be unable to consider relocating the wharenuī for the following reasons.

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<sup>287</sup> formal welcome ceremony

<sup>288</sup> funerals

- The building was a living entity and required special rituals to suspend its life energies and retain its memories.
- This ritual can only be conducted once.
- Whilst this is the ritual, we would conduct to relocate the buildings, it must not be over an indefinite period.

Therefore, without land to relocate to, we have no alternative left but to continue to occupy our current location. Further formal communications were received from Ministry of Education Licence Managers threatening legal action and eviction. I steeled myself for the impending occupation action preparing a strategy should a forced eviction take place. I do make note that some of our mema komiti<sup>289</sup> and marae whānau<sup>290</sup> were not supportive of my suggested form of action. In fact there were very few of the committee willing to make a personal stand should the incident have escalated. While I could relate to some of their reasonings, the reality was that it had to be an all, or nothing stand. Otherwise, everything our organisation had achieved to that point in time, was wasted energy. This was a particularly lonely time for me as the differences in opinions saw rifts caused in the committee, resignations and withdrawal of some community support for my stance.

I resolved to continue despite the challenges even if it was just my own whanau who would lead the occupation. I am thankful to those in our community who continued to believe in the things we were trying to achieve at that time. Mostly, I must acknowledge my own whanau, whose unflinching belief in what I was fighting for was greater than just the establishment of the marae but for Māori to retain the sovereign right to choose the terms. Having planned for the worst outcome, I continued to play a cat and mouse game while seeking alternative and more positive solutions.

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<sup>289</sup> Committee members

<sup>290</sup> People of the marae

Early in 2013, our organisation was presented with two potential site options following a meeting with the Social and Community Development Forum at Auckland Council (February Special Meeting, 2013). The positive outcome was that Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae would be relocated to whichever site we selected. The remainder of the year involved planning the relocation process. Even though we didn't physically relocate in 2013, this was another big year for us which involved navigating Council processes at the same time as we were negotiating our exit strategy, new plans, feasibility report, consents and funding. Pōkea te mahi mārika!<sup>291</sup> In November we agreed a temporary relocation onsite of our whareniui, Te Kākano<sup>292</sup>, to allow construction by The Ministry of Education contractors, of the concrete right of way. I conducted the karakia 'hakamoe whare'<sup>293</sup> myself which involved a ritual prayer transferring the living energies of the whareniui into my toki, 'Te Hōhonutanga o te Reo'.<sup>294</sup> We were moving and shaking but for the first time we were planning for a tangible future (Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Feasability Report, 2013).

2014 came and went just like the previous year. It was frustrating for everyone involved because there were so many external factors dictating the actual course of actions. In September we received yet another vacation notice from The Ministry of Education, but this one was hand delivered to me! I continued to gamble on the throw of the dice conceding ground when I was able and resisting when I was not. "Compromise where you can, where you can't, don't. Even if everyone is telling you that something wrong, is something right. Even if the whole world is telling you to move, it is your duty to plant yourself like a tree, look them in the eye and say no, you move! (Christopher Markus, 2018).

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<sup>291</sup> Absolutely inundated with tasks

<sup>292</sup> The Seed of the Beginning

<sup>293</sup> place the Whare Tūpuna in a state of suspended animation.

<sup>294</sup> The depth of language potential

The building consent was finally issued late in October so in November of 2014, in the early dawn hours, my wife and I blessed and dedicated the Blue Gum Avenue site for Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae. We could finally start physical excavations at the new site. All the buildings were finally relocated to the new site by mid-2015, which saw the end of an era for our organisation and an optimistic new beginning. The funding and refurbishment of the buildings took approximately 2 more, very busy years. In November of 2017, a formal ceremony was held which marked the opening of the marae facility to the public. Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae had arrived!

### **He Arohaehae Kōrero Tara – Ā Muri Mai - He Marae Iwi Kore<sup>295</sup>**

There were two key external influences that had a definite impact on our organisation in terms of Transformative Praxis during this period. The short-term lease was always a contentious issue for us and represented a dichotomy in terms of our marae aspirations. When I discovered that the land, our organisation was leasing at Foundry Road was being sold, it felt like *dēJā vu* in regard to the history of the marae struggle. On top of this was the constant pressure from 'The Ministry' to vacate the land from 2009 – 2014. The 'notices to vacate' were definitely the 'elephant in the room' in terms of marae business as usual! I suggest that dislocation was already staring our organisation in the face, like a loaded gun! These external influences became the catalyst for some major critical thinking (conscientisation) that coerced me to make some difficult decisions (resistance). This is one time that I am thankful for my stubborn streak! (resistance, transformation).

When I returned to the organisation as Heamana<sup>296</sup> in 2009, I was a different person than the individual who had left the *rōpū* several years earlier. My wife and I had seated a *whanau*<sup>297</sup> lifestyle that daily incorporated our Māori cultural values and had become 'the squeaky wheel' with local

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<sup>295</sup> Analysis of Narrative – The Sequel - A marae without people

<sup>296</sup> Chairman

<sup>297</sup> family

mainstream educators, constantly challenging for inclusion of Te Reo Māori me Wōna tikanga<sup>298</sup>.

These self-determinations were buoyed significantly when we joined a Māori language revitalisation movement called Te Ataarangi. Te Ataarangi was established as a direct response by Māori to the momentum of sustained language loss that was threatening the vitality of the language at the time (Benton, 1979). Utilising a kinesthetic teaching methodology called 'te ara wahangū',<sup>299</sup> the movement was experiencing phenomenal results developing and increasing the number of te reo Māori speakers.

Within my own praxis journey, I was in a constant state of flux. Finding more space within Kaupapa Māori<sup>300</sup> satisfied my hunger to be included, connected me with another collective and encouraged my individual praxis development. My transformational experiences when I was part of this collective did give me more awareness of my individual transformation and growth. To be a participant in an environment that embraced Māori lifestyles and practices, that encouraged te reo Māori speaking in all community domains beginning in the home, was empowering. I joined the movement and was continually inspired by the exemplars of the movements inspirational Māori leaders.

As emerging Kaupapa Māori<sup>301</sup> leaders inspired and motivated the national movement, I was also developing my own leadership skills. This involved me regularly taking on leadership roles in the community and my professional career. At that time I was also the Heamana of The Sharks Sports Trust. Our Trust had just completed construction of multi-sports facility in Orewa. We were a small committee of skilled, like-minded people who owned the dream of becoming the leading sports club in the community. I was confident that I could utilise my experiences with The Sharks Sports Trust to

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<sup>298</sup> Māori language and its practices

<sup>299</sup> The silent way

<sup>300</sup> Initiatives informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>301</sup> Māori initiative

contribute to the determinations of Te Herenga Waka Incorporated Society. On another note, my experiences with Sharks is one example of a positive impact from an external influence.

When I was voted in as the new Chairman in 2009, I was determined to maintain the momentum but needed the right people with the right attitude and skills to help me to achieve this end. Our organisation was fortunate to have a broad variety of experience within our ranks. As I recall, we had an ex-Lawyer, retired Policeman, ex-Army, academics, teachers, computer experts, a variety of professional backgrounds, youth and salt-of-the-earth, community minded people. Combined, we represented a melting pot of skills that would be a formidable driving force in any environment. By drawing on these expertise I can see yet another example of how external influences impacted positively on our organisation.

I have no doubt what a transitional moment in time the acquisition of the lease for the Foundry Road site was (resistance, transformation). In terms of praxis this was a significant transformational determination that moved our organisation to a new space of praxis. For instance, prior to the lease our organisational overheads were low, and administration costs were minimal. The new site included several vacated primary school classrooms, offices, and a kindergarten. This was surrounded by two football fields and relative playground areas. Administrative, utility and maintenance costs grew significantly over night (conscientisation). The conscientisation of this reality for me, challenged me to find an appropriate solution (resistance). Once the response (organisational infrastructure, mema komiti<sup>302</sup>) was implemented (resistance / transformation), the next challenge was to financially sustain the organisation. (new praxis) This cycle of praxis was perpetuated multiple times, in multiple circumstances and realities throughout the struggle to establish a marae. We can begin to see how integral the workings of praxis become especial given

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<sup>302</sup> Committee members

that as an organisation we were constantly testing new domains of self-determination, development, and experience.

The knowledge of the imminent land sale and then the pressures of eviction were a major influence on our ability to plan optimistically as an organisation (conscientisation). Despite these 'herd of elephants in the room' circumstances, we continued operating as a marae organisation, including planning for our future (resistance). It is hard to explain how it feels to be a leader in this position let alone having to maintain it for several years. I admit that the constant pressure of imminent eviction added to the psychological duress of the time. One way that I coped with this pressure was to compartmentalise my reality at that time (conscientisation) in relationship to that particular circumstance. For instance, the new domain of marginalisation here, was the lease and the property at Foundry Road in Silverdale (conscientisation). The external influencers were 'The Ministry of Education and their connected contractors'. The term objective was to occupy and secure the land for the purposes of a marae (resistance, transformation).

One key problem that I discovered with our marae objective was that it lacked a 'community purpose' for establishing the marae (conscientisation). What I mean is a common purpose that would unify both our community and the external influencers, in support of our endeavours (conscientisation, resistance). It is this purpose that provided a mandate for the establishment of the marae and therefore attract buy-in from other participants (resistance/transformation). When we established a wāhi tapu<sup>303</sup> onsite (resistance, transformation) we had arrived at another transformational moment as an organisation. This success and others like it during our tenure at Foundry Road, led our organisation to explore ways to exercise our self-determined mandate (position of power, authority) and unwittingly discovered a new field of praxis that would lead to Māori Sovereignty Reclamation (conscientisation).

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<sup>303</sup> Sacred space

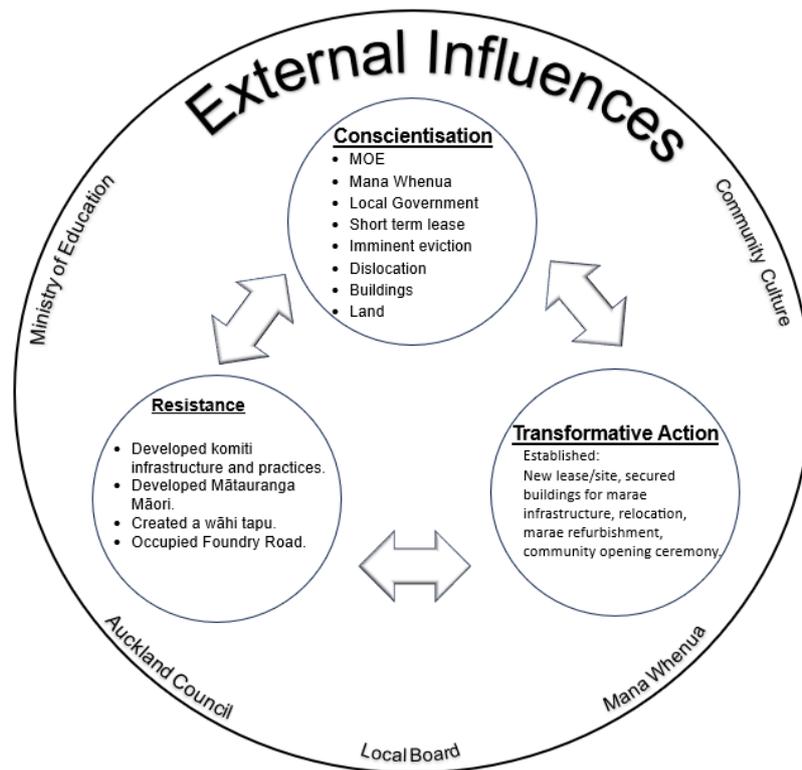
It is interesting to note that despite losing the fight to stay at the Foundry Road site, because of the mandate given by establishing a wāhi tapu we were able to negotiate a new alternative pathway to achieve our marae goal (resistance). This involved us finding a new location as a dislocated marae (new mandate / conscientisation). From the position of a dislocated marae, who was under immediate threat of eviction but with no-where to go (conscientisation), we found ourselves in a stronger more empowered position (resistance / transformation). Funny as it sounds, our vulnerability became the catalyst for greater community concern and support. In the next analysis I will discuss this idea in more detail.

During this period, we had:

- Relocated and refurbished Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae.
- Established the philosophy of Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae.
- Established the organisational infrastructure of Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae.
- Secured a lease for a new marae site at Blue Gum Ave.
- Established Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae at Blue Gum Ave, Silverdale.
- Established Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae as the primary full immersion Te Reo Māori language provider in the Hibiscus and Bays
- Established Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae as the primary Te Reo Māori me Wōna Tikanga Consultant in the Hibiscus and Bays
- Established Kia Ora Ai Te Reo Māori – Hibiscus Coast Te Reo Māori Language Sustainability Plan 2011
- Established marae-based professional development wānanga at Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae

- Established marae-based Māori cultural interactive experiences at Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae

The diagram below shows a snapshot of some of the praxis of our organisation from 2009 to 2017.



Hakaahua 3<sup>304</sup>-Transformative Praxis Model of Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Inc, 2009 – 2017

When I reflect on the numerous achievements over this period in our history, I begin to see the enormity of praxis as an organism that is self-perpetuating and dynamic. Consistent in its impact on the conscientisation, resistance and transformative actions of our organisation in (with and through) its multiple realities, at the same space in time. Literally, juggling all of these kaupapa (conscientisations, resistances, transformations) in the air at once!

<sup>304</sup> Diagram 3

## **Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae Ināianeī Tonu**<sup>305</sup>

Nā te pū, te more, nā te more te weu, nā te weu te aka, nā te aka te rea.<sup>306</sup> Just like this metaphor describes development through a series of defining stages, it easily explains the perpetual attributes of Transformative Praxis. Māori Sovereignty for us started as something else entirely. Māori Sovereignty Reclamation was not the original directive at the start of our journey but rather the unwitting outcome generated by a series of resistance and self-determining experiences while trying to realise our overarching goal of ‘establishing a marae’. The combination of, unwavering faith, self-belief in the face of unsurmountable adversity, an epic struggle, and multiplicitous experiences, metamorphosed our group into the unique, self-determining organisation it is today.

In the following paragraphs, I will observe five unique, Māori Sovereignty Reclamation conventions of our marae today. Utilising the praxis lens, I will critically analyse these conventions and then look at some potential future plans. As a marae that is in the fluid process of transformative praxis, I am confident that the marae structure as it exists today, will be different in the ensuing years and look forward to these eventualities with anticipation.

## **Māori Sovereignty Reclamation kei Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae**

Māori Sovereignty in Aotearoa is substantiated by the fact that Māori are the original Tāngata Whenua<sup>307</sup>. Further to this reality, I concur with the arguments made, that the Rangatira Māori who signed both Te Hākaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī<sup>308</sup> and Te Tiriti o Waitangi,<sup>309</sup> never

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<sup>305</sup> Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae Today

<sup>306</sup> From the seed comes the taproot, from the taproot, comes the rootlet, from the rootlet comes the vine, from the vine comes growth (Nathan, 2023).

<sup>307</sup> Indigenous People of this land

<sup>308</sup> The Declaration of Independence

<sup>309</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

willingly ceded their sovereignty. It is ignorance to think that Māori would give away their authority at a time in history where they were a majority power and under no immediate threat of war or rebellion (Gordon, 2023; Orange, 1997). This has been a consistent argument led by Māori academics throughout history and even today, despite the numerous contrary discourses of non-Māori. Further to this, it is duplicitous to suggest that those same rangatira fully understood the intent behind The Treaty of Waitangi, knowing that the majority of them did not speak English fluently.

For this reason, Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae hypothetically aligns itself with the sovereign intentions of those rangatira Māori from the original signings as mentioned previously. We position ourselves as ‘third party Te Tiriti Partners’ based on Article Two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Article Two guaranteed Māori as iwi, hapū and individuals, the unqualified exercise of chieftainship over their lands, forests, fisheries, and all their **treasures** (Kawharu, 1989, p.317; Temm, 1990, p.18). We have acknowledged our legal right to enter into this agreement as individuals of Māori descent and retain the ‘unqualified exercise of sovereignty over our cultural **treasures**’. In terms of cultural **treasures**, the list is inexhaustible and inclusive of Te Reo Māori me wōna tikanga<sup>310</sup>, kawa, hakapono and **marae!**

We also claim sovereign rights in this region of Tāmaki Makaurau<sup>311</sup> based on our ahi-kā-roatanga<sup>312</sup> this past 40 years. Our organisation has been one of the main providers of mātauranga Māori and cultural consultancy locally throughout this period. Today, we still find ourselves excluded from conversations between Mana Whenua<sup>313</sup> and local government on topics such as cultural

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<sup>310</sup> Māori language and its processes

<sup>311</sup> Auckland

<sup>312</sup> Continuous occupation

<sup>313</sup> Local iwi of the area

consultation, marae experiences, blessings, education, and local history. This does not change our attitude in terms of our historic services to this community but rather motivates us to continue on this pathway in direct response.

Finally, all marae are taonga and should be recognised as sovereign spaces according to Article Two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>314</sup>. Despite being excluded by Mana Whenua, the reality is, there are currently no other marae in the Hibiscus and Bays communities. Te Reo Māori me wōna tikanga underpin all facets of marae operations which means our marae, our tikanga<sup>315</sup> experts and whānau have the capacity to facilitate every kaupapa that our traditional haukāinga marae manage. Our language, our processes and our practices are also taonga and therefore as valid practitioners of this taonga, further substantiate the sovereignty positioning of our marae today!

The exercise of our self-determinations became an essential reality during our struggle, more so as our organisation experienced prolonged exclusion by Mana Whenua, Central and Local Government. None of these authorities were willing to formally support our cause during the early years. Spawned by a strategic essentialist theoretical paradigm we chose a sovereign, self-determining approach on our own recognisance resulting in our own empowerment. In the praxis of this transformation we unwittingly discovered our powerful re-location as a Kaupapa Māori engaging in Māori Sovereignty Reclamation today. This is most obvious at present in terms of the discretionary powers of the organisation to operate, and make decisions by a Māori majority, for the benefit of all its members, at a community and regional level.

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<sup>314</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

<sup>315</sup> culture

## Hakatauākī<sup>316</sup> o Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae<sup>317</sup>

We have a hakatauākī here at the marae that aptly describes our inclusive philosophy. “Nō te Atua mai tēnei marae. Ina nō te Atua mai tēnei marae, kore e kore he marae mō te katoa” (Kereama Nathan, Personal Communication, 2020). ‘This marae is a gift from God. If it is a gift from God, then surely, surely it is a gift to us all’. On its own, this proverb contributes to the reasoning around the inclusive philosophy of this marae. In turn, it removes the need to humanise the potential of the struggle and therefore question the genuineness of the marae philosophy. This is also an important acknowledgement of the work that faith plays in the cultural landscape that is Māori lifestyles. As a christian, I relate to a personal relationship with Christ and it has been my faith in Christ that has kept me humble. It is this steadfast belief, that has remained a consistent source of strength in some pretty bleak situations during this marae struggle. As a Māori who has a christian perspective, I personally relate to hakapono<sup>318</sup> as an intrinsic necessity on marae and therefore offering a freedom for people to embrace a personal faith in something greater than themselves.

Our hakatauākī<sup>319</sup> acknowledges the provision of God for the establishment of the marae. As a karaitiana<sup>320</sup> I believe that there is no higher spiritual power and that his authority is sovereign in both heavenly and earthly realms. As a marae with no intrinsic iwi mandate for inter-generational authority, I have chosen to align myself and by default this marae, with the sovereign authority of Io Matua Kore<sup>321</sup>.

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<sup>317</sup> Proverb of the marae

<sup>318</sup> Faith / belief

<sup>319</sup> proverb

<sup>320</sup> christian

<sup>321</sup> God (The Parentless)

Symbolism is entrenched in the infrastructure of our organisation to acknowledge this fact. The carved tomokanga<sup>322</sup> of the marae is called ‘Emanuera’ which means, God with us. The name of the Kōruru<sup>323</sup> is Io Matua Kore, and the two Amo<sup>324</sup> (right to left) represent ‘Jesus Christ and The Holy Spirit. Collectively they represent ‘The Holy Trinity’ of ‘Father, Son and the Holy Ghost’ Amen!

Although The tomokanga was carved by a well known carver from Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki, I gave him the narrative. He then came up with the concept and completed the carvings that we have today. The tomokanga is more than just an expression of my personal faith, it is an acknowledgement of a more supreme power and authority, the ultimate symbol of sovereignty. Furthermore, the tomokanga is a reminder of the miraculous self-determining journey that we have been on to establish our marae despite the multiplicitous challenges that presented themselves. I tell people ‘God built the marae’, if anyone wants to debate our sovereignty status, they can just argue with the big fella!

### **Pepeha<sup>325</sup> o Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae<sup>326</sup>**

Ko Pukeora te maunga – Wainui Hill is the mountain

Ko Te Wei-ti te awa – Wade is the river

Ko Okura te moana – Okura is the sea

Ko Te Herenga Waka te waka, ‘ehara i te waka tūpuna, he waka paihere tāngata, he waka paihere kaupapa, kia kotahi ai’ – Te Herenga Waka is the vehicle – ‘our waka is not an ancestral waka, it is the vehicle that unites people and initiatives’.

Ko Te Herenga Waka o Orewa te marae – Te Herenga Waka o Orewa is the marae

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<sup>322</sup> formal entry way

<sup>323</sup> Carved figure head on the tomokanga gable

<sup>324</sup> Upright panels that support the bargeboards

<sup>325</sup> Metaphor that validates an individual’s tribal identity with the land

<sup>326</sup> The locating of the marae

Ko Ngā Tāngata Tiriti te hapū – People who acknowledge and honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>327</sup> are the sub-tribe

Ko Ngāi Motuhake te iwi – Sovereign People is the tribe

I wrote this narrative when we completed the refurbishment of our marae buildings on our current site. It was important to me to locate our organisation in an intrinsically Māori appropriate way. Our pepeha<sup>328</sup> locates our marae in Te Wei-ti<sup>329</sup>, next to Te Wei-ti<sup>330</sup> and retains some of the historical references of the region. The form of our pepeha is still based on traditional Māori epistemological and ontological underpinnings despite its more contemporary application. The hapū and iwi have been recent additions as a sovereign response to the latest dictates from The Ministry of Education. 2023 was the year that Aotearoa histories were to be practically delivered in the national mainstream school curriculum. One convention of this delivery was the importance of acknowledging local regional Māori histories. The catch is that The Ministry of Education have specified one specific Mana Whenua<sup>331</sup> of our region. Further to this they are recommending that all kura engage with this one Mana Whenua. The issue for me is that if I align with these ministrations, I am excluding my own iwi of Ngāti Whātua, who have their own histories that validate their Mana Whenua status in this area. Furthermore, for myself to concede this position would fail to recognise the mana of our marae, or its historic, cultural contributions to this community, in any formal capacity at all.

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<sup>327</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

<sup>328</sup> Metaphor that validates an individual's tribal identity with the land

<sup>329</sup> Silverdale

<sup>330</sup> The Wade River

<sup>331</sup> Local iwi of the area

I suggest that this is just another example of the divisiveness caused by government legislation. Decisions like this disregard the dynamic iwi histories of our community and only serve to pitch iwi against iwi and Māori against Māori. Although we have emancipated ourselves from our former subjective location as a ‘people without a marae’ we once again face subjection, but this time at the hand of The Ministry of Education and Mana Whenua! However, we are already accustomed to being excluded, so the inclusion of an iwi and a hapū<sup>332</sup> in our pepeha<sup>333</sup>, is a direct response to this new encounter.

### **He Mahitahitanga**<sup>334</sup>

Therefore, from a sovereign Te Tiriti location, Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae practices Te Tiriti collaboration with all local government bodies, community organisations and individuals that value reciprocal relationships. This means that these relationships must honour the principles of partnership, participation and practice. We reserve the right to manage these relationships on our terms engaging an authentic Kaupapa Māori approach<sup>335</sup>. Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae practices inclusivity in the Māori determined form by offering an unconditional opportunity to all peoples;

- to participate as an endorsed member of the marae, .
- to participate as an endorsed exponent of te reo o Te Taitokerau<sup>336</sup> and its relevant tikanga and kawa according to the practices of the marae.
- to honour, protect, practice and participate in kawa and tikanga processes as an endorsed member of the marae taumata<sup>337</sup>.

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<sup>332</sup> Tribe and sub-tribe

<sup>333</sup> Metaphor that validates an individual’s tribal identity with the land

<sup>334</sup> Collaboration

<sup>335</sup> Approach informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>336</sup> Northern dialect

<sup>337</sup> Formal speaking place of the marae

- to participate as an endorsed executive committee member of the marae.

I have no doubt that this position is open to rigorous debate from all sectors of Māoridom and Pākehādom, but it is an eccentricity directly related to the inclusive philosophy that the organisation has upheld from its inception. I do temper our position by stating that these ‘opportunities’ are selective based on appropriate kaupapa and or the consent of Māori experts participating. Furthermore, this particular provision remains as a process within the domains and daily operations of Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae only. This practice remains Māori led in order to provide a consistent and respectful process as well as providing a culturally safe environment for all involved.

It is imperative that non-Māori participating in this marae understand clearly that this inclusion is still a privilege and not a right. Marae membership is not a privilege that can be earned by these recipients but rather a ‘tākoha piritahi’<sup>338</sup> that has been bestowed upon them. The process of pōhiri<sup>339</sup> or hakatau<sup>340</sup> are the authentic methods we use to include new visitors to the marae and must be led by haukāinga<sup>341</sup>. The gift is unconditional to all peoples regardless of age, ethnicity or gender. The gift is reciprocal, meaning that there are cultural responsibilities attached. One example is that It will never truly feel like a persons marae, unless they get involved and engage authentically. It is imperative to declare that inclusion of non-Māori as I am indicating here, is not a consideration in terms of our traditional haukāinga<sup>342</sup> marae. In these types of marae, membership is reserved for **whānau who have genealogical ties to the marae only.**

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<sup>338</sup> Gift of inclusion

<sup>339</sup> Formal welcome

<sup>340</sup> Informal welcome

<sup>341</sup> People of the marae

<sup>342</sup> homestead

## He Matakite<sup>343</sup>

Leadership, vision and a giant dose of ‘intestinal fortitude’ are mandatory necessities for Māori Sovereignty Reclamation. I am not saying that ‘I’ am the best leader that our organisation could have had. The truth is that there were numerous, other, inspirational Māori leaders that could have done as good a job, if not better! In fact I am blessed that some of those leaders were my mentors during our struggle, and remain so even today. I am however, fiercely proud to be Māori, and a willing participant in the decolonising discourses and the struggle to pursue a self-constructed sovereign location for Māori as a people and as representatives of our related organisations. I have a particular set of skills’ that contributed to the management and leadership of our organisation in the past and helped our organisation to achieve its many outcomes. I have a life-time of multi-disciplinary experience in construction, business management, administration, and sales and marketing that contribute to my own leadership style and decision making capabilities. This does not concede my doggedness and sheer bloody mindedness! Being Māori, I am accustomed to being a team player but even though I am a leader, remain a servant to everyone.

The leadership vision for the future of the marae, begins with our current location, but will evolve, transform and eventually determine a new location. This thesis is part of the legacy that I want to leave my community as a valid dialogue to sustain the foundations of what we have built together, as well as future-proof the unique philosophy of our marae, for the foreseeable future. This also includes the work of the komiti who are the visionaries working with me today, to determine our tomorrows. This includes developing photographic and video footage, care and maintenance of our marae taonga, as further repositories for our legacy archives.

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<sup>343</sup> A Visionary

Everyone who visits the marae is interested in the story of the establishment of Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae and in particular how non-Māori are culturally, included. As part of the perpetual decolonisation discourse, I continue to share our unique journey daily, through oral presentations or just in every day conversation with interested parties. More importantly, my lifestyle validates these dynamic sovereign locations as a normal, every day practice. Not just for myself, but for all members of Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae. Most of all, I am a parent and a grandparent that does not want my children or my grandchildren to accept a hegemonic western societal norm as their lived reality but rather a self-determining, constructive, sovereign Māori future as in the case proposed by our current marae model.

By the time we had re-established our organisation at its new location in Blue Gum Ave, I had already conceived an idea that we had insufficient space to meet future demands. The expansion design had to be based on the limited size of the remaining land envelope onsite and needed to include more multi-use rooms with a usage capacity of approximately 150 people or more. So, I drew a then, draft design of a marae extension, which transformed recently into a cultural centre. With a steadily growing community, I was becoming more aware of the importance of our marae development remaining unique from other, potential community facilities. It is clearly a self-determining strategy to market our next stage of development this way, to prevent any potential funding competitions with other community organisations. As well as a couple of multi-use, wānanga spaces, the building will host a function centre / kitchen dining area, conference room, whānau room, offices, ablutions and storage spaces. Our construction plans are at Council now, in the final stages of Resource Consenting. I do not know fully, how or when, in the near future this project will be realised. All I know, is that we will continue to determine how we will achieve this goal, on our own terms.

## He Arohaehae Kōrero Tara - Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae Ināianeī Tonu<sup>344</sup>

The formal community opening we held announced to the community that Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae was officially a marae (resistance / transformation). This was not my decision alone, but was influenced strongly by our local Te Tiriti partners,<sup>345</sup> The Hibiscus and Bays Local Board and Auckland Council. They were proud of the outcome and wanted to share their success with the community. I was obligated to acknowledge their support. Truth be known, without it we would never have achieved our marae goal as easily as we did. The Hibiscus and Bays Local Board and Auckland Council continue to support the marae today.

I made a point of formally inviting all of the Mana Whenua<sup>346</sup> to our opening but there was no formal recognition in response. My Ngāti Whātua whanaunga were here in support however, I can't help thinking that it was because they were my whanaunga<sup>347</sup> and not in a formal iwi capacity. There were other local whanau with hakaapa<sup>348</sup> to other Mana Whenua, however I suggest that their attendance was due to their community identity (local residents) and various inter-connected working relationships (health, social services, education..).

While we have established reciprocal working relationships within Local Government in some areas, we continue to remain excluded from formal Mana Whenua support. This does complicate our relationships with some government organisations who remain obligated by Memorandums of Understanding (with Mana Whenua) and political agenda. Mana Whenuatanga is more complicated than government will have us believe and through their lens, remains as divisive as ever for Māori.

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<sup>344</sup> Narrative Analysis – Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae Today

<sup>345</sup> Treaty partners

<sup>346</sup> Local iwi of the area

<sup>347</sup> relatives

<sup>348</sup> genealogical ties

Despite the development of our organisation to date, these external organisations remain major influences on our ability to develop and expand our services today.

Looking forward, I acknowledge that these external influences, at both the national and local level, remain the bane of our existence. It will be interesting to see what the future will look like for Kaupapa Māori,<sup>349</sup> under the newly elected National Government. During their campaign, they promised to eliminate The Māori Health Authority, Te Aka Whaiora, and dis-establish Te Pūkenga Polytechnic Merger amongst other things (Lyth, 2023). It is obvious that the entire country will be impacted in multiple ways by the election of a new government, and not just Māori. Despite the potential uncertainties a new government, its alliances, and its ministrations represent, we are dedicated to maintaining the impetus of our Māori Sovereignty Reclamation position locally. This means that it is business as usual, and we need to continue to focus on what we are doing and not on what might be!

These are some of the current reasons for us as a marae, continuing to explore our Māori Sovereignty Reclamation identity, as a Kaupapa Māori. In terms of a Transformational Praxis perspective today, our organisation is being excluded from participation in the local, regional, Māori cultural domains, by Mana Whenua and their associate government and community organisations (conscientisation of reality). In response our organisation has constructed new internal domains of authority based on Article Two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (resistance, transformation), based upon hakapono<sup>350</sup> and its synergy with a higher form of spiritual sovereignty (conscientisation, resistance, transformation). We have constructed a new internal domain of inclusion based on our organisations philosophical underpinnings and Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles (resistance, transformation). We have constructed our own narratives and continue to explore distinct positions

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<sup>349</sup> Initiatives informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>350</sup> faith

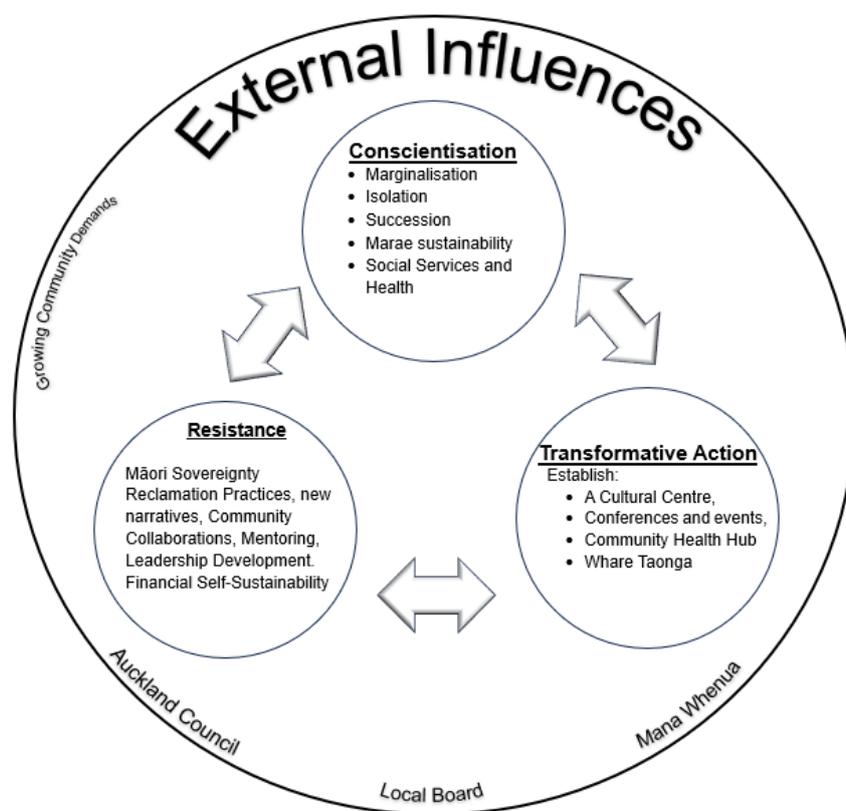
of difference to Mana Whenua and other Kaupapa Māori (resistance, transformation). Our organisation has emancipated ourselves from the oppression of Mana Whenua exclusion (conscientisation of reality) by creating our own hapu and iwi (resistance, transformation).

As I reflect on these cycles of praxis in their individuality, I can recognise a strong sense of self-determination. After forty years of struggle, this approach is understandable. If I explore all of the individual cycles combined as a collective, I can see a stronger and more powerful movement of self-determination. It is through the synergy of the collective praxis model that I begin to see the conceptualisation of Māori Sovereignty Reclamation (resistance, transformation). I acknowledge that many of our current practices are direct responses to a history of exclusion. Praxis has enabled our organisation to construct our own sovereign space, on our own terms. This is how Māori Sovereignty Reclamation for our organisation emerged and became a daily practice at the marae today.

As our organisation looks forward, we will:

- Establish a new Cultural Centre onsite.
- Establish historical archives of the marae establishment.
- Establish a marae museum for taonga.
- Establish a community led health locality/hub.
- Establish a Kura Kaiako o Te Ataarangi
- Establish a perpetual succession plan to sustain the culture and practices of the marae.

The diagram below shows a snapshot of some of the praxis of our organisation from 2017 to 2023.



Hakaahua 4<sup>351</sup> -Transformative Praxis Model of Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Inc, 2017 - 2023

**He Hakakapinga Ara Rangahau**<sup>352</sup>

As our organisation looks towards the future, I can easily see the benefits of The Transformative Praxis Lens as a planning, and strategising tool. Further to this, having applied the lens to the history of the marae establishment journey, we see its further advantages as a tool of reflection. It is the reflection of past successes and even failures that informs the lens as a planning tool. Although my scrutiny of our history (through the praxis lens) has been more general in nature, there is easily flexibility with the lens to be magnified and applied to more intricate examinations as well. I

<sup>351</sup> Diagram 4

<sup>352</sup> Research Methodology Summary

conclude that the inclusion of the external influences field within my amended model of praxis was an important addition. Although often representative of negative impacts to the goals of our organisation in the past, I must also acknowledge its positive impacts. These opposites were determining influences on our organisation as it underwent praxis, fuelling the struggle and potentially leading to new realities of conscientisation.

One benefit of the praxis lens is its ability to identify the internal potential for change in relation to any of its three core fundamentals. Within 'conscientisation' it recognises that transformation begins at the unconscious level and therefore is conceived by a conscious acknowledgement of influential factors that currently reside outside of the parameters of internal control. 'Resistance' incorporates the first stage of response which involves consideration of your current state of development. Further to this, is the conscious resistance either to transform your unconscious fallibilities or take a determinate physical action. 'Transformative action' is solution focussed, almost like a self correcting behaviour, or a new practice based on a new location based on historic evidence. This cyclical progression forms the organic and dynamic nature of transformative praxis, that is fluid.

Time is a transformational constant. In short, everything takes time, and events take place at certain spaces in time. For instance, it has taken forty years to establish and develop this marae to its current state. Given time the make-up of the marae may be different to what it is now. Praxis determines the speed of transformation, the participants determine the completion of a praxis cycle. These two co-dependencies are critical to the transformational potentials of each cycle. Time combines fluidly with the the concept of location in its manifold forms. For instance, seeing the potential for organisational change, I must first locate my organisation in 'the now'. Present location helps me to reflect on our organisations former location, which in turn informs me of the potential, next location. The common determinant here, is time!

It is important to note that determinate action or decisions are the principal ingredients that initiate changes and or development. Indecisiveness can result in a lost opportunity but more importantly delays in progress towards self-empowerment and transformation. Therefore the fundamentals of praxis lend themselves to the praxis of self-determining change.

This research has shown me the inherent synergy that Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae has with other Kaupapa Māori,<sup>353</sup> but more importantly, what makes this marae unique. It has taught me that the praxis struggle we experienced as a Kaupapa Māori in the 1980's is similar but different, from what it is as we struggle to be a Kaupapa Māori today. The organisation that practices Māori Sovereignty Reclamation today is the same fundamentally, but unique in its self-location, and an acute identification with its practices of a sovereign, by-Māori approach. In short we are a Kaupapa Māori in our present location of 'praxis', building on the foundations of our former praxis locations, and experiences of yesterday.

If there is one piece of advice I can offer to any individual or group considering a Māori Sovereignty Reclamation approach with regard to their own project, I would suggest applying a Transformative Praxis lens to their organisation, in the first instance.

### **He Hakamutunga**<sup>354</sup>

This study has clearly shown that the Crown was envious of the land and natural resource that Māori owned and had already equipped themselves with a plan of conquest. Te Hakaputanga o ngā

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<sup>353</sup> Initiatives informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>354</sup> Conclusion

Rangatira o Nu Tireni<sup>355</sup> and Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>356</sup> were the conventions that saw the swing of power from a collectively informed political infrastructure of Māori governance to the new Crown-preferred western model. The formation of this new system of governance became the vehicle that executed their plan of procurement. This proposal included a quagmire of land acquisition legislations and ministrations, whilst simultaneously launching attacks on our language and culture. The continual loss of land instigated the spiritual and physical dislocation of Māori Sovereignty Authority and its future capabilities. Māori are intrinsically linked to the land through genealogy, which are epitomised in narrative such as pepeha<sup>357</sup> and concepts of ahi kā Roatanga.<sup>358</sup> The loss of land provoked the disenfranchisement of Māori from their intrinsic selves and therefore prompted impoverished ideologies and survivalist strategies as a form of response both consciously and unconsciously. Further fuelled by a barrage of assimilative, integrative, and even bi-cultural approaches, the deterioration of Māori Sovereignty identity for Māori, was inevitable.

In contrast, Māori Sovereignty Reclamation is a resistance strategy. It is not a new concept and is evidenced by the earliest resistance exemplars of tūpuna Māori<sup>359</sup> such as Hone Heke, Tāwhiao, Te Whiti o Rongomai or Te Kooti, to name a few. This is further validated by the perpetual argument that our Rangatira Māori<sup>360</sup> never willingly ceded their sovereignty at either the signing of Te Hākaputanga o ngā Rangatira o Nu Tireni or Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>361</sup>. Resistance movements of the time such as Te Kotahitanga, Te Kīngitanga and The Māori Land Wars, add further endorsement to this point.

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<sup>355</sup> The Declaration of Independence

<sup>356</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

<sup>357</sup> Metaphor that validates an individual's tribal identity with the land

<sup>358</sup> Occupation Rights

<sup>359</sup> Māori ancestors

<sup>360</sup> Māori Chiefs

<sup>361</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi (Māori version)

If our Rangatira Māori never ceded their Māori Sovereignty, hypothetically, it proposes the idea that Māori Sovereignty still exists today. At present, Māori Sovereignty is predominantly evidenced in our cultural constructs of rangatiratanga, iwitanga, hapūtanga, and whanaungatanga.<sup>362</sup> It is seen and experienced first-hand in our cultural practices of kawa, tikanga, hakapono, and mahi toi<sup>363</sup>. It is acknowledged through the numerous successful Waitangi Settlement outcomes and the continual self-determining approaches of Iwi development. It is conveyed through our reo rangatira<sup>364</sup> and mātauranga Māori<sup>365</sup> imbued with our unique epistemological and ontological underpinnings.

Kaupapa Māori<sup>366</sup> lead the assault on behalf of the Māori Sovereignty Reclamation movement today. Its critical and constructivist theoretical underpinnings collaborate to form the ideal organic mechanism to protest the continual under-privileging of Māori Sovereignty rights. Kaupapa Māori such as Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa and Whare Wānanga are the contemporary vehicles that argue the perpetual discourses at multiple levels of society and are incorporated into a Māori human development approach to self-determination and Māori Sovereignty Reclamation.

Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae is a community marae today. The first Kaupapa Māori in this community's more recent history, and its only marae. Our marae lifestyle is founded on Te Reo Māori, he ahurea Māori, he hakapono Māori me wōna tikanga<sup>367</sup>. It is the space where these taonga remain invaluable, being seen, heard, experienced and practiced every day. The story about the establishment of the marae is the story of the struggle for justice, inclusion and location. Today, Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae practices Māori Sovereignty Reclamation from the self-determined location of a third-party Te Tiriti partner. Drawing upon the legal precedences accorded to Māori by

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<sup>362</sup> Sovereignty, tribalism, and kinship

<sup>363</sup> Cultural processes, beliefs, and creativity

<sup>364</sup> Chiefly Language

<sup>365</sup> Māori knowledge

<sup>366</sup> Initiatives informed by Māori cultural underpinnings.

<sup>367</sup> Māori language, culture, beliefs, and its practices

Article Two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi we normalise Māori Sovereignty practice as an underpinning of our every day marae lifestyle and organisational operation.

As I reflect on our journey of marae establishment, I also reflect on the history of the urban marae struggle as a movement. Beginning with an assimilative strategy of government, the urbanisation of Aotearoa became one of the vehicles that transformed and fractured traditional Māori society as we knew it. Urban Marae were one of the responses by Māori for the benefit of Māori in these contemporary domains and lead the local discourses to be included in both iwi and government considerations. Te Herenga Waka o Orewa marae is part of this movement and draws strength from this synergy and relationship with other urban marae in our region.

The positioning of Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae as a ‘community marae’ is one distinct idiosyncrasy that distinguishes our ‘community marae’ identity from other marae. Based upon the original philosophy of inclusion conceived in our earlier days of development, the concept has metamorphosed and become incorporated as a unique tikanga practice<sup>368</sup> of this marae. As discussed in the previous chapters, this is one of a multitude of unique positions that this marae takes to validate one of our Māori Sovereignty Reclamation practices.

As empowering and self-determining as this movement is, we must acknowledge dominant external influences that continue to temper the sovereign potentials of our organisation in this community.

Firstly there are the contentions with a government and democratic infrastructure that is juxtaposed to the ideology of Māori Sovereignty Reclamation. Decisions made at a central and local government level maintain an influence on our capabilities and continues to dictate terms of

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<sup>368</sup> Cultural practice

engagement. Secondly, we face Iwi, struggling to reclaim their own sovereign mandates within this bureaucracy. I completely respect their position, including their struggle in terms of their own Māori Sovereignty Reclamation journey. Unfortunately, our experience with our own local Mana Whenua<sup>369</sup> have resulted in their determinations becoming direct adversaries to our endeavours. We remain optimistic that these contentions can be alleviated however this end can only be decided by Mana Whenua<sup>370</sup> themselves.

We are not unaccustomed to difficult or even untenable situations such as the scenario we find ourselves in today with Mana Whenua. Although less than ideal the continual struggle for our own self-identity is a part of transformative praxis. This study has shown me that Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae has always been in the fluid process of praxis, despite being unaware of its potential in our earlier days. Understanding the practical benefits of utilising a Transformative Praxis Lens as a research tool, has been empowering. In particular, discovering its dual potential as both a lens of reflection and a strategic planning tool. At the close of this experiment utilising the fundamentals of Transformative Praxis as a critical and structural analysis tool, I can't help thinking that I am just beginning to scratch the surface of its greater potentials within Kaupapa Māori in general. Perhaps herein lies a prelude to a more comprehensive examination of its capacities as I consider a subject for my future Doctorate study.

Today however, praxis will continue to provide intelligence to our organisation as it develops its own possibilities, and plans for its imminent self-determined future. The dynamic experiences in the course of our struggles, have been an unrelenting motivator for both our individual and organisational transformation. The confidence drawn from our past successes as an organisation, aid

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<sup>369</sup> Local iwi of the area

<sup>370</sup> Local iwi of the area

us in planning for the next stages of our journey. The story about the establishment of the marae is the story about a people without a marae and their aspirations that resulted in its eventual establishment. Our combined experiences have taught us the unlimited possibilities available to us once we begin to determine our own future goals, on our own terms. The words of Tā Hemi Henare epitomise our journey fittingly. ‘He tawhiti kē tō koutou haerenga, ki te kore haere tonu. He tino nui rawa ō koutou mahi, kia kore e mahi nui tonu.’<sup>371</sup> So, this is us in a nutshell whānau, ‘Te Herenga Waka o Orewa Marae, a Model of Māori Sovereignty Reclamation in a Community Space’, today! Rongonui kei Te Weiti!<sup>372</sup>

Tēnā, tikina Te Hōhonutanga o te Reo, poroa ai ngā here, tūturu hakamaua kia tina, tina, haumi e,  
hui e, tāiki e!<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>371</sup> “You have come too far not to go further. You have done too much not to do more.”

<sup>372</sup> World famous in Silverdale

<sup>373</sup> Well then, send forth my sacred axe, and I will end this here, bind and fasten it securely with our words of agreement!

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