REVALUING RARANGA:
WEAVING AND WOMEN IN TRANS-TASMAN MĀORI CULTURAL DISCOURSES

JOSEPHINE G. DIAMOND

A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY OF THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY IN NOVEMBER 2003
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is entirely my own work. I certify that all sources used and assistance given, have been fully acknowledged.

[Signature]

Josephine, G. Diamond
November 28, 2003
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Thesis Abstract

Raranga is a generic label for diverse forms of Māori weaving, primarily, though not exclusively undertaken by Māori women. Like other forms of Māori cultural production, raranga has undergone dramatic changes since British colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand in the first half of the 19th century, and consequent Māori trans-local, trans-regional and trans-national migrations. Such changes portray various, and at times contradictory, perspectives and values amongst Māori people responding in different ways to colonialist hegemony. In this thesis, raranga is discussed in relation to Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, in order to highlight changing, contested and contradictory cultural values, particularly in migrant settings. I engage with the question: 'How is raranga indispensable to Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses?' by challenging dominant colonialist discourses on Māori culture that erase or diminish the importance of Māori women and their cultural production.

For this challenge I have constructed a clearly defined 'discursive marae', as both a model and a metaphor for discussing Māori women's social experiences that feature raranga. It is based on physical and ceremonial features of the marae, an important Māori institution in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is multi-faceted and complex, employing various Māori cultural referents, anecdotes and poetic metaphors, family histories, unpublished and published written and oral records, visual representations, and analytical interpretations. With it, I posit interwoven connections amongst various linguistic, poetic, technical, historical, spiritual and conceptual aspects of raranga in trans-local, trans-regional and trans-national settings.

The theoretical premises upon which this 'marae' is built, or more accurately 'woven', are Māori philosophy (including spirituality) and postcolonialist feminism, from my perspective as a Māori woman scholar. In revaluing raranga, I argue that raranga discourses extend beyond technical attributes and its social stigmatisation as 'only women's work', deserving extensive engagement both within and beyond this thesis 'marae'. I demonstrate its importance to Trans-Tasman Māori cultural contexts, to Māori
identification and identity politics, to a number of prominent Māori cultural tenets, to representations of Māori people, particularly women, to a spiritual environment, and to Māori women's political struggles.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

HE KÖRARI TE PUA: KA TĪMATA TĒNEI
RARANGA

(A ‘FLAX’ FLOWER BUDS: THIS WOVEN THESIS BEGINS)

Toi Maihi 2001-3. *Taku kete mahi. My working kete.* 42 cm x 53 cm, including handles. Kōrari from northern Aotearoa New Zealand (kete) and Canberra, Australia (handles). Named by, and held in private collection of, Jo Diamond
PROLOGUE

Figure 1.1: Entrance gate to Mātihetihe Marae, Mitimiti, North Hokianga, North Aotearoa New Zealand, January 2000. I affiliate with this marae through the hakaheke (genealogy) of my late paternal grandmother Raiha Tuha Hotere Diamond.

HE KARANGA

Haere mai, haere mai

Haere mai ra ki tēnei marae o Ngāpuhi

Ngāpuhi kōwhao rau, Ngā uri o Rāhiri, Te taua o Hongi Hika

Ki ngā manuhiri Ngāpuhi o Poihākena!

Haere, haere, haere mai ra…

(Approach, approach, approach this marae (gathering place) of Ngāpuhi.

Ngāpuhi of one hundred chiefs, the progeny of Rāhiri, the army of Hongi Hika

To us, the Ngāpuhi guests of Australia! Come to us…)

Nā (by) Jo Diamond/ Mai Te Toka o Te Kahurangi

Taimona

HE MIHI AROHA

Karanga mai

Mihi mai

Whiriwhiria ngā wawata ki ngā pito o te ao

13
Pinea te aroha ki to ngākau hei tohu kotahitanga
Ko te korowai he kākahu mo tatou, te whānau
Te raranga Aho, ko te Aroha
Te raranga Io, ko te whanaungatanga
Ui e, Taiki e!
(Call us. Greet us. Weave our dreams into all of humanity
Attach aroha to your heart to signify unity
Our family is a korowai, a fine tasselled cloak to clothe and keep us
Its weft weave is Aroha
Its warp weave is family togetherness.)

Diamond\(^1\)
Imagine standing, waiting at the gateway of a marae. There are many similar gateways throughout Aotearoa New Zealand at which people wait before being welcomed on to a marae. Manuhiri (visitors) must wait for, and respond appropriately to a karanga (a beckoning call of welcome) from the tangata whenua (Indigenous hosts) before entering the marae. Marae gates represent thresholds, not only of physically defined spaces, but also of ways of perceiving the world. Such perceptions relate to physicality, spirituality, cosmogony and cosmology of Māori culture.

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\(^1\) This mihi was composed by my mother Te Mihinga Eileen Diamond, as an introduction for a number of oral presentations I gave during my doctoral candidature. I remain indebted to her for this gift that speaks so poetically of our family attachments, links with the rest of the world and metaphorically, refers to the importance of raranga (weaving) in our Māori culture.
INTRODUCTION: A DISCURSIVE MARAE AND A THESIS QUESTION

Figure 1.2: Toi Te Rito Maihi and Marokura: kairaranga (weavers) at Kohewhata Marae, Northern Aotearoa New Zealand 1999-2000. This marae was a key site of my doctoral fieldwork in Aotearoa New Zealand. I frequently re-visit this marae in this thesis. Note the multi-coloured whiri (plait) hanging top-centre that I discuss more fully in chapter 7.

I begin this thesis with a prologue that is similar to karanga1 (welcoming call) performed by Māori women on many marae2 in Aotearoa New Zealand. 3 This prologue metaphorically lays a path into a Trans-Tasman ‘discursive marae’ purpose-built for this thesis. The ‘path’ and its destination, feature the Māori form of weaving named raranga, and Māori women kairaranga (weavers). My mother’s mihi (greeting), with its numerous references to raranga embellishes my karanga into this discursive marae that serves as a home location for the thesis question: how is raranga indispensable to Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses?

A karanga can be used to introduce the historical backgrounds of participants in Māori ceremonial events. Its utility is flexible in that its various forms position hosts and visitors in Māori cultural ceremonies. In similar fashion I must at the outset explain that this thesis (a literary form of ceremonial disclosure) is based
upon ethnographic research amongst Māori people, including my family members, in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Whilst it relies on officially sponsored fieldwork that took place from mid-1999 to early 2001, it also results from a lifetime’s familiarity with, and lived experience of, various forms of Māori culture. I particularly take into account the opinions of my extended family; surviving or recently deceased blood-relatives of my four deceased grandparents Mai (Michael) Hohua Diamond, Raiha Tuha Hotere Diamond, Hakaraia Ngāniho Karaka and Kahutaha Ngaro Barney Morunga Karaka, all of whom are of Māori descent. Haere, haere Te Hunga mate, Te Tini Aitua, haere ki to moenga roa i tua o Te Ara, takoto, takoto... Roimata māturuturu. [I pay my respects, without English translation, to our dead and to those of us so bereaved by their passing]. As my karanga in the prologue implies, some of these family members reside in Aotearoa New Zealand, whilst others have migrated to, or were born in Australia.

In more direct relation to raranga, my research would not have been possible without the guidance and mentorship of the internationally recognised artist, Toi Te Rito Maihi. Toi, amongst a small number of other Māori people, has been involved with the construction (including raranga) of Kohewhata Marae in northern Aotearoa New Zealand for the entire period of my doctoral candidature. I participated in raranga at Kohewhata for nine months from November 1999 to July 2000. I consequently established links with other kairaranga (weavers) in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia during my official fieldwork. Contact with this network of weavers prompted me to focus my research onto raranga and its relationship with other Māori cultural references in Aotearoa New Zealand, as well as in Australia.

A MARAE ANALOGY
In order to continue introducing this thesis as a discursive marae (including its foundational philosophies) on raranga, it is necessary to refer in more depth to its primary inspiration, the marae. The
marae structure and its social systems serve as a model and metaphor for this thesis. As Māori cultural institutions, marae typify the importance of home location to many Māori people, yet they have been and continue to be affected by European (particularly British) colonialism, and by trans-local and trans-national migration. For example, marae complexes usually consist of a whare tupuna (large main building, named after an ancestor) used for meetings and as sleeping accommodation, an adjoining or nearby wharekai (dining room and kitchen) and a separate ablution building. The size of buildings and land designated for marae activities is currently subject to numerous Acts of Parliament and local government project approvals. Therefore, while some autonomy exists for Māori people on marae, especially in terms of ceremonial protocols, they must also conform to ‘outside’ legislative constraints and can be variously affected by the influences of a European-based colonialist hegemony.

The discursive marae of this thesis is similar in character to an actual marae. The finished form of this thesis, for example, can be likened to the whare tupuna, a place of formal ceremony, discussion of current issues, and a haven of hopes for the future. Research, including fieldwork contributing to this thesis, is comparable to the food preparation in a wharekai (dining room/kitchen) that nourishes the inhabitants of the whare tupuna. On-going raranga-based research similarly ‘nourishes’ this thesis. In the process of thesis completion, there has been some necessary editing (deletions, expulsions) much like the cleansing activity that takes place in ablution buildings on marae. Just as an actual marae has its own internal hegemony, rules and regulations, I have arranged the structure of this discursive marae, setting my own rules for its final presentation, based on my interpretation of raranga-based discourses. At the same time, and similarly to the organisers on marae, I am mindful of, and comply with external rules and protocols, such as citation styles and submission deadlines.
Other features of the marae have also influenced the content of this thesis. Marae function, for example, in accordance with fundamental Māori philosophical principles, yet these have also undergone change since the arrival of Europeans. Thus, religious ceremonies of various kinds but predominantly Christian in character are a common feature on marae. Many Māori people closely relate such activities to their wairua (spirituality), regardless of religious denomination. This spirituality is most evident at tangihanga (funerals) that occur all too often. Similarly, and as I discuss later in more depth, Māori spirituality features as an important component of the raranga-based discourses of this thesis.

Cultural identity is another important concern of this discursive marae, mirroring aspects of a physical marae system. Individual marae are, for example, often part of a network of hapū (extended family)-based institutions, each of which has its own levels of autonomy and inclusivity. Many Māori people consider their belonging to at least one marae, as an essential component of Māori identity. Many Māori people, therefore, see the marae as the centre of contemporary Māori art, politics, spirituality and education, yet the majority also remains very familiar with a wider multi-cultural community.

Marae have survived and functioned within mainstream colonialist society that has not always supported them. Nevertheless, they are considered by many Māori to constitute mainstream society in themselves. The physical structure, ceremonial protocols and philosophies of marae continue to inspire the architecture of, and social interaction in a number of contexts ranging from private homes, through national institutions to Internet websites. Māori people perceive marae in various and diverse ways depending on levels of participation on marae, ‘outside’ experiences and influences, and individual personalities. Some Māori people, for example, rarely involve themselves with marae whilst others live on or very close to them, participating fully with all marae-based activities. Marae-based Māori identity, along with its various
counter-influences inspires a focus on cultural identity in this thesis, particularly as it relates to raranga. Its discursive marae is a contribution (not one that stands in isolation as a closed argument) to discourses on cultural production including raranga and social identity formations.

None the less, Māori women are acknowledged to be the marae gatekeepers. It is the karanga performed exclusively by women that vocally exemplifies this gate-keeping role and symbolically represents their linkages with female ancestors and deities. In referring to the marae as a model and metaphor for this thesis I acknowledge the primary role of women kaikaranga (marae ‘callers’) by privileging discourses from and about Māori women, both within and beyond marae.

In constructing this ‘marae’ I do not assert that raranga, in physical or discursive form, is always, and only present on, or dependent upon actual marae. I do, however, assert the importance of both raranga and Māori women within and beyond Māori cultural sites, such as marae, that exist in both Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia.

Adhering to an important marae protocol of Aotearoa New Zealand, I also acknowledge ‘tangata whenua’ (translatable here as ‘Indigenous people’, living and deceased), in both Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. In doing so, I include in this thesis an intercultural dialogue between Māori and Indigenous Australian cultural discourses, particularly where they concern weaving, women, cultural identity and migration. I therefore build upon current published engagement with Māori people, with areas of Trans-Tasman study that have not previously entered dominant academic discourses.

Values
There are two main ‘gateposts’ for this discursive marae, metaphorically speaking. They are the premises that firstly, raranga is primarily though not exclusively, undertaken by Māori women
and, secondly, raranga-based discourses generally bear close relationship to postcolonial feminist theory and politics. Both ‘gateposts’ are planted in the ‘grounds’ of the creation, maintenance and changes of social values especially those concerning cultural identity and attachments to a physical and spiritual environment. Notions of belonging, to home locations, groups of people and migrant settings, impact on raranga. Therefore, the outlook of this thesis extends beyond the physical marae complex with its localised protocols, politics and spiritual symbolism, into the wider world of social values that are variously affected by colonialism, nationalism and capitalism.

While recognising the impact of colonialism, nationalism and capitalism on Māori cultural forms, I have constructed this discursive marae under the assumption that as a principle and a practice, Māori contributions to wider academic discourses can be afforded equal standing to others from around the world. This assumption is in itself a value creation, one that is based on the observation that values may be maintained by Māori cultural tenets, but also that they can and do change.

Māori cultural experiences and values also attract a variety of interpretations. Ngāpuhi, for example, is an identity to which I belong by virtue of most of my genealogy, and to which I personally attach great value. It is an iwi (tribal) identity, genealogically based with the rohe (territory) of northern Aotearoa New Zealand (a country where land entitlements are key factors in social affiliations, interactions and conflicts). In order to emphasise Māori diversity, this discursive marae provides unprecedented focus on Ngāpuhi women, like me, who are often de-particularised and subsumed under the general identity term ‘Māori’. Gender difference and sub-group formations based on closer genealogical ties within a framework of Ngāpuhi identity, trans-locally and trans-nationally, for example, must be taken into account if this situation is to change.
Raranga is presented via this discursive marae as a multi-dimensional component of a Māori cultural holism that is not confined to one place. It provides a central nexus from which to examine the history of particular Māori sectors such as Ngāpuhi, since British colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand and their current existence in contemporary trans-national modern society. Such sectors have never been static in cultural make up or geographic location. In the following sections of this introductory chapter I provide a linguistic examination of the word raranga. I then introduce the ethnographic sources and theoretical foundations of this thesis, followed by discussion on relevant identity categories. The final section is an outline of the forthcoming chapters.

WHAT IS RARANGA?
As a preliminary introduction to the raranga techniques featured in the next chapter, I now focus on linguistic interpretations of the word *raranga*. This linguistics-based discussion incorporates Reo Māori (Māori language) and English language. Given my forthcoming focus on social constructions of postcolonial Māori identity and Māori political struggles against non-Māori colonialist hegemony, the irony that exists in my need to explain the Māori term raranga in English language, does not escape me. Nevertheless, the following interpretations of the word raranga occur in relationship to English terms, to other words that have been described generically (Ryan, 1997; Williams, H. W., 1975) as Māori, as well as those more identifiable with the Māori iwi (‘tribal’ collective), Ngāpuhi.9 The form of these interpretations acts somewhat as a template for extensive English language interpretations of other Māori words, phrases and concepts featured in later chapters.

A BRIEF LINGUISTIC FORAY INTO THE WORD ‘RARANGA’
Raranga has a similar meaning to the word ‘ranga’. Raranga has been defined in English as ‘plait, weave, direction’ (Ryan, 1997: 241) while ranga has a vast number of meanings (for example Ryan, 1997: 239; Williams, H. W., 1975: 322-323) that range from ‘weave’
to ‘perform rite over a child’. Ranga occurs as part of many words throughout generic Māori language and Ngāpuhi dialect. The following list provides examples and English equivalents.

Rangatira—chief, landlord, team, manager, noble, employer (Ryan, 1997: 239)

Rangatahi—modern youth, to move quickly and a certain type of fishing net (Williams, H. W., 1975: 323 and Ryan, 1997: 239)

Rangahau—search for, research, probe, survey (Ryan, 1997: 239) and seek, search out, pursue (Ryan, 1975: 323)

Aranga – Resurrection, Easter, rise to the top (Ryan, 1997: 35) and become known, famous (Williams, H. W., 1975: 14)

Like many other Māori words ‘ranga’ is therefore homophonous, related to other words such as raranga, and part of other words with completely different meanings altogether.

In English translation, it is a complex exercise to establish grammatical functions, ranges of use and meaning of the word raranga. For example, I have heard it used in conversation in the languages of English, Ngāpuhi Māori, inter-tribal Māori and a mixture of two or all three of these. Although Reo Māori differs amongst the various iwi (tribes) of Aotearoa New Zealand, in the following examples I refer to speakers of this language who are without exception, of Ngāpuhi descent. Nevertheless, the degree of their exposure to other Māori dialects and non-Māori languages varies. Here is a demonstration of some of the various ways in which they use the word raranga:

1. As a noun, ‘this is raranga’.

2. As a verb in the form most often spoken by Ngāpuhi, ‘e raranga ana ahau…’ (I am weaving, or I weave).

3. As a verb in the same tense as the above but in Māori language more often spoken by non-Ngāpuhi Māori, ‘Kei te raranga au’ (I am weaving, or I weave).

4. As a descriptor ‘he kete raranga’ (‘a kete - basket woven in raranga style’ would be an English translation but raranga is actually
used in this sense by some people to describe the innate character and value of the kete).

There are also other linguistic syntheses that are occasionally used such as ‘this whāriki is raranga-ed’ (approximating ‘this sleeping mat is made in raranga technique and style’). The varied use of the word raranga in these examples reflects difficulties in speaking at least two languages at once, but also the lexical incommensurability that exists between languages, constant attempts at translation notwithstanding.

I am particularly reminded in this instance of feminist scholar Sneja Gunew’s (1993: 15) observation of the untranslated inclusion of Māori words into the English text of Māori women writers Patricia Grace and Ngahuia Te Awekotuku:

This incorporation of the Māori language within their English narrative is a way of signifying the indigestible element that will not be assimilated or, more resonantly perhaps, the incommensurable and untranslatable which exists between languages (symbolic systems) and within each language – that is, the non-identity of language with referential reality. The lacunae and ellipses undermine the possibility of a [sic] universalist discourse.

In political terms, this lack of translation infers a pro-active and subversive stance against one of Aotearoa New Zealand’s most prominent historical features, British colonisation. Nevertheless, the importance of understanding raranga and its indispensability in Māori cultural discourses outweigh my recognition of Gunew’s ‘lacunae and ellipses’ between Reo Māori and English language. As will be seen later, for example, this thesis posits raranga and other Reo Māori terms as contributors toward a universal respect for cultural diversity rather than misguided Universalist discourses based on colonialist monism.

It is therefore equally important to understand other Reo Māori terms relating to sociological aspects of raranga. There are, for example, various Māori names for people who engage in raranga praxis. Generally, the prefix kai is attached to the person or people engaged in any activity. Kaiako for example is a combination of the
prefix kai, and ako - the Māori word for teach, instruct, mentor or
guide. Kaiako therefore means a teacher, instructor or guide. The
word kairaranga denotes any person who undertakes raranga (noun
or adverb), not necessarily a teacher of raranga, while kaimahi (mahi
is translatable as ‘work’) suffices for workers engaged in any
occupation, including raranga. Throughout this thesis I frequently
apply the term kairaranga to people involved with the practice,
promotion and education of raranga.

The word tohunga can be translated into English as ‘expert’.
This word is mostly used in relation to men but is not inherently
gender-specific. Although tohunga whakairo is often used to
designate a master carver it is equally possible to adopt the same
principle for a raranga expert, tohunga raranga, though I have not
seen it used in published literature to date. This unequal application
of the title tohunga to Māori men effectively marginalises Māori
women including kairaranga, regardless of the levels of their
expertise and any public recognition they may receive. A social
hierarchy of values that distinguishes Māori men above Māori
women is thus maintained. I discuss further implications of this
hierarchy in connection with mana and other Māori philosophical
concepts later. It should be emphasised here, however, that
kairaranga are free to adopt or discount the title of tohunga. For
example, I use the word kaikako to address my weaving teacher Toi
Maihi despite my high regard for her expertise, because she prefers
this term to tohunga raranga.

In this thesis I use the word raranga in various ways. I
consider it as a label for a particular kind of creative process and as
an aspect of philosophical thought and theorisation, an artistic
technique and a finished piece of work. I do so despite my
awareness that other idiomatic variations of raranga occur in
common speech. I am also aware that definitions of the word
raranga, like many other Māori words, are contested in highly
political arenas of Aotearoa New Zealand ranging from Parliament
sittings to Marae hui (gatherings) and Parent-Teacher Association
meetings. In many cases, it is easier and more effective (though not necessarily as precise) to explain raranga by using the English words weave, weaving, wove and woven and I frequently do so in this thesis that privileges the English language.10

Other words relate in varying degrees to the term raranga and those used in the remainder of this thesis are explained as it progresses. This linguistic focus is broadened in the next chapter to an examination of the various media and techniques used in raranga. Such factors are also shown to inspire philosophical insights that use raranga-based metaphors, exemplified by my mother’s mihi that appeared in the prologue. Other raranga-based metaphors continually recur throughout this thesis.

**SOURCES: PUBLISHED AND ‘VOICED’**

Now that raranga has been discussed in preliminary and linguistic terms, it is possible to shift focus to the general character of research sources that contributed to this thesis. Pre-arranged interviews were as indispensable in my doctoral research as casual and impromptu conversations. These formal interviews and informal conversations represent voices, narratives of opinion and memories. As acknowledged earlier, many of these ‘voices’ belong to my extended family, some of which are now deceased. My own autobiography is also an important source for my research, especially those moments relating to raranga, my Ngāpuhi identity and a family history of trans-local and trans-national migrations. From these voices I have begun a growing archive that is not only vital to this thesis overall, but is a valuable resource for future projects.

This archive also consists of written records, audio-visual recordings and representations of Māori people, and importantly in this raranga-based thesis, pieces of weaving. Newspaper articles and unpublished letters were also very important to my research, reflecting a lacuna of academic literature relevant to the main subject areas of this thesis. There is, for example, no published academic literature about Trans-Tasman Ngāpuhi or Trans-Tasman raranga.
This is despite the fact that Ngāpuhi people have visited and lived in Australia over a period of at least two hundred years.

Only comparatively recent statistics and statistical analyses (Carmichael, (Ed.) 1993; Lowe, 1990) address the demography and social characteristics of Māori people in Australia. However, this literature does not highlight iwi (tribal) differences amongst Māori people in Australia, or raranga-based activities. While Māori tribal affiliations are gathered statistically by census in Aotearoa New Zealand (itself, a comparatively recent occurrence), this is not the case in Australia. As yet, there are no official statistics on people who identify as Ngāpuhi in Australia. I have no doubt that provided an archive including Australian Ngāpuhi ‘voices’ and academic research is maintained and continues to grow, this situation will change.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Although much of my research has included unpublished anecdotal recollections, I have also drawn upon various published theoretical perspectives for my raranga-based analyses. For example, I have been guided in my attempts to both avoid prescriptive accounts of raranga and yet to privilege its importance to cultural theory, by the postcolonial writer Gayatri Spivak’s view on Deconstruction theory:

Deconstruction is not an exposure of error, certainly not of other people’s error. The critique in deconstruction, the most serious critique in deconstruction, is the critique of something that is extremely useful, something without which we cannot do anything (Spivak and Rooney, 1994: 156).

Raranga-based discourses provide indispensable contributions towards fully understanding Māori cultural formations in various social contexts. The primacy in this thesis of raranga as ‘extremely useful, something without which we cannot do anything’ is unequivocal and in keeping with Spivak’s interpretation of Deconstruction analysis.

However, my focus on theoretical perspectives relevant to raranga discourses and Māori women, relates more directly to
regionally based postcolonial feminist theories. Postcolonialism and the globalisation of raranga11 are therefore deliberately excluded, not because they are not critically important dimensions of raranga, but because there are more central conceptual issues in this thesis. I now describe the general nature of this region-based theoretical perspective and its interaction with uriuruwhenua, a Māori philosophy relating to a spiritual environment. I follow this description by briefly introducing intersectional and multidimensional theory that features towards the end of this thesis.

**Postcolonial Theories**

As the term 'postcolonial' is open to various interpretations,12 I draw upon the observation that:

The resistance to colonialism and its dominant structures and ideologies is driven by the desire to restore the integrity of colonised peoples, and to create space for their institutions, practices, and values (Fleras and Spoonley, 1999: 94).

This resistance is a responsibility of all parties involved, not only those who are 'colonised'. As such the theoretical parameters of this discursive marae include a 'critical postcolonialism' (During, 2000: 392) that acknowledges the harm of colonialism, as much as the human capacity to move beyond it.

Postcolonial theory adopted by this thesis, has a politically proactive 'edge'. It is mindful of a history of British colonialism in Aotearoa New Zealand that can be traced back through oral and written records to the turn of the 19th century. This history includes events leading to the signing by Māori and British representatives, of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 that only began to receive strong legislative power in Aotearoa New Zealand in the 1970s. This time delay reflects social disadvantages that Māori people have endured in the interim, and continue to suffer today. The history of colonialism in Aotearoa New Zealand also includes the counteraction of late-20th century Māori cultural revivalism (Fleras and Spoonley, 1999: 94).
Research ethics in relation to postcolonial discourse, also feature as part of this discursive marae particularly since, despite Aotearoa New Zealand’s current status as an independent nation, the power of colonialism to monopolise Indigenous views, continues there today (Bishop, 1997: 29). A history of colonialist misrepresentation of Māori people, based on exploitative research methods, needs to be recognised. This thesis not only endeavours to move beyond such travesties. It also provides a conduit for Indigenous voices that demand respect for raranga and Māori women.

Nevertheless, Māori women have also adamantly expressed the view that postcolonialism is an impotent political and cultural position:

Aotearoa is not a post-colonial society in either political or cultural terms; Aotearoa is not a post-colonial society in any terms. Every day Māori women confront colonial structures which have their roots very firmly planted in Britain. The term ‘postcolonialism’ contributes to the shifts and re-shaping of dominant discourses that espouse a false sense of neutrality whilst ensuring the maintenance of cultural dominance (Johnson and Pihama, 1995: 86).

I remain aware of such problems associated with postcolonial theory, such as Johnson and Pihama’s ‘false sense of neutrality’, but am also committed to its inherent capacity to be incorporated into an emancipatory politics, as part of social change. Therefore, I refuse to submit to any notion of wholesale Māori cultural demise. I elect instead to describe, analyse and promote aspects of Māori culture, particularly raranga, in terms of cultural survival, adaptation, innovation, politics and the presence of social values that are created, maintained and changed in postcolonial contexts. Accordingly, notions of static, unchanging and authentic Indigenous cultures receive concerted critique that includes discussions of power relations ‘inside’ Indigenous groups (that are not immune to embedded colonialist agendas from ‘outside’), in a number of different sites.
Whilst this thesis takes into account theories that have general postcolonial leanings, it is in itself, also postcolonial in character. It privileges cultural perspectives that can be defined as Māori and uses terms from Reo Māori (Māori language), diverse in make-up as this culture and language is. For example, it deliberately excludes a glossary section of Māori terms. It encourages readers (whether fluent in Māori language or not) to broaden their own vocabulary with words, terms, phrases and interpretations of Māori language as they appear within the main body, rather than in an appendix. I expect that each reader of this predominantly English language thesis is capable of adopting Māori language, just as my Māori ancestors incorporated English into their predominantly Māori vocabularies. In such manner, languages grow and adapt.

Also on the subject of language, it is important to note that I use macrons (signified in this thesis with umlaut fonts to denote ‘long’ vowels) for Māori words, where appropriate. However, I am aware that some writers of Māori language have declined to use macronised vowels. Therefore, I quote passages of other writers’ work exactly, whether they have used macrons or not. I also take the extra expedient of spelling proper nouns (including author’s names) exactly as they are published, regardless of whether or not these are macronised in common usage. In doing so, I do not deny that British colonialism has adversely affected the use of Māori language and other Māori cultural referents. I critically engage with and foster the survival and growth of Māori language and other aspects of Māori culture in this thesis, as respectfully and precisely as I can.

ON THE ‘RIM’
Given the importance of Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses in this thesis, it is also necessary to address the colonialism of ‘Pacific Rim’ capitalist countries that include both Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. Here I am mindful of cultural theorist Arif Dirlik’s observations on Pacific Rim discourse that supports the recent work of Indigenous scholars (including the prolific writer, Epeli Hau’ofa)
from the Pacific region. In relation to their work, Dirlik (1997: 138) observes that:

This discourse is heir to two centuries of domination of the Pacific by powers from the Rim, or outside of it, that has been accompanied ideologically by the erasure of the subjectivities of Pacific peoples, and the denial to them of a place in modernity.

The domination he refers to is one that supports capitalist ventures and expansion.

He also acknowledges Indigenous voices of ‘Pacific peoples’ that represent cultural alternatives:

It is to recognize also the challenge to capitalist modernity that is imbedded in their historical experience and, even more importantly, in their efforts to recapture a way of life that presupposes alternative organization of social relationships, and an alternative relationship to nature (Dirlik, 1997: 138).

Whereas Dirlik’s ‘subjectivities’ refer to any Indigenous groups in the Pacific Ocean region (he does not specify exact limits to this demography), this thesis more specifically concerns Trans-Tasman Ngāpuhi Māori, other Māori groups and Indigenous Australians, particularly women. Postcolonial concerns of Indigenous people within two Pacific Rim capitalist countries, Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, are therefore given voice in relation to raranga and social values.

It is equally important to note that since British colonisation Māori people have been alienated by various means from their tribal lands in Aotearoa New Zealand (Durie, M., 1998: 117-123). Many of us have migrated to the large cities of Aotearoa New Zealand, particularly since the 1950s, often in efforts to escape impoverished lifestyles. This migration continued, for some of us at least, across the Tasman Sea to Australia, for similar reasons. Nevertheless, the Māori presence in Australia, like those other ‘Pacific peoples’ has not been afforded any substantial published voice in postcolonial discourses. I therefore build upon Dirlik’s (1997: 141) views on political and social equality in the Pacific Ocean region by
respecting Māori migrant voices of those who have travelled the Trans-Tasman portion of the ‘Rim’.

**Māori Diaspora**

Questions of whether or not this movement of Māori people constitutes a diaspora also needed to be addressed in the construction of the discursive marae of this thesis, given that Māori social structures prior to British colonisation were ‘tribal’ and strongly attached to rohe (territories). These rohe were established as a consequence of Trans-Pacific migration that, according to Māori oral histories have entailed alienation from past homelands. This is an oral tradition conveyed by my Māori kaumātua (elders). While it is not my intention to attempt to verify this oral tradition, I have necessarily considered them in relation to the following view of diasporic discourses regarding tribal peoples:

Dispersed tribal peoples, those who have been dispossessed of their lands or who must leave reduced reserves to find work, may claim “diasporic” identities. Inasmuch as their distinctive sense of themselves is oriented toward a lost or alienated home defined as aboriginal (and thus “outside” the surrounding nation-state), we can speak of a diasporic dimension of contemporary tribal life. Indeed, recognition of this dimension has been important in disputes about tribal membership (Clifford, 1997:253).

Accordingly, the dispersal of Māori people globally from a homeland in the Pacific Ocean region, then away from tribal rohe in Aotearoa New Zealand and across the Tasman Sea to Australia is considered in this thesis to constitute a diaspora. Broader cultural implications of this diaspora (including Clifford ‘disputes about tribal membership’ cited earlier) are introduced later in this chapter, where cultural identity categories are discussed in more depth.

However, it should also be noted here in relation to the postcolonial theory guiding this thesis, that the inclusion of Trans-Tasman raranga sites under an umbrella of diasporic Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses also incorporates the following viewpoint:

Contemporary diasporic practices cannot be reduced to epiphenomena of the nation-state or of global capitalism. While
defined and constrained by these structures, they also exceed and criticize them: old and new diasporas offer resources for emergent "postcolonialism" (Clifford, 1997: 244).

An important contribution that this thesis makes, via its discursive marae, to 'emergent postcolonialism' is gender-related.

**POSTCOLONIAL FEMINISM**

Feminist theory figures largely here although the work of observers such as the Australian academic R. W. Connell (2000), who primarily discusses masculinity, has also influenced the gendered approach of this thesis. Gender theories receive such primacy due to raranga, which as already stated, is undertaken predominantly though not exclusively by Māori women.

Postcolonialism and gender are not seen as separate theories within this thesis. Rather, it builds upon and extends the postcolonial feminist examinations of my B.A Honours dissertation (Diamond, J.G., 1998) that emphasised Māori women's artistic and literary contributions towards and beyond the following observation of postcolonial criticism:

Post-colonial criticism bears witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order (Bhabha, 1994:171).

In the earlier dissertation, I incorporated this interpretation of postcolonial criticism along with feminist discourses into a critical analysis of Māori feminism (one that specifically relates to Māori women) that remains relevant to my current research. I continue to maintain my focus on 'unequal and uneven' power relations that impact on Māori women's cultural representations.

In this doctoral thesis I reconfigure those earlier observations that centred on the life and paintings of Māori woman artist Robyn Kahukiwa, towards a substantial engagement with raranga and cultural values. In my earlier research (Diamond, J. G., 1998: 10), for example, I noted that the descriptive term 'art' does not have an exact equivalent in the Māori language, as is also the case with other languages of the world. I also observed in relation to Australian

The particular focus of this doctoral thesis on raranga, Māori women and social values in both Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, builds upon my earlier work. I place at issue the value creation of raranga as strictly ‘art’ or ‘craft’ and its relegation as an inferior creative practice compared to painting, sculpture (including woodcarving) and other modes of cultural production, usually associated with male ‘masters’. In doing so, I have incorporated viewpoints (Morphy, 2000; Clifford, 1988; 1997; 2001) on ‘Western’ value creation embedded in capitalist art markets and its relationship with the historical agency of Indigenous, non-Western cultures. I also place raranga in a framework of values that relate to Māori philosophical tenets and protocols, aspects of which are not necessarily market-driven. Most of my attention, in this regard, centres on Māori women’s cultural production, which incorporates identity-based politics and interactions with a spiritual environment.

Māori social values have only recently received direct academic attention by Māori scholar, E. T. Durie (1998). Such values are also implied in the literature of other Māori scholars (for example, Te Rangi Hiroa, 1949; M. Durie, 1998; Barlow, 1991) and anthologies of Māori voices such as Te Ao Hurihuri, (King (Ed.), 1992) and He Mātāpuna, (Te Kaunihera Whakakaupapa (Eds.), 1979). However, while they highlight Māori perspectives, no link has yet been made between the creation, maintenance and changes of Māori values, and Indigenous agency within a colonialist hegemony. Furthermore, the possible effects of gender-based differences within these values receive little, if any, direct attention. Of particular concern to this thesis, therefore, is the often contradictory and contested values associated with the cultural production of Māori men vis-à-vis that of Māori women.
In constructing this discursive marae I have recognised institutionalised bias favouring Māori men's cultural production, such as whakairo (carving) over that primarily undertaken by Māori women, such as raranga, in representations of Māori people. Consequently, I depart from discussion (Tapsell, 1998) of Māori taonga (highly valued items of cultural production) and representation in colonialisist institutions that does not make this gendered distinction. For a perspective on gendered inequality in cultural representation, I have drawn upon the observation (Kleinert, 2002) that cultural objects associated with Indigenous Australian men have received a privileged (albeit primitivist) representation within colonialisist institutions, and that those of Indigenous Australian women, have not.

**URUURUWHENUA: A SPIRITUAL ENVIRONMENT**

It has been part of my education in practical aspects of raranga, to take note not only of the various fibrous plant supplies used in its process, but also of their upkeep. By necessary extension, a concern for the environments in which these plants grow is predicated in kairaranga circles upon a number of inter-related Māori cultural concepts. This thesis does not directly engage with environmentalist theory. It does, however, examine connections between a spiritual environment based on the Māori concept of uruuruwhenua (ritualised connections between people, ancestors, spirituality and land), social values and postcolonial feminism. I provide an extensive interpretation of this spiritual environment based on the word uruuruwhenua and other related Māori words in the later chapters of this thesis. This connection between raranga and uruuruwhenua is important because of the culturally held link that has been established by Māori women (Maihi, 1999-2003a; Puketapu-Hetet, 1989: 3; Te Ara Maenies (Ed.), 1996; Te Awekotuku, 1991: 66) between raranga and places of belonging, Māori identity and spirituality.
INTERSECTINONALITY AND MULTI-DIMENSIONALITY

I query distinct boundaries between postcolonialism, feminism and ururuwhenua, as much as I query distinct and stringently held cultural boundaries. Recent analyses of cultural identity by Black American Gay lawyer Darren Lenard Hutchinson (1999; 2001), who discusses intersections between race-based, gender-based, class-based and sexuality-based identities, and multi-dimensionality within those identities, are incorporated into this thesis, particularly in its later chapters. These theoretical perspectives have connections with feminism, Queer theory and legal studies. They question all essentialist forms of cultural identity.

The theoretical positions of this thesis are in summary, postcolonial feminist and regionally based. They take into account notions of a ‘Pacific Rim’, Māori diaspora, diverse social values and a Māori spiritual environment. These theoretical positions, important to this thesis as they are, cannot be separated from the strong emphasis I place on identity constructions and their relationship to raranga. It is therefore incumbent upon me, to discuss those identity categories and some of their discourses that are most relevant to this thesis, further.

CATEGORIES – SOME WHĀRIKI

Terms relating to identity groups that are based on gender and race or ethnicities are a necessary staple of this thesis. I liken these to the whāriki (woven sleeping mats) of the whare tupuna (ancestral houses) of marae. Metaphorically speaking, categories, much like whāriki, can outlive their usefulness though they may offer comfort to people for a finite period of time. Many different people may sleep on each whāriki just as many people rest on familiar social categories. Some whāriki are finely woven and protected for an élite class of people whilst others serve a larger less well-endowed populace. Categories, like whāriki are never impermeable. They are prone to ‘wear and tear’. They exist in relationship with other categories. As one cultural theorist observes: ‘Despite our desperate,
eternal attempt to separate, contain, and mend, categories always leak’ (Trinh, 1989: 94). To discuss the permeable character of cultural categories more fully I begin with the gender-related distinction entitled women, and then move to other categories of race and nation, culminating this discussion with comments on identity marginalisation.

WOMEN
In this thesis I particularise women of Ngāpuhi Māori identity. Upon deeper examination it becomes clear that a definitive meaning for the term woman, Ngāpuhi and otherwise, and its plural form can prove quite elusive. The term woman can be seen as a ‘generalising and imprecise’ (Fuss, 1989: 2) label that inadequately categorises a heterogeneous section of society. The details (including social expectations and stereotypes) of this categorisation are not unanimously accepted by, or applicable to all members of that section.

Although I frequently use the terms woman and man and their plural forms, I understand that their meaning and validity as identity terms can be questioned and contested. The scale of this understanding becomes clearer in a further discussion of other nominal terms, such as Māori, Pākehā and Ngāpuhi.

MĀORI
Māori is also a contentious term, most often used to describe around 15% (Webster, 1998: 25) of the population of Aotearoa New Zealand. Its literal meaning in published dictionaries is ‘ordinary, fresh, native’ (Ryan, 1997: 146) and ‘normal, usual’ (Williams, H. W., 1975: 179). The Māori language equivalent for ‘fresh water’ is, for example, ‘wai māori’.

It is in a political arena that this term of identification becomes most fraught with problems. A prominent issue within this arena concerns the notion of ‘authentic’ Māori identity. In order to rigidly define Māori, it is necessary to also define what is not Māori; whether or not a person is part of a Māori ‘us’ versus a non-Māori
‘them’, a Māori ‘self’ as opposed to a non-Māori ‘other’. Senses of belonging based on collective (the notion of belonging to Māori tribes, pan-tribes or subtribes for example) or individual (autonomously removed from other members of any society) identity have changed for Māori people since British colonisation as new systems and philosophies were introduced and imposed by legislation. These changes have led pro-Māori, anti-colonist politics that essentialise Māori identity. One example of this essentialist view is that Māori people are more inclined to think and act as groups rather than as individuals (Rangihau, 1992). This argument privileges primary philosophical tenets such as whanaungatanga (honouring kinship ties) that are not attributed to Pākehā (‘White’ – see next sub-section) people.

I do not advocate such rigidity in defining essential Māori characteristic traits. I would instead point to the principles of an important Māori cultural tenet, that of hakaheke14 (genealogical tables). Although I provide more detail of this tenet in the latter chapters of this thesis, I would mention here that whilst the form and meaning of hakaheke are identifiably Māori, the names and backgrounds of people on them are in many cases, not. The fact of racial intermarriage and the mixed, often myriad identities of progeny serve as counter-arguments to this essentialism.15 Nevertheless, as I have argued elsewhere (Diamond, J. G., 1999: 309), there is room to consider forms of strategic essentialism as part of Māori postcolonial politics. I begin discussion of this strategic essentialism in relation to Māori women and raranga in chapter 2 of this thesis.

It is frequently touted that Māori identity rests on an appreciation of Māoritanga (Māori culture – see King (Ed.), 1992 for various views on the social implications of this term). Being Māori it has been argued (Barlow, 1991: xvi) requires deep knowledge of and adherence to tikanga (rules, deep cultural knowledge and guiding principles). Access to deep knowledge of tikanga depends on a social hierarchy where a privileged few are ‘in the know’. In
Aotearoa New Zealand, where no sector is untouched by European influences, this view invites the emergence of an educated élite that is conversant, linguistically and intellectually, with Māori and non-Māori cultures. First-born sons, for example, may be favoured (Manihera, 1992) as recipients of knowledge, and prohibitions (including tapu – see chapter 4 of this thesis) on knowledge are correspondingly imposed. The implications of gender-based elitism, in relation to raranga and Māori women, are examined throughout this thesis.

There is also élitism in academic circles that exemplifies various and complex types of Māori agency in cultural representations. I have, for example, been privy to the unofficial views of some sections of the university educated Māori élite that do not respect the knowledge of certain Māori elders, that pick and choose their authoritative sources amongst available elders who best suit their political, academic and/or economic agenda. Some are also inclined to belittle non-academic attempts to convey and interpret knowledge, deep or otherwise, especially that concerning Māori culture. I examine this academic form of Māori élitism in relation to my own research methodology in chapter 3 due to the powerful influence that the academy has on the creation of social values, particularly the value of acquiring knowledge. I also continue this discussion later in chapter 5 relating it to a museum consultancy I undertook in 2001-2.

A late 19th century discussion on the word Māori appears in the academically respected Journal of the Polynesian Society (Atkinson, 1892 and in reply Paora, 1893). It outlines the origins of the application of the label Māori, to all iwi (tribes) of Aotearoa New Zealand regardless of differences in each iwi’s identification with a ‘founding’ ancestor, histories of war with other iwi and language (or more accurately, dialectal) variations. However, Māori cultural differences do occur amongst iwi, hapu (sub-iwi formations of closer genealogically related members) and whānau (sub-hapu formations of very close genealogically related members). This
important point concerning tribal and sub-tribal distinctions needs to be made in any discussion of Māori culture.

In spite of pan-Māori policies being imposed countrywide there remains an effort to distinguish iwi and their rohe (territory – see later discussion). Those efforts of Te Rangi Hiroa (1949: 381-3), a Māori anthropologist, are exemplified with a discussion of pan-Māori characteristics, such as attachments to land that contain references to specific iwi. Te Rangi Hiroa posits a common source of identity that existed prior to migration to Aotearoa New Zealand from islands further north in the Pacific Ocean, but which disseminated and divided after arrival. His insights contain much relevance to this entire thesis so I quote his work at length, adding my own emphasis in italic text:

As the primary motive for the long sea voyages of the Polynesians was to find land for new homes, the original ownership of land was based on prior discovery and occupation. The first arrivals in New Zealand found no one to oppose their settlement, and they spread out without trouble… In the course of time, the principal tribes with their subtribes came to occupy definite areas with fixed boundaries. The love of their own territory developed to an absorbing degree, for tribal history was written over its hills and vales, its rivers, streams, and lakes, and upon its cliffs and shores. The earth and caves held the bones of their illustrious dead, and dirges and laments teemed with references to the love lavished upon the natural features of their home lands. The prestige of the tribe was associated with their marae sites and terraced hill forts, and their religious concepts were bound to their tuahu shrines. Captives in distant lands have begged for a pebble, a bunch of leaves, or a handful of earth from the home land that they might weep over a symbol of home. It is the everlasting hills of one’s own deserted territory that welcome the wanderer home and it is the ceaseless crooning of the waves against a lone shore that perpetuates the sound of voices that are still.

With the love of home territory so strong, the desire to occupy other lands by conquest faded. The tribes continued to have their quarrels and feuds but war parties returned home with plunder and captives, after satisfying their desire for military glory. However, this period of land stabilization was rudely shattered by the advent of Europeans and their introduction of firearms. The Ngapuhi in the North, armed with guns swept over the whole of the North Island but they returned without disturbing the existing distribution of tribal lands.
Te Rangi Hiroa's poetic and romantic account of pre-European migration to and within Aotearoa New Zealand, followed by a stable system of land distribution, most likely conveys his own sense of belonging to an iwi and its rohe. Words he includes such as love, prestige, religious, and home, along with other descriptions of landscape contain emotional undercurrents of the author's own feelings of attachment to tribal land. It is also very relevant to this thesis, with its emphasis on postcolonial criticism and politics, that Te Rangi Hiroa (1949: 383) provides extended description and analysis of the adverse effects European colonisation had on earlier systems of land distribution in Aotearoa New Zealand. I briefly revisit his reference to Ngāpuhi firearm acquisition later, in relation to Australia.

More recently, especially since the 1980s, Māori identity has been part of a revival (also known as a renaissance) in cultural awareness on the part of Māori and non-Māori people. Whilst this revivalism signals a new turn in Māori cultural assertions, its direction is not necessarily progressive. Nor is it helpful for all Māori people. One non-Māori observer from the Anthropology Department of Auckland University in Aotearoa New Zealand provides a larger view of this resurgence:

In barest terms [Maori society] is about 15 per cent of the national population, about 30 per cent of its youth, and lives primarily in the urban centres. Beyond this, the situation appears paradoxical. Contemporary Māori society has undergone a cultural florescence since the depression years of the 1920-30s and especially in the last twenty years, now called the Māori Renaissance. On the other hand, Māori remain about three times more likely than Pakeha ('whites') to live in poverty, to be unemployed, to be unhealthy, to be poorly educated, to be without satisfactory housing, and to be in gaol – and some of these indices have actually worsened during the Renaissance. The paradox may be a lived one for some: Māori rates of readmission for serious psychotic illnesses increased 40 per cent 1981-90, while Pakeha rates fell by nearly a quarter [quoting official Government Department statistics from 1993]. Thus Māori cultural life and social reality appear to diverge as though independent of one another (Webster, 1998: 25).
Māori as a name has emerged since British invasion of Aotearoa New Zealand. Nevertheless Māori identity remains replete with differing opinions over its meaning. It has been used for various political purposes since British colonisation. It is a name that distinguishes one social grouping of people from another, where its opposite was generally more advantaged in a colonialist social order. Therefore, references are frequently made to Māori identity throughout this thesis in the full knowledge that interpretations of ‘Māori’ are as diverse as the various social actions that can be associated with it.

PĀKEHĀ
To fully examine the term Māori as part of a naming system that emerged after British colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand, it is also pertinent, especially in regard to ‘mixed’ identities, to consider the non-Māori identity term Pākehā. This term does not specifically mean ‘English’ or ‘British’, but denotes a non-Māori ‘other’. Current dictionary definitions include ‘non-Māori, European, Caucasian’ (Ryan, 1997) and as a ‘person of predominantly European descent’ (Williams, H. W., 1975). Related terms such as kai pakeha, pakehakeha and pakepakeha can be defined more variously, ranging from the state of being foreign, to types of eels and fleas, to awkward, outlandish, disordered and disarranged (Williams, H.W., 1975).

However, the term Pākehā remains contentious. Many predominantly European people prefer to qualify their identifications with being Pākehā by mentioning their numerically smaller Māori ancestry. Some Europeans are quick to assert their non-English identities18 and on this non-English basis alone, wish to be called Pākehā. Some published texts (King, 1985; Archie, 1995; Bell, C., 1996) discuss non-Māori identity along with attachments to the landscape and society of Aotearoa New Zealand that are sometimes influenced by the ‘Māori presence’. Also, some people of Māori descent prefer to consider themselves as Pākehā because of mixed
ancestry, lifestyle and harassment from pro-Māori politicos and élites.

A changing sense of national identity in Aotearoa New Zealand that over time emphasised an antipodean existence separated from imperialist Britain contributed to this Pākehā identity construction. While acknowledging his own English, Scottish and Irish ancestry, for example, prominent Aotearoa New Zealand historian Michael King follows this progression by firstly highlighting the post-World War II years of ‘being Pākehā’. I quote him at length as this excerpt succinctly provides historical comment on being Pākehā and changing attitudes toward Māori:

To be Pakeha in the 1940s and 1950s was to enjoy a way of life that changed beyond recognition in the succeeding decades. At the outset, for almost all of us, Britain was Home, the centre of an Empire of which our country was the most far-flung Dominion ... Unless you were Maori, it was possible and forgivable in the forties to view New Zealand as a single-culture society. The country’s major institutions were based on European models, the systems of government and law derived from Britain, the dominant values were post-industrial revolution, Western and Christian. Most New Zealanders accepted this package without question, and new immigrants, such as displaced Continental Europeans, were expected to conform to it. So were Maori when they moved out of their rural enclaves into the nation’s towns. Suspicion and hostility fell upon those who behaved differently or spoke any language other than English. New Zealand’s xenophobia was intensified by the fact that the country lacked borders with any other ... By the mid-1980s it was again possible – as it had been in the eighteenth century – to be Maori anywhere in New Zealand and to be assertive about and proud of that identity... If the assertion of mana19 Maori was an accomplished fact by 1985, the process of Pakeha adjustment to it was not... Some individual Pakeha responded by learning the Maori language and trying to equip themselves with Maori views of New Zealand experience and knowledge of Maori protocol. Others withdrew into their professional and suburban enclaves and resisted efforts to change their personal lifestyle or the national one... Meanwhile, cracks in the edifice of Pakeha racial and cultural superiority added to the momentum of the Maori cultural revival (King, 1985: 9, 11-12).

None the less, for many years of my experience, the term Pākehā failed to be generally accepted as a descriptor for non-Māori
people in Aotearoa New Zealand. As I was growing up in a post-World War II era amongst predominantly non-Māori children, schooled by non-Māori teachers, I was regularly assured that the correct name for Pākehā people is ‘European’. The term Pākehā appeared to fall into disfavour because of its multiple meanings, some of which can be interpreted as derogatory. I also suspect that there was hesitancy in, if not an aversion to, incorporating Māori terms into English curriculum or common speech, beyond common Māori placenames. English language and customs were in this way infused into the prevailing education system as being in some unspecified sense, superior to Māori language and customs. Institutionalised education in my, and many other Māori people’s formative years constitutes a hallmark of Pākehā hegemony in Aotearoa New Zealand that gave minimal credence to many aspects of Māori culture and identity.

Small changes have occurred since my schooldays that indicate a growing awareness and respect for Māori culture and language, such as dropping the anglicised plural for Māori (as in Māoris) because the Māori language does not contain the letter ‘s’.20 Such linguistic changes have occurred along with larger (though as yet unequal to English) recognition of Māori language contributions to Aotearoa New Zealand literature (Garlick, 1998).21 Māori people themselves, have made efforts to raise the profile of Māori language in the education system of Aotearoa New Zealand since the 1980s through a variety of ‘innovations in a variety of educational sites’ (Smith, G. H., 2000: 57). Changes in relations between Māori and non-Māori have therefore accompanied large-scale Māori efforts to raise the profile of Māori language and other kinds of knowledge in public education at all levels. These efforts were made in response to the ‘dual crisis [for Māori people] of educational underachievement on the one hand and the loss of language, knowledge, and culture on the other’ (Smith, G. H., 2000: 57).

This shift in cultural recognition and respect for Māori culture and identity by Pākehā hegemony has resulted in other
identity changes. Increased radio and television broadcasts of Māori culture, from ‘traditional’ to ‘hip-hop’, have engendered a current sense of Aotearoa New Zealand’s national identity that now permanently borrows aspects of Māori culture, including such identity terms as Pākehā. In some instances these developments have brought a different sense of pride in ‘being Pākehā’ and an accompanying regret at not ‘being Māori’.

Clearly, there are as many variations and detractions in Pākehā identity as there are with Māori identity. The essentialised separation of one from the other, nevertheless, reflects a power differential between Māori and Pākehā cultures. Since colonisation, Pākehā domination has prevailed, recent ‘cracks in the edifice’ (King, 1995: 12) notwithstanding. Thus, Pākehā identity is closely allied to a particular national identity of an imagined country called ‘New Zealand’. Later in this introductory chapter, I briefly investigate Ngāpuhi iwi-based nationalism that further problematises this national identity, including its various links with colonialist Pākehā hegemony.

**Physical appearances and bi-culturalism**

Māori and Pākehā people may be mistaken for the reverse because of outward physical appearance, so that it becomes necessary to protest or over-emphasise a particular identity. People with darker or lighter complexions may not see themselves as qualifying as Pākehā because they, or their ancestors came from countries outside the European continent. Their very existence problematises the Māori/Pākehā dichotomy and shifts the interpretation of the term Pākehā to ‘other than Māori, but not necessarily European’.

However, identity in Aotearoa New Zealand continues to be based on dualisms. A forceful impetus for duality came with the politics of bi-culturalism (shared cultural identity between Māori and Pākehā) that has prevailed since the 1980s (Fleras and Spoonley, 1999: 232). Bi-culturalism developed in a political lobby (supported mostly by Māori, but also by some Pākehā) to promote Māori
culture and language, and to advance the profile of Māori people in decision-making and education within the country. Consequently, Māori cultural identity has found new political ground under the buzzword ‘partnership’. Many formerly Pākehā-exclusive institutions, such as schools, universities and government departments, art galleries and museums now employ Māori advisers and incorporate cultural references, including alternative and official Māori names for their offices and officers. The Director of the Māori collection at Te Papa Tongarewa, the National Museum of Aotearoa New Zealand, for example, holds the office and title, of Kaihautū (literally translatable as ‘leader’ or ‘captain’).

However, Māori academic and author Mason Durie (1998: 236) has observed that: ‘most policies for Māori are decided through the [British] Crown either by Cabinet or by state departments and Crown entities’. I would add the extended argument that a well established British-based Pākehā hegemony that variously affects policies for all cultural groups in Aotearoa New Zealand. Other non-Māori groups, beside those more commonly associated with the term Pākehā, have their own identity and politics. Such groups include, for example, migrants from Asian countries and other Pacific Ocean islands. They must negotiate with two sets of culture in bi-cultural Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori and Pākehā, as well as their own internal constituents (Fleras and Spoonley, 1999: especially chapters 5 and 6). The integration of these diverse cultures, within and outside the bi-cultural paradigm, continues to be dictated, blatantly or subtly, by British hegemony.

This ‘White’ hegemony also prevails in Australia regardless of an Indigenous Australian presence and an increasingly multicultural population. I discuss some implications of Australia’s ‘Pākehā’ hegemony for Australians of Ngāpuhi descent later, particularly in relation to Trans-Tasman Māori women, raranga and trans-national Indigenous cooperation. However, at this point it is more important to briefly note that implications of Aotearoa New
Zealand’s bilingual policies extend across the Tasman Sea to Australia.

**NGĀPUHI**

![Diagram of Ngāpuhi tribes]

* Also known as Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu

Figure 1.3: Rohe o Te Iwi Māori (territorial lands of Māori iwi), North Island only. The rohe of Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu is labelled ‘Te Taitokerau or Northern Tribes’ * (Adapted from Mead, 1998: 34).

Identities in Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori or Pākehā, can also be complicated further by iwi-based distinctions (see figure 1.3). As with most iwi (tribes) of Aotearoa New Zealand the name Ngāpuhi refers to an ancestor who is held in common, genealogically speaking, by a group of people. Ngāpuhi can therefore be translated into English as ‘those descendants of Puhi’, Puhi being an ancestor or ancestral entity. The actual identity of Puhi (including biographical details of this figure, the man, the legend or the mythical entity) remains obscure to this day (Hohepa, 1964: 30; Hotere Whānau, 2000-3).
The founders of the Ngāpuhi iwi also include the kaihautū (captains) of large ocean-going waka (outrigger ‘canoes’) that first brought people to Aotearoa New Zealand. These Ngāpuhi kaihautū include Nukutawhitih25 of the waka Ngātokimatawhaorua, Ruanui of the waka Māmari and Tumoana of the waka Tinana. Exact details in terms of time and place of arrival of the waka, remain a debated issue and relate to a myth-making politics that surrounds nationalism in Aotearoa New Zealand. The following statement by one Pākehā commentator sums up this point:

Nations are based on historical myths and New Zealand by the late nineteenth century was in the process of inventing hers. There was room for a heroic Māori past, starting in India or the Caucasus, blossoming in the colonization of the Pacific, finding expression in the discoveries of Kupe [see later reference in this sub-section] and the coming of the Great Fleet ... But it would be misleading to dismiss the Māori role as merely one of collaboration with Europeans. For Māoris [sic] had their own purposes to serve in reciting and recording oral traditions, myths, and legends. Above all there was the vital question of establishing titles to land, since genealogies showing descent from Maui [a Polynesian demi-god] and the commander of the ancestral canoe from Hawaiiki [a fabled point of origin in the Pacific for Māori people] could be used to establish a charter to land. *Nor was this merely a matter of proving a title to the satisfaction of Pakeha officials or judges; it was necessary to establish the mana of one tribe as against another* (Sorrenson, 1979: 84 – my emphasis).

I revisit Sorrenson’s views, particularly the portion that I have emphasised, in considering Ngāpuhi nationhood later.

It is possible that the journeys of the waka Ngātokimatawhaorua, Mamari and Tinana (amongst unrecorded others26) were preceded by another voyager, the legendary Kupe,27 who has been credited28 with being the first Māori ancestor to ‘discover’29 Aotearoa New Zealand. Kupe is therefore very much a part of the founding narratives (in various forms) of Ngāpuhi people.

However, Ngāpuhi identity also acknowledges the significance of another tupuna (ancestor), a descendent of Kupe. This tupuna is Rāhiri who is not, unlike his immediate successors, known for his prowess and warrior spirit. He is more generally
acknowledged and renowned as a progenitor of Ngāpuhi people. In a broad band extending across from the western Hokianga Harbour eastward to the Bay of Islands, people distinguish themselves in relation to the tupuna Rāhiri and his two wives Ahuaiti and Whakaruru (Sissons, Wi Hongi and Hohepa, 1987). Such references to women are an example of how Ngāpuhi people can, and often do, acknowledge their female and male ancestry. Nevertheless, published text dedicated solely to all three ancestors, individually or as a group, does not yet exist. Acknowledgment of this ancestry often relies on oral tradition passed down through generations and can be subsumed under male-based narratives, especially those concerning war and warriors. I take up this point again in later chapters.

A primary important reference for Ngāpuhi identity is therefore, hakaheke (genealogy), recitations of which are supplemented by oral history passed down through numerous generations. Customarily such knowledge and recitations are the preserve of particular people who are highly respected in their communities. Nevertheless, in the process of transferral over time, some details have been lost. Whilst full details of Ngāpuhi history remain elusive, those that are known through oral history and hakaheke recitation provide many people with senses of cultural and geographic belonging to the Ngāpuhi iwi and rohe. As with the other identity categories discussed, however, Ngāpuhi affiliation remains open to various styles of interpretation.

NATION AND MARGINALISATION
Ideals of national belonging have influenced Māori in various ways, reflecting our identification with iwi, hapū and whānau (closest related)-based communities. The Māori scholar Powhiri Rika-Heke (1997) has described her ideas of being Māori as part of belonging to a Māori 'nation'. She (1997: 171) is careful to point out that the elements of this Māori nation have various constituent parts. For example she describes her hakaheke (genealogy) as comprising a
number of different hapu and iwi, the distinctions of which must be incorporated into the concept of a Māori nation. Her thoughts influence my consideration of nation and nationalism in theoretical and practical terms that are linked with Trans-Tasman Ngāpuhi identity. The following definition is helpful in that it takes into account historical factors, collective memories and aspirations:

Nations are historical phenomena, not only in the generic sense that they are embedded in particular collective pasts and emerge, sometimes over long time-spans, through specific historical processes, but also because by definition, they embody shared memories, traditions and hopes of the populations designated as parts of the nations (Smith, A. D., 1999: 10).

If Ngāpuhi is to be considered as a nation in these terms, for example, it relies on a variety of assertions that are sociologically (including genealogical), politically, economically and creatively grounded. These assertions are part of an agenda of value-creation where people adopt the term Ngāpuhi as a cultural signifier. The idea of Ngāpuhi separatist nation building is not merely a reaction against Pākehā colonialism. It is also an indication of inter-iwi rivalries and struggles for power. Māori nation building is intra-political in establishing and maintaining positions of power amongst other Māori iwi in Aotearoa New Zealand. It serves to inspire those within its own groupings toward self-pride and cultural significance vis-a-vis other groups.

However, such rivalries do also relate to a history of British colonisation. It is clear from Rika-Heke’s (1997) thoughts and from my personal observations as a Ngāpuhi woman amongst other Ngāpuhi people, that our nation building (actual or potential) amounts to passionate political action based on an essentialist social construction. It draws upon and reacts against Pākehā hegemony and its system of nation building whilst maintaining its genealogically based distinctiveness amongst iwi. To express this point in terms of my earlier discussion of Pākehā identity, this political agenda is a
two-fold struggle involving 'Pakeha officials or judges...[and the] mana of one tribe against another’ (Sorrenson, 1979: 84).

Iwi-based specificity has not received such critical engagement in terms of nation building, though a push for Pan-Māori sovereignty has received recent and robust attention (M. Durie, 1998). A focus on pan-Māori marginalisation in the 'national' politics of Aotearoa New Zealand has taken precedence over any other critical focus. In this process Ngāpuhi (and other iwi) people have been subsumed. This lack of critical engagement not only neglects iwi-based political agendas.

It also includes a failure to closely examine the gendered distinctions that exist within such identity groups. The role of women in nation building that relies on a mythologising of women as for example 'mother country' has been seen (McClintock, 1995; Yuval-Davis, 1997) to conflate women’s bodies and landscape, as territory owned by men. However the active role of Māori women (including Powhiri Rika-Heke) in nation building has not been critically or substantially addressed. Marginalised positions, iwi and gender-based, within understandings of Māori identity therefore persist. This thesis particularly addresses interpretations of Ngāpuhi identity manifested in raranga. This particularisation relates to the primacy of rohe in iwi-based identity formations that can influence kairaranga and their raranga. Nevertheless, it does not deny that inter-iwi and other inter-cultural commonalities also exist in raranga production and raranga-based discourses.

In this thesis I posit an interwoven identity amongst kairaranga (weavers), the implications of which are trans-local, trans-iwi, trans-regional and trans-national. This identity seeks to move beyond marginalisation of all identity groups by adequately respecting their particularities.

OUTLINE OF FORTHCOMING CHAPTERS
This thesis is replete with various inter-related strands of argument or what I prefer to call 'fibres' that contribute to its eight chapters.
Their woven course begins in this introductory chapter. The remainder of this thesis comprises six middle chapters divided evenly into two parts, and one final concluding chapter. Each of the six middle chapters has two sections that offer two different though inter-related views of the chapter’s primary discursive ‘fibre’.

Part 1 comprises three chapters that are particularly orientated towards Aotearoa New Zealand. Within this part, chapter 2 introduces raranga with more depth in terms of technique, colonialism and cultural revival. Chapter 3 concerns research methodology and a raranga-based ethnographic case study. Chapter 4 analyses Māori philosophical concepts relevant to raranga in various social contexts within Aotearoa New Zealand but also begins a shift towards Māori culture in Australia.

In part 2 my focus is more directed to Trans-Tasman raranga and cultural identity (especially of Māori women), environmentalism and spirituality. Chapter 5 concerns cultural display based on Māori cultural tenets and relevant to raranga in Australia. Chapter 6 focuses on examples of raranga and cultural identity in Australia and associated social activities of Māori migrants in Australia. Chapter 7 incorporates both Australian and global contexts where issues surrounding ‘mixed’ identity and a spiritual environment are addressed in relation to raranga. In the interests of clarity, given their complex inter-relationship, I now briefly introduce in more detail some of the main points (or ‘fibres’) of each chapter.

The express purpose of chapter 2 is to establish a firm platform for understanding raranga in technical and political terms. In section 1 technical aspects of raranga are discussed along with short descriptions of a variety of raranga items. The techniques of raranga are, in my considered opinion, much better conveyed with practical demonstration rather than by writing alone. However, they are used in this written thesis to introduce the reader to the multi-dimensionality of raranga in terms of technique, values and metaphors that have been influenced by European colonialism. It is shown that raranga techniques and items are afforded differing
levels of social status in Māori and Pākehā contexts that invariably involve visual representations. Raranga makers and wearers often remain invisible and silent despite these representations.

Accordingly the chapter's title makes an oblique reference to the movie *Once were warriors* (Tamahori, Scholes, Brown and Duff, 1994) and its representations of Māori people. Discussion of Māori representation in chapter 2 revolves around the unidentified female Māori subjects (including kairaranga) of paintings and photographs, and 19th century paintings representing Māori men as noble and ignoble savages. In section 2 of chapter 2 raranga is discussed in historical terms including its mixed fortunes due to colonialism, its more recent revival and its role in building self-esteem for Māori women. Emancipatory politics and reconstruction of Māori culture are therefore conveyed in relation to Māori women, raranga and social values.

Chapter 3 concerns raranga research, its methods and outcomes. General aspects of research methodology are discussed in section 1 from my perspective as a Māori migrant woman of Ngāpuhi descent having lived for extensive periods in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. Accordingly, I discuss my own role in the value creation of raranga. It is made clear that research undertaken amongst one’s ‘own people’ is not a straightforward affair but requires various types of negotiation, awareness and sensitivity. Section 2 describes and analyses some aspects of fieldwork undertaken on a marae of the Ngāpuhi rohe (territory). The perspectives of kairaranga on this marae take prime position in this discussion that relates to a localised setting of raranga-related techniques, social roles and values.

Chapter 4 turns towards interpretations of a number of Māori cultural tenets relevant to raranga. Section 1 interprets mana, the first of three inter-related concepts of social status and sanctity. In section 2, two more concepts, tapu and noa, which directly affect Māori women (including kairaranga) and raranga undergo an extensive interpretative analysis. A raranga-based example is discussed in each
section, firstly in relation to mana, then in relation to tapu and noa. In both sections, notions of cultural authenticity as part of dominant value systems receive considered attention, as do values that stem from family-based memories.

Chapter 5 continues with Māori concepts, featuring karanga and karakia that relate to ritual and ceremony. Raranga and Māori women are either actually or potentially a part of these rituals and ceremonies. Section 1 provides examples and interpretations of karanga and karakia in similar fashion to those discussed in chapter 4. It re-introduces the concept of ururuwhenua as part of a spiritual environment relevant to raranga and kairaranga. The silences of ‘wearers’ and ‘makers’ of raranga items are described and analysed (beyond those already discussed in chapter 2) in relation to two particular kinds of raranga item. Section 2 discusses a particular institutional context where these concepts (and those discussed in chapter 4) are at issue. This context is a planned travelling exhibition organised by an Australian national institution that seeks to display representations of the Ngāpuhi ancestor Hone Heke Pokai.

Chapter 6 places this thesis more firmly within trans-local and trans-national relations within and between Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. Section 1 features two Australian contexts relevant to raranga. The first context is an official opening of a raranga-based Anzac monument in Canberra, the Federal Capital City of Australia, where people of a number of different Indigenous identities, including Ngunnawal (of the Canberra region) and Ngāpuhi, were present. The second context includes a brief narrative about Ngāpuhi presence in Sydney (dating back some two hundred years in written records) and a survey of Australian pari (bodices), some of which have had a long-standing presence amongst Māori cultural performance groups. Both contexts invite engagement with Indigenous postcolonial discourses. Section 2 then discusses Ngāpuhi people in Australia in terms of hakaheke (genealogical connection) with other identities including Indigenous Australians. Details of my own family history are included, as is a discussion of a
Canberran Māori cultural group. They are set within a theme of arrivals and departures, of cultural nostalgia, essentialism and innovation.

Chapter 7 is a further development on the theme broached in chapter 6, of cultural arrivals and departures. It addresses cultural continuities and disjunctures that are held in a web of colonialist, gendered power relations; yet find solace and political agency within spiritual, environmentalist and intellectual realms. Section 1 discusses knowledge (as part of academic enterprise) based on critical engagement. It interprets a particular Māori term for intellectual pursuit, hinengaro that builds a rationale for future raranga-based enquiry based on Māori vocabulary and postcolonial feminism. Section 2 builds further on this vocabulary and rationale. I focus on raranga in contexts involving wairua (spirituality), nurturing and eschatology. My particular focus here is on a spiritual environment that is linked to raranga. I re-emphasise the relevance of Māori spirituality in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia.

Chapters 2 to 7 each have an interim summary at the end of their first sections. All of these chapters end with a chapter discussion. In metaphorical raranga-based terms, this provision allows the ‘fibres’ of each chapter to remain clearly visible and well tensioned.

Chapter 8, the final chapter, provides a thematic summary of this thesis. It contains some concluding comments, indicating the limitations of this thesis and the potential within its ‘discursive’ marae for future engagements. Again in raranga-based terms, this chapter metaphorically weaves together the multi-dimensional strands of the earlier chapters then leaves them ‘loose’, ready to be taken up again later. It makes no attempt to definitively set limits on the discourses of Trans-Tasman Māori cultures, being more concerned with firmly establishing and affirming the importance of raranga to postcolonial feminist contributions in academic enterprise.
I have composed this example of karanga (calls) performed by Māori women who, in Māori cultural protocols, welcome guests on to a marae. With the words of a karanga, much as my female ancestors may have done on our family marae, I invite the reader into this world. In accordance with the protocols of many marae I welcome all visitors, especially those who are new, by firstly describing some physical and historical features of this Māori world in which the marae serves as an important nexus of social activity. It is a world that includes Māori of Ngāpuhi descent historically and currently resident in Australia. See chapter 5 for a fuller discussion of karanga and a larger selection of its associated social contexts.

2 When I refer to marae I more often have in mind those of northern regions of Aotearoa New Zealand though there are marae throughout that country as well as, though less often, in other countries such as Australia. Comparable to many non-Māori Community Centres, marae are important gathering places for many Māori people. The northern marae in Aotearoa New Zealand are held by variously sized groups of people who identify as part of the iwi (tribal collective) named Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu (Greater Ngāpuhi). I discuss this Ngāpuhi iwi collective, in terms of its cultural identity and territorial boundary later in this chapter though for convenience I usually refer, henceforth, to the tribal rohe (territory) of Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu as the North. In doing so I am mindful of many Ngāpuhi kaumatua (elders) who prefer the transliteration from the English, Nota in describing their rohe rather than the more recently and popularly applied Māori name Te Taitokerau. I also make various references to aspects of northern marae throughout this thesis that support its main focus on rāranga.

3 The term Aotearoa New Zealand is increasingly used in published academic texts (Thomas, 1999a: 3; Jolly, 2001). While I personally find this term unwieldy I acknowledge its important and recent inclusion of the Māori name Aotearoa. The use of the term Aotearoa recognises pre-European history in that country. Its use is often politically laden advocating equal rights there for Māori and Pākehā. It is my preference to employ the Māori word alone to describe this country. However it is most accurate to use a combination of both terms as both Māori and Pākehā continue to refer to this country as New Zealand whilst others prefer Aotearoa. The combined term covers both bases. I should also note that recognition of the term Aotearoa often depends on iwi (tribal) and other personal affiliations. Some Māori iwi, for example, are more willing to accept the term Aotearoa than others are.

4 When using the term multi-cultural I refer to the frequent contact Māori people have with other diverse cultures in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia.

5 It is inappropriate to state that all Māori people acknowledge women as gatekeepers to marae or that we all give primacy to them or their roles on marae. There are certainly cases where this acknowledgment is either lacking or superficially assigned to women. I elaborate on this point at various stages throughout this thesis.

6 For a more substantial description of a marae see chapters 2 and 3. Marae are also frequently mentioned throughout this thesis in relation to the primary themes of each chapter.

7 While this thesis does not privilege linear chronology in its examination of the history of Māori people it recognises the historical momentum of early colonialism in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. It also associates this momentum with that of capitalism including some consequences, positive and negative, for tribal and state-based identity amongst Māori people today.

8 Some of my other genealogical connections include Irish (more likely from the Republic of Eire though this is not yet fully confirmed), English on the Welsh border and Quaker American ancestors.

9 Ngāpuhi language was used in the first publication of the Bible in Aotearoa New Zealand (Ko te paipera tapu, 1999). I have relied on the Paipera Tapu and other texts, published (for example Motuti Community Trust, 1986) along with unpublished letters, manuscripts and oral exchange especially from my tribal elders for examples of Ngāpuhi language. It does, however, contain variations that
reflect hapu diversity within the Ngāpuhi iwi (see footnote 17) and the influence of other Māori tribes and non-Māori languages.

10 It is my hope to present this thesis in Ngāpuhi language in future. However, I am aware that in writing this thesis I currently conform to academic requirements set by a non-Māori institution. Its translation into Ngāpuhi would need to account for cultural differences that could influence changes in its form and linguistic expression.

11 Cultural Studies commentator Simon During (2000: 385) considers the inter-relationship between critical and reconciliatory postcolonialism thus: ‘the former seeks radical alternatives to modernity based on non-Western traditions and lifeways, while the latter works to reconcile colonized peoples to colonialism’. He (2000: 393) offers insights into critical postcolonialism’s dialectical relation to ‘globalization’ theory. He concludes that:

Globalization represents not so much the end of ethnic and colonist struggles as a force through which these struggles are continually re-articulated and replaced, and through which the transitivity of relations like colonizer/colonized, centre/local is continually proved. Which is to say that if the colonial era is going to be remembered in the era of globalization as always already global, that analytic and commemoratory move does not have to be set against the local and indigenous politics of self-determination upon which critical postcolonialisms finally rest (During, 2000:402).

This view needs to be addressed beyond this thesis that prepares a raranga-based Trans-Tasman discursive foundation for future projects, a point that I reiterate in its last chapter.

12 Anthologies on postcoloniality, such as H. Schwarz and S. Ray’s edited volume A companion to postcolonial studies (2000), should be referred to in any exploration of postcolonial theory. Fleras and Spoonley (1999:93-4), however, provide a succinct summary of relevant literature ‘offering an analysis of colonialism and post-colonial options’ including the work of theorists Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Simon During and Aotearoa New Zealanders Alan Curnow and Keri Hulme. This summary is instructive and provides a departure point for this thesis and its critical examination of raranga in Trans-Tasman contexts today.

13 Throughout this thesis I frequently cite two dictionaries (Ryan, 1997 and Williams, H. W., 1975) of Māori language. I note, however, recent developments such as the incomplete Te Papakupu o Te Tai Tokerau/ Tai Tokerau Dictionary currently being produced by the James Henare Māori Research Centre at the University of Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand that concentrates exclusively on Māori language of the North. An invaluable source of Māori language is my family whose grasp and use of this language does not always concur with published sources.

14 In many areas of northern Aotearoa New Zealand the most acceptable Māori term for genealogy, genealogical tables and genealogical knowledge is ‘hakaheke’. This term is often at odds with the more popular term ‘whakapapa’ that predominates in educational institutions and published literature concerning Māori culture and language (for example Metge, 1976). The term hakaheke is sometimes altered slightly to whakaheke. In other cases whakaheke is most preferred. An opinion (Rankin family, 2000-2) that has been presented to me is that the ‘f’ sound in whakaheke was dropped due to the influence of Christianity and an avoidance or alteration of any Māori words that resembled the ‘f-word’ English expletive. In this thesis I use the term hakaheke as my mother would. The Ngāpuhi form of Māori is her first language that she consistently used before first attending school where speaking any language beside English was discouraged. She has also taught Māori at school in an educational climate where the more pan-Māori terms such a 'whakapapa' received the most promotion. I respect and emulate her use of the term hakaheke and follow it though I am aware of the available alternatives.

15 I consider raranga in relation to ‘mixed’ identity amongst Ngāpuhi Māori in Australia in chapter 6 of this thesis.
16 I am reminded here of anthropologist Charles L. Briggs' (1996: 437-438) observations on discursive authority in research as linked to nationalism, something I discuss later in this chapter as part of Ngāpuhi identity. Briggs notes that the anthropologist Roger Keesing 'claims that nationalist rhetoric uses an argument based on color and culture to cover up the "real battle lines of class and interest" that separate Native politicians and scholars from "their village cousins".

17 Academic discourse concerning whānau and hapu has been extensively analysed Webster, 1998: especially chapter 5). My own use of the terms iwi, hapu and whānau recognises that they are kin groups whose names may also be interpreted as 'bone', 'pregnancy' and 'birth' respectively. The kinship configurations of whānau approximate those of the 'nuclear' family in that they consist of biological parents and their children. The whānau also includes biological parents of biological parents, siblings (biological and adopted) of biological parents and all their children (biological and adopted).

18 Often, people in this situation do not want to be associated with English colonists (J.G. Diamond, 1998-2003) because they consider their politics as counteractive to British colonialism.

19 See chapter 4 of this thesis for an in-depth analysis of this term.

20 Australian television has recently adopted culturally sensitive attitudes toward Māori language. In a recent (June 2002) television coverage of a Rugby League match in Perth between Australia and New Zealand Māori the letter 's' was never attached to the word Māori in describing the game, the team, the collective identity or the culture.

21 Issues surrounding Māori authorship, the written recording of oral traditions and related issues has been addressed in Garlick, (1998) that comments on cultural and intellectual property issues that have direct bearing on Māori culture (including Māori language and its English translation) and its written publication. The book (Garlick, 1998: 13) contains some criticism of postmodernism that 'privileges the present in its sceptical historiography... [Whereas] The Māori conception of time, and of history, in which one stands with one's back to the future, facing the past, ngā ra o mua, does not'. Postcolonialism also does not escape criticism (Garlick, 1998: 13) in that such theory tends to 'universalise colonial experience, and by doing this might be seen to destablise important Māori discourses'. I address such discursive issues in relation to raranga, cultural property and representation periodically throughout this thesis.

22 I make an oblique reference here to Benedict Anderson's seminal Imagined Communities (1983) that examines the construction of nations whereby 'Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined' (Anderson, 1983: 6). It is clear that differences of Māori and Pākehā styles of imagined communities are culturally determined though their dichotomisation is most apparent in political struggles against uneven power and resource distributions.

23 Partnership issues that have stemmed from the Treaty of Waitangi 1840 resulted in momentous legislative changes such as the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 and subsequent amendments receive an overview in published literature (For example Fleras and Spoonley, 1999). However it is clear that social and economic disparities between Maori and Pakeha persist whereby Maori disadvantage continues. Efforts to engage in quantifying this disadvantage and in 'closing the gaps' via governmental reports (see for example Te Puni Kokiri, 1998 and 2000) have developed. A telling introductory statement in one of these reports (Te Puni Kokiri, 2000: 1) summarises this currently unresolved state of affairs: 'This report provides further impetus to the urgent need for Government to work hand in hand with Māori communities to improve outcomes for Māori. Its findings will not be a surprise to many but should be of concern to all.'

24 Commenting on Northern iwi, Te Rangi Hiroa (1949: 59-60) cites an earlier Pakeha observer:

Percy Smith attributes this lack of detail to the fact that missionary influence was established early in The North and the tendency was to suppress all that related to the past as interfering with the new order of things.
25 I refer to Nukutawhiti again later in discussing the concept of uruuruwhenua.
26 I refer to a conversation with my kaumātua Hipiriona Hotere and his brother Matiu Hotere who in 2000 (Hotere Whānau, 2000-3) made various references to other auxiliary waka (‘carrying food and women’) that were part of a flotilla accompanying the main waka Tinana.
27 A recent reference to Kupe’s voyages that older sources such as Te Rangi Hiroa (1949: 6) have described as ‘tradition’ includes the following:
[An elder and the main subject of this story wrote books] about all sixty-two generations [of us] who have been here since our ancestor Kupe surfskied into Hokiang Harbour and left a couple of taniwha [guardian entities] in the Harbour entrance to stop anyone gaining access to his pad’ (Komene, 2000:171).
The writer, Zion Komene, clearly indicates the relevance of Kupe in Māori senses of identity today. Komene is Ngāpuhi and the overall theme of his short story (Komene, 2000) concerns relationships between Ngāpuhi elders and youths in their tribal lands.
28 The journeys of Kupe are mainly recorded in text through the work of S. Percy Smith though his work was later discredited (See Metge, 1976: 1-3). However, legends and landmarks relating to Kupe and his voyages continue to enrich oral narratives of the Northern Māori especially in the region of Hokiang Harbour. The Māori name of this Harbour refers to Kupe’s return to Hawaiiki following his earlier landfalls in Aotearoa New Zealand (Te Rangi Hiroa, 1949: 7). The extensive sand-dune feature on the northern side of the Harbour mouth is according to local Māori narratives, the result of an uncontrolled fire that Kupe lit and that subsequently destroyed a vast tract of then-existing forest (Cash, 2000).
The issue of empirical evidence comprising written records alone is compromised by the prevalence of these oral narratives of Kupe and requires far more investigation that is beyond the scope of this thesis.
29 The facts of Māori discovery of Aotearoa New Zealand are vague and more commonly assigned with the term ‘tradition’ or analysed in political terms similarly to those of Sorensen regarding nation building – see earlier quotation. Possible existence of earlier inhabitants in Aotearoa New Zealand (King, 1989) before Māori migration places the identity of any so-called ‘discoverers’ of this country at issue.
CHAPTER 2: ONCE WERE WEAVERS

A CONTEXT OF TECHNIQUES AND COLONIALIST HISTORY

Taku kete mahi – te whakapapa (detail of my working kete)
INTRODUCTION

My father (J. W. Diamond: 1999) says ‘Yes your grandmother did weaving. She used to send me to collect reeds from the streams. What are they called again?’

I reply ‘Maybe raupo or maybe even kuta. What did she weave?’

He answers ‘Mats and things. It’s a long time ago now and I always wanted to be somewhere else anyway [always wondering what was beyond home].’

I think to myself: Who was this woman? She died many years before I was born but she was a weaver (just like me), a part of my family history of raranga. Why is it that I don’t know of her life, including her raranga? Why does my lack of this knowledge annoy me?

I cannot find the answers in books. A veil of invisibility shrouds kairaranga including my grandmother and this realisation only prompts more questions.

This short exchange between my father and me demonstrates disjuncture in our family’s collective memory. It also portrays a diversity of interests amongst my family members that, in turn, denotes an assortment of cultural values. It is not my interest or intention to point fingers of blame for ruptures in our family history or to impose inappropriate uniformity of thinking and interests onto my relatives. My short raranga-based conversation with my father sets the scene for this chapter that examines raranga both in technical terms and in relationship to colonialist discourses on Māori culture.

This chapter rests on raranga’s capacity to address various sociological factors in gendered terms. These factors include human creativity, philosophical streams of thought, processes of knowledge accumulation, divisions of labour, and marketability. Inherently political, they are value laden and driven. They relate to social history in Aotearoa New Zealand since British colonisation in the early half of the 19th century. They can be viewed as part of Māori people’s agency in attempting to ensure the survival and growth of Māori cultural forms since British colonisation. Creative processes involved in raranga cannot be seen as isolated from this socio-historical context. Accordingly, raranga can be considered as a
multi-sited context of ‘a whole way of struggle’ (Webster, 1998: 39).

This chapter provides a supporting link with chapter 1 and establishes a technical and historical ‘scene’ that is built upon in later chapters. In the interests of clarity, it is split into two sections. In section 1 I add to my earlier linguistic discussion of raranga with a focus on those raranga techniques and items that are a recurring feature of this thesis. An understanding of techniques is indispensable to all subsequent discussion in this thesis of raranga within social contexts. I introduce this connection between techniques and social contexts by discussing a number of ways that raranga items and their makers have been represented since colonial times.

The second section focuses more directly on colonialism, relating it to raranga and Māori women. It highlights social disadvantage (including loss of identity and alienation from family land and histories) of Māori women and introduces raranga as part of emancipatory politics and cultural revivalism. It also critically engages with the relegation of raranga and Māori women in colonialist discourses on Māori culture and considers the impact of educational institutions (including the marae) and tourism on Māori identity and cultural production. This discussion prepares the way for the fieldwork-based focus of chapter 3.

SECTION 1: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF RARANGA TECHNIQUES AND ITEMS

This section’s focus on raranga techniques and items begins with an analysis of available literature on the subject. This literature-based exploration then progresses to other observations of particular techniques and items, and to visual representations of raranga techniques, items, makers and wearers.

LITERATURE ON RARANGA TECHNIQUES

Published literature regarding Māori weaving techniques can be analysed in terms of gendered authorship given that most literature
of this writing has until recently, been the work of men. Male authors (Pendergrast, 1984 and 1987; Mead, 1999), for example, have offered directions for gathering fibrous plants, construction stages and finishing, to the appearance and utility of a completed item. Emphasis is therefore placed on technical processes and outcomes.

Various techniques have also been classified and labelled by male authors, separating them out from others. Pākehā author Mick Pendergrast (1984: 11), for example, considers raranga solely as a diagonally formed example of Māori hand weaving or braiding. Diagonal hand weaving that is found throughout the Pacific Ocean region has also been distinguished by Māori male anthropologist Te Rangi Hiroa (1949: Chapter 4 and 5) as basketry and mat making, separating it from clothing and cloth-making techniques. As I discuss in more detail later, however, such classifications are rigidly imposed and do not take into account technical innovations and crossovers that may occur within a single woven item as well as amongst a broad range of items. Owing to the linguistic utility of the word raranga, and for other reasons discussed later in this section, I counteract the compartmentalisation of Māori weaving techniques by using the term raranga generically.

Male authors of published literature about raranga tend not to include the thoughts and motivations behind techniques. The kairaranga (weaver or weaving cooperative) responsible for these techniques, for example, is infrequently acknowledged and not given in any obvious way, an opportunity for co-authorship. Kairaranga are excluded from dominant discourses on Māori culture, often despite their willingness to be involved. Social values associated with raranga and kairaranga such as ways in which senses of belonging to places, iwi and families are manifested in this activity are therefore not closely described or analysed. There are, as a result, discursive gaps in the literature concerning raranga. These gaps exist despite the importance of raranga as a mode of cultural production for many Māori women. Such discursive gaps may be filled by more
contributions, particularly those of Māori women who comprise the majority of kairaranga of all iwi. Their absence bears witness to a discursive erasure that this thesis challenges.

Publications produced by Māori women about raranga are rare but include a recent biography of Māori women kairaranga entitled Pū manawa (Tamati-Quennell (Ed.), 1993). This publication and a small number of instructive works by kairaranga (Puketapu-Hetet, 1989; Te Kanawa, 1992) do afford Māori women a literary ‘voice’ about raranga, albeit a recent one. Other semi-autobiographical contributions have also been made by kairaranga in poetic form such as the He Wai anthology (Te Arama Menzies (Ed.), 1996) to be discussed later in this chapter. This literary form conveys a sense of cooperation amongst women in cultural production rather than a single person’s authoritative opinion. Thus, Māori women authors have changed the general character of published literature about raranga from single to collective authorship, with fewer tendencies to compartmentalise a variety of raranga techniques.

However, detailed tribal differences amongst Māori women, including kairaranga are not emphasised in any currently available published literature. The experienced and internationally acclaimed (cf., D’Allueva, 1998:151) kairaranga Erenora Puketapu-Hetet (1989), for example, offers a perspective on weaving without tribal specificity. Her contributions contain attractively photographed examples of completed items and describe the technical processes that contributed to their achievement. Puketapu-Hetet provides a general account of Māori weaving based on her own views and practical experience. Although her iwi tribal affiliation is with the Taranaki/ Ngāti Toa/ Maniapoto iwi of the southwestern region of the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand, her writing does not privilege any particular iwi. Accordingly, hers is a valuable exposition for Māori and non-Māori people regardless of background or affiliation. Nevertheless, this lack of tribal specificity
signals a need for more critical and regionally specific literature about raranga, rather than any shortcoming on the author’s part.

There is, for example, nowhere near enough literature on Ngāpuhi raranga to compare it with Hetet’s writing, yet kairaranga (Maihi, 2000; Landers, 2000; Ruki, 2002-3b) confirm that tribally based raranga differences have accumulated over time. This iwi-based diversity in raranga techniques and design is also referred to, without great detail, in the Māori male art historian Hirini Moko Mead’s (1999:10-11) observations of tāniko, a form of Māori weaving that I discuss later in this section. Such iwi-based diversity therefore signals opportunities to increase and broaden the current corpus of published literature about raranga and, indeed, other forms of Māori women’s cultural production.

**ITEMS AND TECHNIQUES**

In keeping with these general observations of available literature on raranga techniques, I am mindful that the following descriptions of raranga techniques and items are mainly drawn from both my own experience and from kairaranga who remain unacknowledged beyond their family circles. Thus, in conveying these technical observations and by producing this thesis overall, I pay homage to those ‘silenced’ voices, particularly of those who have passed ‘beyond the veil’, now deceased. Their corpus of knowledge may have contributed more directly to this thesis had it been given enough respect to be recorded more fully for posterity. The following observations are a remnant of this past knowledge of raranga as much as a promotion of a more substantial, and respectful, engagement both currently and in future.

In describing any piece of raranga either in progress or completed, I prefer to use the word *item*. My use of this word avoids descriptors such as *finished product* that imply a market base that may not necessarily be available to, or desired by all kairaranga. The word *object* could suffice, but it contains a quality of threedimensionality that does not apply to all raranga items. I therefore
use *item* to describe raranga that is produced in either two or three-dimensional forms. As I soon discuss in the following sub-sections, raranga items also vary in utility and scale from small kete (carry bags and purses) to large static installations in art galleries. The term *item* accommodates this variation in dimensions, scale and function.

To restate earlier linguistic and literature-based points, I use a broad generic interpretation of raranga techniques in this thesis, departing from any definition limiting it solely to diagonal plaiting. During my doctoral research in northern Aotearoa New Zealand I became accustomed to the term *raranga* being used generically to refer to a variety of different weaving practices. I am aware that other words, such as *whatu* can equally describe Māori weaving depending on iwi-based custom and individual preferences. I have chosen to follow the Ngāpuhi iwi preference for the word *raranga*. I use raranga as an umbrella term that covers many different Māori weaving techniques and finished items. Raranga practices, therefore, include diagonal weaving as well as the use of horizontal and vertical warp and weft threads in tāniko (figure 2.1) and the crosshatched panelling of tukutuku (figure 2.2).
Figure 2.1: Example of tāniko weaving method showing io or whenu (warp) and aho (weft) threads likely to be used as a border enhancement for kākahu (cloaks). To date the identity of the young Māori women in this photograph is not officially recorded. Photograph courtesy Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa in Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand.

Figure 2.2: Māori women (unidentified) working in pairs to construct tukutuku panels. Such panels are attached to the walls of whare tupuna (main houses on marae). Strands of fibre are interlaced with the panelling to form patterns. Photograph courtesy of Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa, Wellington Aotearoa New Zealand.

Since British colonisation, raranga has undergone a variety of technological changes that may be termed in academic or more
popular parlance as alterations, innovations, embellishments and bastardisations depending on a variety of value judgements. Hence the important focus in this thesis on social values. Technological changes include the use of more modern materials such as woollen and synthetic yarn, and the adoption of tapestry, for example, to achieve similar results to tāniko (Mead, 1999: 6).

More should be said in general terms, at this stage, about the acquisition of raranga materials, as this is an important aspect of raranga production. A recently revived preference amongst kairaranga for kōrari (flax) and other naturally fibrous plants, and naturally occurring dyes and mordants, for example, is evident today. However, plastics, fake fur, and other synthetic materials (including dyes) are not avoided by those kairaranga who incorporate both traditional and innovative materials and methods into their work. A variety of methods and materials (traditional and innovative) are also popular in particular contexts of raranga, such as Pākehā run art schools.

In terms of natural (rather than artificial) fibres, material is gathered for raranga by various means depending on the special characteristics and availability of its plant source. Botanical knowledge and experience can determine the choice of plants for raranga and the time period in which their fibres are gathered. Gathering kōrari during inclement weather, for example, is generally not encouraged by experienced kairaranga (Puketapu-Hetet, 1989:3). Also, there are various types of kōrari and each has its own Māori name. Some varieties of kōrari have a softer leaf with a high amount of muka (fibre) that is valued for kākahu (cloaks) and other items of clothing.

Therefore, some types of kōrari are more prized for their muka than others, though all kōrari contains some amount of fibre. Kōrari varieties that have large amounts of muka undergo more protracted processing, including pounding and washing, as the inner fibre must be separated from the outer. Other types of kōrari are gathered for whāriki (mats) and kete. Harder and straighter varieties
such as those that are used for whāriki (sleeping mats) generally require less preparation. Understandably then, knowledge of plants (and synthetic alternatives) as sources of fibre, their habitats and various other aspects concerning their growth patterns, including the effects of pollutants, are an important part of raranga discourse.

This practical knowledge also becomes symbolically important in Māori women’s political action and spirituality. Various protocols and rituals can, therefore, be associated with raranga items and techniques along with botanical knowledge. They denote the complex interactions between raranga practice, political action, environmental knowledge and spiritual associations that are emphasised throughout this thesis. I revisit the subject of muka later in this chapter, for example, highlighting its function in Māori women’s politics and self-awareness as a poetic metaphor.

From this general sociological overview of raranga techniques and materials it is already clear that raranga is ‘more than just a product of manual skills’ (Puketapu-Hetet, 1989: 2). In the following subsections I provide a more detailed introductory view of specific raranga items that are continually referred to throughout the remainder of this thesis.

**Kete**

Kete are a frequently seen raranga item in Aotearoa New Zealand, having enjoyed resurgence in recent popular fashion amongst Māori and Pākehā people. Their functions vary, ranging from coin purses to large carry-alls. They are found throughout Aotearoa New Zealand on the commercial market in art galleries and tourist outlets.

Kete are most commonly made with the diagonal weaving technique, often with dyed kōrari strands interlaced with undyed (or differently coloured) strands to form patterns. My kaiaako and kaumatua (raranga teachers and elders) refer to such kete as *kete whakairo* (translatable as ‘carved’ kete or kete with a design) blurring the distinction between whakairo (woodcarving) and raranga. I return to this point later when discussing social values.
assigned to raranga compared with other Māori creative forms such as whakairo.

In figure 2.3 below I have provided an example of a kite whakairo. I value this kite for its aesthetic qualities as much as for its association with the person who gave it to me. Unfortunately the kairaranga who made this kite is currently unknown and as a matter of principle, I am making best efforts to determine her/his/their identity. It comprises one of a wide variety of kite whakairo designs. It is also and importantly for the sociological emphasis of this thesis, similar to many kite that have appeared on the commercial tourism market without acknowledgment of their makers.

Figure 2.3: An example of a kite whakairo plain and dyed kōrari, black nylon lining 38 x 28 cm. Constructed circa 1998. Personal collection of Jo Diamond gifted by Jane (Horace) Davis of Kalkohe in 2000. Photograph by Celia Bridgewater, Centre for Cross-Cultural Research ANU.

Two other kite examples (photographed in detail and at various angles), constructed and gifted to me by my kaiako (teacher) Toi Te Rito Maihi appear as images on each chapter title page of this thesis. These images offer some sense of a kite’s technical and aesthetic attributes and the work of a kairaranga who frequently features in this thesis.

However, kete vary widely in technical complexity, style, shape, size and function. Some diagonally plaited kete, for example, have tāniko borders at their openings. Other kete examples include
shell and bone shapes as fastenings and/or patterning. Some kete are made entirely of tāniko, without the more common diagonal technique, but retaining the standard kete size and shape. Other embellishments include tassels made of natural and/or synthetic fibres, and leather handles. I have seen kete made entirely of synthetic yarn and fake fur and recall the popularity amongst my family and others of kete made of diagonally woven coloured plastic strips in the 1970s. Whilst many kete are used as everyday carryalls, others are treasured and are only seen in public on special occasions, similar to ‘Sunday-best’ clothes.

Like many other raranga items, kete are ‘sites’ of both creative custom and innovation. They can therefore be valued in different ways by different people. Māori and Pākehā people, for example, value some kete more highly because they are reputedly (according to product labels) made according to time-honoured techniques. They are therefore successfully sold as authentic ‘genuine articles’. Others are more popular because they break with such traditions, incorporating different materials and techniques in their construction.

Beyond the market there are also symbolic factors attached to kete that influence notions of cultural identity and belonging. For example, and as I discuss in a later chapter, kete forms have influenced the design of a monumental sculpture in Australia’s Federal Capital city Canberra, that signifies a history of Trans-Tasman international cooperation between Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia.

Kete are also used metaphorically in education. For example, the Ministry of Education in Aotearoa New Zealand has constructed an Internet website called Te Kete Ipurangi (The Internet kete). In providing background to this name the Ministry explains:

A kete epitomises some key elements of this site. It symbolises the fundamental concepts of collection, storage and distribution. It has a sense of travel associated with it [due to its portability and carrying function]. Further, the weave of a kete symbolises
the unification of many components to form a robust and purposeful structure.

Maori mythology explains how [the male deity] Tane-nui-a-rangi, ascended the heavens and...

"…I riro iho ai nga kete o te wananga

Ko te kete tuari, ko te kete tuatea, ko te kete aronui, ka tiritiria ka poupoua ki a Papatuanuku…"

…Received the baskets of knowledge and brought them to earth for the benefit of mankind (Ministry of Education, 2002).

The Ministry thus confirms the value and relevance it places on Māori culture as a hallmark of its identity as a national institution. Its website uses the kete metaphor and associated references to Māori culture, including mythology, to promote the Ministry globally, via cyberspace.

The variety of possible associations that can be made with kete (and other raranga items) is therefore rich and diverse, encouraging equally extensive engagement and debate over the meaning of an authentically Māori raranga item. It is clear that issues of raranga authenticity depend on context. As mentioned earlier, for example, kete sold as ‘genuine articles’ are often more commercially successful today than those made of fake fur or plastic. Conversely, the less conventional items may appeal to a younger fashion-conscious sector of both Māori and Pākehā communities. Discourses on Māori cultural authenticity may be considered as predominantly market-driven, yet they impact in various ways on Māori people’s senses of cultural identity. Histories of individual kinds of raranga items, such as kete can be incorporated into such discourses.

PARI
While the importance of a history of the kete to Māori cultural discourses, including authenticity issues, features in this thesis, its focus more frequently rests on the pari. The pari is a raranga-based bodice worn by women in Māori cultural performances in competitions, concerts and festivals, usually for some material
reward. This item is frequently used in this thesis to challenge dominant colonialist discourses on Māori culture that neglect raranga and Māori women. The pari is an intriguing example of women’s clothing that, despite its high visual profile in Māori cultural performances for competition and tourism, has not yet received the published attention it deserves. Various forms of pari, and their wearers, are frequently used to visually represent Māori culture though they and their roles in cultural performance are inadequately addressed by published literature.

Indeed, Māori cultural performances (including competitions) in their historical and current forms have yet to receive extensive published analysis. Experienced cultural performance teacher and Māori professor Timoti Karetu (1993) offers rare published insight into some aspects of this kind of cultural production focussing on the haka (war-dance) that is mainly undertaken by men. A long-serving Māori participant (and Judge) in these cultural performances, Karetu states the following opinion on gender distinctions made in judging Māori cultural performance competitions:

Some of the rules stipulated by the delegates have been contentious and controversial and have been fiercely contested by some of the groups. It is fortunate that some groups have been vociferous in stating their objections, thus forcing the delegates back to the drawing board to reconsider some of the rules thought by the groups to be nonsensical or ill-founded … One such policy was the banning of females from the haka (Karetu, 1993:80).

His comments illustrate contention and complexities within Māori cultural performance paradigms (as well as those of other forms of Māori cultural production) that are on going and ever changing. Thus, Karetu points to a variety of value-based opinions on Māori culture that are driven by formalised competition rules, cultural tourism (including festivals and concerts) and regulatory bodies. Owing to these mechanisms, the pari has become standard dress for female performers and has appeared in mid 20th century literature as symbolic of Māori culture generally (see figure 2.4), the
absence of direct acknowledgment of the women and their pari notwithstanding.

Figure 2.4: Images of unidentified Māori women, pari and other items of costume from published literature. A. Photograph accompanying an article on Māori education in an academic journal (Vandenbreg, 1992: 9). B. Cover of a 24-page book of photographs featuring Māori people (Bigwood, 1966). C. Pamphlet cover promoting New Zealand as a tourist destination published by New Zealand Tourist and Publicity Department in the 1950s courtesy of Timeframes, Te Puna Matauranga o Aotearoa (National Library of New Zealand).

In terms of a more substantial focus on Māori women in these performances and in tourism generally, Māori feminist scholar Ngahuia Te Aweko (1991: 73-105 and 125-134) provides details of their important role. Hers is an account of Māori women who have always been actively involved as performers and
supporters, in such ventures from their inception, though they have rarely received public (and published) recognition for their work outside their own Māori communities. I am encouraged by Te Awekotuku’s work to focus on Māori cultural representation, particularly the contributions of the pari and the women who make and wear it.

Figure 2.5: Māori woman, (circa 1900) as yet unidentified in public records, wearing a kaitaka (cloak with tāniko border). It is likely that the kaitaka was reversed in the photography studio so that its lower tāniko border was moved closer to the woman’s shoulders and face. Photograph courtesy of Timeframes, Alexander Turnbull Library, Te Puna Mātāuranga o Aotearoa National Library of New Zealand.

Earliest examples of pari were made with tāniko techniques though they have since undergone ‘several revolutionary changes’ (Mead 1999: 14), including tapestry and needlepoint renditions. Technical comparisons can be made between tāniko-bordered cloaks (figure 2.5) and earlier pari examples.

Christian ideals of modesty necessitating the concealment of breasts under clothing had without doubt some role to play in the design of pari that first appear at the turn of the 20th century (Mead, 1999:14). Here a paucity of recorded information frustrates attempts at determining exact dates and social motivations, but the pari is most certainly an early 20th century phenomenon that persists today.

Introductions since British colonisation of other weaving and needlework technologies, crosshatched embroidery and tapestry
pieces have influenced the construction of pari, giving rise to a variety of new designs and motifs (figure 2.6). Motifs may include Christian references such as crosses, angels and churches. Words may also be included in the design including school, church or family names.

![Figure 2.6: Pari and piupiu (skirts) worn by unidentified women in late 1940s (Mead, 1999:12). The variety of pari designs is clearly evident in this photograph, as are the Māori and Pākehā physical appearances of the wearers.](image)

Pari are often emblematic of either an entire performance group or the family of an individual performer. Their technical construction is varied and social values assigned to them by both individuals and groups of people also vary. Their raranga origins and connections are not always acknowledged, nor do all parties consider them as culturally authentic, given their links with the tourism industry and notions of ‘tourism kitsch’. Nevertheless, pari are rarely seen for sale in the marketplace except in cases where they dress souvenir ‘Māori dolls’. Therefore, whilst pari may be associated with commercial public performance they are not commonly used in their own right as commercial commodities. Examples of pari within wider social contexts (including some Australian settings) appear at various points later in this thesis where their relevance to issues of cultural authenticity, representation, identity and spirituality are continually examined.
KĀKAHU (CLOAKS)

Generally-speaking kākahu tend to be valued more highly than pari. Māori and Pākehā people can value kākahu very highly, positively recognising the intricacy and skill of their construction, attractive aesthetic features and the social status of their wearers. In many Māori cultural contexts, within and outside marae, a great deal of mana (see chapter 4 for an extended interpretation of this status-based concept) is therefore attached to kākahu, particularly those worn by men. An aura of high status is often assigned to a kākahu wearer that clearly contrasts with that usually afforded to pari wearers. Kākahu wearers may be of any identity (in contrast to the pari that are purpose-built only for women and girls) but they are usually people (more often men) who are highly regarded in Māori society. One possible reason for the status-based disparity between pari and kākahu is that, unlike the pari, kākahu pre-date British colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand (Mead, 1999: 36-37). Consequently, there is not the same association made between kākahu and tourism as there is with pari.

Notwithstanding technological changes since colonisation, there are various Māori forms of kākahu (figure 2.7), such as kaitaka (bordered with ornate tānīko), korowai (tasselled), kahukiwi (made from kiwi feathers), kahu-huruhuru (assorted feathers), kahukuri (dogskin) and hieke (raincaps). Many kākahu are made with the tānīko, horizontal warp and weft technique discussed earlier. The ornate tānīko border of some kaitaka is renowned and highly prized due to its intricacy and skill in construction and design.
Figure 2.7: A selection of kākahu and their maker, the eminent kairaranga Diggeress Te Kanawa (Te Kanawa, 1992: frontispiece).

Again, some iwi differences occur in relation to kākahu. In Ngāpuhi idiom, for example, all cloaks may be referred to as korowai. However, in this instance I have chosen to use the looser term, kākahu, in order to distinguish the tasselled korowai from other types of cloak. This distinction helps me to make the further point that some particularly prized kākahu have korowai (tasselled) and kaitaka (bordered) features combined into one item. It is also the case that kahukiwi and other types of feather or dogskin kākahu may include intricate tāniko borders that are also highly valued by Māori people and therefore regarded as taonga. Some kākahu are also treated as taonga by virtue of their age and their association with people of highly valued social status.

Innovative and tradition-based techniques in kākahu design are a feature of contemporary art practice. In Sydney, Australia for example, Māori woman artist and kairaranga Keren Ruki has constructed a cloak (figure 2.8) using cane tubes that have been individually wrapped with iron-on transfers and interwoven with cotton material. Keren, who was born in Aotearoa New Zealand and later migrated to Australia, combines various techniques and
materials that may be termed both traditional and modern. The overall effect of her cloak produces a photographic image, a self-portrait wearing Māori performance dress. The work is entitled ‘Maori girl’. It can be worn as a garment as well as mounted on a wall in similar fashion to a framed picture. This innovative raranga-based item does not disrespect earlier, more customary techniques (Ruki, 2002-3a). Rather, it pays homage to all forms of raranga, tests of restrictive raranga conventions and asserts the artist’s cultural identity.

Figure 2.8: Keren Ruki. 1999 Maori girl [a kākahu] 120 x 90 cm. Cotton, tape, cane, iron-on transfers. Photograph, courtesy of the artist.

Whilst it is tempting to presume that such innovative design has been made more possible by the artist’s Trans-Tasman migration, similar innovation is displayed in the recent work of Māori woman kairaranga Erenora Puketapu-Hetet, who resides in Aotearoa New Zealand. Her metal feather kākahu (figure 2.9A) that featured in the most recent Pacific Arts Festival in Kanaky/ New Caledonia are examples of the willingness of expert kairaranga to extend their work beyond raranga traditions. Ruki (2002–3a) and
Puketapu-Hetet (Creative New Zealand, 2000:11) see their kākahu as statements of the importance of women in Māori society, giving their raranga a definite politically based character.
Kairaranga also experiment with other media in constructing kākahu. Figure 2.9B provides an example of Māori woman, Caroline William’s raranga, using plastic bread packaging rather than natural fibres. Such innovation makes use of recyclable material that may have otherwise contributed to environmental problems associated with less efficient plastic disposal methods. Other environment-based discourses relating to raranga will be discussed later.

The high value placed on kākahu, especially those made in more traditional styles, by Māori communities usually means that they are made as gifts and/or heirlooms rather than marketplace commodities. More recent exceptions to this general rule are the cloaks that are commissioned by art galleries and museums for exhibitions and by Māori and Pākehā officials to wear at public ceremonies. Māori and Pākehā therefore apply high ceremonial value to kākahu in most circumstances.

Kākahu may also be incorporated into the clothing worn in cultural performances with the most finely created examples usually reserved for the group leaders and instructors. However, on some occasions, especially for school concert performances, kākahu are made from calico sheeting with sewn-in woollen tassels. Often these ‘stage costumes’ are less valued amongst Māori people (including audiences and performers), making the stage versions of kākahu somewhat more comparable to pari. A hierarchy of values is therefore attached to kākahu that depends on construction techniques as well as function, especially in terms of the social status of their wearers.

Later in this section, I discuss kākahu in relation to European visual representations of Māori people linking them to stereotypical understandings of Māori culture. In chapter 5, I also discuss kākahu
that feature in representations of the Ngāpuhi chief, tupuna (ancestor) and national icon Hone Heke Pokai. His numerous representations (mostly portraiture) provide important examples of associations made between the social status of Māori people and raranga items in a number of different contexts, including a planned Australian National Museum exhibition. Throughout this thesis I discuss complex social relationships, often gender-based, that surround kākahu and pari while acknowledging the latter’s silence in Māori cultural discourse and its lower position in a hierarchy of social values.

**Whāriki (sleeping mats)**

Whāriki as explained earlier, are often used on marae. They are also currently available in the commercial market. Nowadays whāriki are usually made on marae for more general use rather for one individual person, family or function though this may not have been the case in earlier times where different hierarchical social structures prevailed.12

Whāriki and other kinds of mats13 are usually, though not exclusively made in the diagonal weaving technique. The more highly prized whāriki become treasured heirlooms14 in some cases. Whāriki are usually made for the whare tupuna (main houses representing ancestors) of marae though others also grace the walls and floors of public institutions and private homes. Some whāriki, often the most finely made, are reserved, especially on marae, for special guests.15 Whāriki are sometimes used only as wall hangings and their function as sleeping-mats is never realised.

Whāriki can also be employed as metaphors. In chapter 1, for example, I organised a discussion of identity terms similarly to the organised strands of fibre that are woven into whāriki. They may also be used to designate spaces of cultural belonging, a point I discuss later, again in relation to the Ngāpuhi chief Hone Heke Pokai.
COMBINATIONS
As already stated in relation to kete, pari, kākahu and whāriki, there are innovative crossovers and combinations of construction techniques, materials and eventual function, amongst these items. Tāniko techniques, for example, are evident in some examples of all these four types of raranga item. Newer raranga forms, discussed in later chapters combine tukutuku-panelling with tāniko-based ideas and the diagonal weaving techniques, while another transfers kete shapes into a large-scale monument. Some pari examples that can be linked with the same diagonal braiding of kete and whāriki are also discussed in later chapters. As mentioned earlier regarding published literature on raranga, strict categorisation of raranga items is therefore considered as inappropriate in this thesis which recognises the versatility of raranga techniques as much as the creativity and innovation of raranga exponents.

NECESSARY OMISSIONS
There are many other kinds of raranga items including hīnaki and other types of fish and eel traps, string-games, and the piupiu (skirts) and other clothing and accessories of Māori cultural performances used by both women and men. My narrow selection of kete, pari, kākahu and whāriki is necessary, given the spatial limits of this thesis that emphasises raranga items and Māori women within Trans-Tasman social contexts, heavily affected and influenced by colonialism. I envisage my future explorations of those omitted raranga items as being equally important in the study of Māori cultural discourses.

IMAGES OF RARANGA SILENCE
There remains one aspect of raranga items to discuss before the subject of colonialism is directly broached in the second section of this chapter. This aspect concerns visual representations of raranga, involving makers and wearers. Acting somewhat as a bridge linking raranga techniques and items with socio-historical and socio-political contexts are painted and photographed images of Māori people whose identities are not always recorded. Such images date
back to the early days of British colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand. Photographs of Māori women as makers (figures 2.1 and 2.2) and wearers (figures 2.4 to 2.6) of raranga items are an illustrative feature of this chapter. As I have noted in captions, the identities of these women have not been included in public records. Insufficient records kept at the time these images were produced and collected are a likely cause of such omissions. These photographs also provide a pertinent starting point for discussing the effects of Pākehā hegemony in Aotearoa New Zealand over Māori women and raranga in terms of their representation in books, paintings and other media.

Some relevant observations have been made by Pākehā art historian Leonard Bell (1992) of European paintings of Māori people dating from the 1840s to the early 1900s. Many of these images portray Māori women, men and children wearing cloaks, blankets and similar attire. Bell’s concern is with European artists and specifically their representations of Māori people; ‘the processes of representations made by Europeans for Europeans’ (Bell, 1992: 2). He also notes:

Representations of Māori were never unproblematic, ‘faithful’ transcriptions of the visible, simply literal records of the physical, social, and psychological actualities of Māori existence, however much viewers claimed they were, and however much some historians still write about or use them as if they were or could be (Bell, 1992: 2 – my emphasis)

Representations of Māori people have thus reflected Pākehā cultural biases. However analyses of these representations may also encourage stereotyped and monolithic understandings of Māori culture. One area where analyses fail to sufficiently engage with the ‘physical, social and psychological actualities of Māori existence’ (see emphasised portion of above quotation) concerns depictions of raranga items.

For example the colonial artist George Angas who ‘spent six months in New Zealand, painting and making notes upon the Maori people and their way of life’ (Angas, 1979: frontispiece) in 1844 was
responsible for numerous representations of Māori people. He produced sketches and paintings of various aspects of Māori life including raranga items, techniques and wearers of raranga garments.

Leonard Bell (1992: 12) notes that Angas ‘presented the majority of women and children in a standardised and uniform manner [with] the absence of physiognomic realism’ and provides clear examples of Angas’ stereotypical representations of Māori women. Images of Māori women by Angas, for example, ‘conform to a type of female beauty that had widespread currency in contemporary European imagery…’ (Bell, 1992: 17). A class-based selectivity is also evident as ‘Angas’s women were largely wives and daughters of chiefs’ (Bell, 1992: 18). The stereotype of Māori beauty conveyed in these paintings also includes raranga items of clothing, particularly kākahu (cloaks). The effect of these items in reifying Māori female beauty amongst the viewing audience is significant, though passes without comment in Bell’s analysis.

However, Bell’s analysis of Angas’ paintings of Māori men does extend to their dress:

Details of dress in particular were stressed by Angas, whether it was the grubby, nondescript old blanket of the old ‘savage’...or the splendid cloaks of chiefs... to the extent that the figures can seem primarily props on which picturesque and ethnological information is hung (Bell, 1992: 12 – my emphasis).

Māori women wearing cloaks and blankets also appear in Angas’ paintings though they are not included in Bell’s ‘savages’ or ‘chiefs’. Angas, according to Bell’s analysis, tends to represent Māori women as anonymous wives of chiefs, not as women of autonomous power, poverty or savagery. I note Bell’s caution that his book concerns ‘European, not Māori, ways of seeing, behaviour, practices, and attitudes, as embodied or manifest in representations’ (Bell, 1992: 2). However, his concern with ‘the processes of representations made by Europeans for Europeans’ (Bell, 1992: 2) does not adequately broach the subject of embedded phallocentrism within these processes of representation. The various modes of
European representation and their interpretation exposed in Bell’s writing are largely confined to those of men of a particular social standing and class, yet gender relations and class distinctions are not an explicit or prevailing emphasis in his analysis. Nevertheless, I agree with Bell’s conclusion (1992: 256) that:

The meanings and uses of visual representations are not necessarily closed or fixed. A painting can offer a plurality of meanings to viewers and can be used in a variety of ways, depending on viewers’ attitudes, knowledge, and needs. And meanings and uses can vary too depending on the socio-cultural contexts and times in which the representations are seen and circulated.

It is not difficult to involve raranga-based discourse into further analyses of colonialist paintings of Māori subjects. For example, a comparison between two pictures (figure 2.10A and B – next page), one painted by Angas in 1844 and a later more famous painting by the well-known and well-published Gottfried Lindauer, a resident of Aotearoa New Zealand in the early 20th century. The Angas painting depicts ‘Te Rau, daughter of Tariu’ (Angas, 1979: 50). The second painting of 1906 is entitled *Maori women weaving flax garments*.

Bell’s analysis (1992: 201, 203) of the second painting discusses Lindauer’s reliance on photographs for his depictions of Māori lifestyles but also notes that the four-posted weaving support is ‘unknown’. However the painting by Angas, which preceded the Lindauer by almost 60 years, clearly shows that such a structure existed. Bell’s analysis (along with his sources) of the weaving support is therefore problematic, if not inaccurate. More substantial raranga-based discourse would include an extended comparison of the two paintings and investigations of the four-posted weaving support that each of them depicts.
Figure 2.10: A. Sketch by G. F. Angas that he described as ‘Te Rau, daughter of Tariu’ (1979: 50) B. Gottfried Lindauer’s *Maori women weaving flax garments*, 1906, oil, 2260 x 2070 mm (Bell, 1992: 199).

Raranga-based discourse that begins with raranga items and their representation under colonialism extends to images of Māori
men. I previously mentioned the ubiquitous presence of kākahu (cloaks) in early colonial images of Māori men that implicitly refer to their high social status. Some examples of these images also refer to the conflicts between Māori European settlers (soldiers and civilians) that occurred in the late 1840s in Northern Aotearoa New Zealand and in the 1860s further south.

Figure 2.11: G.F Angas. *Honi Heki and Patuone* 1847 Tinted lithograph, hand-coloured 550 x 360 mm. Image courtesy of Timeframes collection. Te Puna Mātauranga National Library of New Zealand

Angas’ image of the Ngāpuhi rangatira (chiefs) Hone Heke Pokai and Patuone (figure 2.11) of the 1840s provides one example of how an early colonial artist mixed European dress with kākahu in his depictions of Māori people. Their garments emphasise their significant social standing and their involvement in war with the colonists. In this picture the capped and cloaked Hone Heke Pokai holds a gun, denoting his active resistance against colonisation in the
1840s whilst the clothing of his fellow Ngāpuhi chief, Patuone, seems more church-going, almost angelic. Significantly, Patuone had a more peaceful relationship with British colonialists. Angas therefore uses clothing, including kākahu to distinguish one man from the other, despite the likelihood that Patuone also wore kākahu. I discuss Hone Heke Pokai more extensively in a later chapter that concerns his ‘cloaked’ representations in an Australian museum.

Māori men and women wearing kākahu continued to be the subject of paintings and later photographs for various reasons ranging from notions of a noble but dying Māori race whose cultural characteristics needed to be preserved in print, to painted perceptions of Pākehā superiority over the ‘natives’. Raranga and representations of Māori people as noble warriors or perpetrators of violence are therefore often intertwined within these images.

The Māori attacker in figure 2.12, for example, is mostly distinguishable by his clothing, as are the other two people in the painting. In fact, none of the figures in this painting would have such a powerful cultural identity without their particularised attire. The garments in this painting can therefore be regarded as cultural signifiers. A raranga-based analysis of this painting would necessarily focus on the clothing, as this is the only feature that distinguishes the attacker as a Māori. The attacker wears a piupiu (skirt) that is commonly made of treated kōrari strands, contrasting him against the red uniforms of the boy bugler and his slain compatriot. The half-naked figure dressed in the piupiu appears as an unidentified ignoble savage whilst the boy is depicted as both vulnerable and intent upon taking action. The painting’s title reinforces notions of his bravery and implies a civilised cultural superiority.

This simplistic illustration of life (and death) on the battlefield relies heavily on dress forms, colour (gloom and creeping shadows in the background signifying terror, for example) and a written title. The dignity of a noble Māori dressed in a cloak depicted in the 1840s is replaced here in the early 1900s by
uncivilised half-nakedness and a piupiu that cannot, in this picture at least, equal the social stature of a buttoned (most likely British) uniform. In this picture the ‘glories’ of colonialist campaigns against the Māori foe in the 1860s are thus romanticised by European clothing on the eventual victor and by a raranga-based garment on the ‘uncivilised’ foe.

Figure 2.12: An example of the representation of Māori men as savages. Lithograph entitled A boy’s heroism. ‘Awake! Awake! 1908 by Arthur David McCormick. Note the piupiu worn by the figure on the left. This garment distinguishes the figure as a Māori attacker. Photograph courtesy of Timeframes Collection, Te Puna Mātauranga National Library of New Zealand

Colonialist artists generally have not depicted Māori women as warriors in battle with colonialist troops. They have depicted them as trophies of war. As the example in figure 2.13 by artist Louis Steele shows, female figures can be distinguishable as Māori by their dress, including tiki, moko (dress accessories, facial tattoos and other taonga) and nearby objects of war including abandoned
weapons and broken palisades. European cultural influences, including the preference for paintings of Māori female nudes at the time the painting was completed can be analysed in this picture (cf. Bell 1992: 176-179).

Figure 2.13: Louis Steele, *Spoils to the victor* 1908, oil, 378 x 260 mm (Bell, 1992: 176).

However, Louis Steele’s appropriation of Māori items, including raranga items, as signifiers of the Māori identity (albeit vanquished) is also an important part of its discourse. The taonga, including the captive Māori women, the weapons and garments are indeed ‘spoils to the [Pākehā] victor’. Their inclusion in the painting sanctions the male Pākehā artist’s appropriating power; his ‘capture’
of Māori women and other Māori cultural signifiers. This picture also signifies a defeat for the representations of Māori cultural diversity because it depicts a stereotypical Māori warrior and his stereotyped culture as summarily killed, captured and subjugated along with his woman. Questions remain: Who exactly has been captured and subjugated? Is it a particular Māori man and woman who are defeated or is it the artist who is captured by some romantic notion of racial superiority over these two people, Māori people and/or Māori culture generally? Such questions arise due to a more focussed engagement with the cultural signifiers of the picture such as its inclusion of raranga-based garments.

Paintings of war victories appeared at times of burgeoning Pākehā nationalism in Aotearoa New Zealand notably at the turn of the 20th century and continuing through to the Great Depression of the 1930s (M. Williams, 1997: 21-22; Bell, 1992: 149). Stereotyped representations of Māori as a vanquished but noble foe succumbing to superior forces have therefore bolstered nation building political agendas and general senses of national identity that privileged Pākehā domination.

More recent representations of Māori men as wife-bashers and child sex offenders include the movie *Once were warriors* (Tamahori, 1994/5) and the book (Duff, 1994) on which it is based. These representations are available internationally, providing a wide audience with an idea of Māori people’s contemporary lives. For some people *Once were warriors* (the book and the film) are rare sources of knowledge about Māori people and culture. This film may unintentionally support racist notions of a Māori predilection for savagery, now in the home (with scenes of domestic violence and child abuse) rather than on a 19th century battlefield. Unlike the earlier colonial paintings the book and film were produced by a Māori male author and a Māori male film director, yet a general thematic leaning towards a Māori male warrior stereotype persists. Such artistic (and published) representations of Māori violence are therefore no longer monopolised by Pākehā people as they were in
the 19th and early 20th centuries. These representations may inspire some Māori people to adopt or continue militant struggles and Māori cultural assertiveness. However they can also exclude other Māori representations.

The title and plot of Once were warriors prompts an alternative approach in this thesis where weavers and weaving form the basis of arguments regarding Māori cultural representation rather than images of warriors, thugs and violence. This approach does not support the stereotypical representation of a Māori culture of war and warriors. It in fact functions as a critique of the fantasy of colonialisat domination over Māori people, particularly Māori women and their cultural production. My approach is not unlike Māori woman scholar Irihapeti Ramsden’s (1995: 111) oblique reference to the film and book Once were warriors:

An analysis of the normal annual activities of any pre-contact Māori communities would probably reveal that people were more heavily involved in co-operative activities, gardening, food preservation, the production of complex technical and art forms, and making and rearing babies, than in conflict ... A book entitled Once Were Gardeners would just not have had much of a ring to it.

I therefore use chapter titles such as Once were weavers to emphasise the importance of raranga-based discourses on Māori culture without denying that wartime activities have also been part of Māori histories. By refocussing such histories through a lens of raranga discourse, raranga items can be recognised as significant not only in forms of Māori cultural representation, but also as social indicators of historical events. Thus, the early 20th century development of the pari, for example, can be seen as an active negotiation (including resistance) of the patriarchal power of that time. This power manifested itself in various ways including the enforcement of Pākehā laws on decency, Christian ideals of modesty and such nationalistic paintings as Spoils to the Victor.
INTERIM SUMMARY

So far in this chapter I have discussed a skilful and diverse variety of raranga items and techniques. The significance of these items and the contributions of their kairaranga are seen as deserving extensive academic engagement, not least because they appear in many representations of Māori people and culture. Such representations convey various sets of social values, including those associated with colonialism, nationalism and tourism marketing. In the second section of this chapter I discuss more directly, relationships existing between these raranga-based discourses and Māori women’s responses to patriarchal colonialism in Aotearoa New Zealand.

SECTION 2: RARANGA IN COLONIALISM

The powerful influences of colonialism, migration and current political efforts to revive Māori culture have all played a part in the relegation of social values associated with raranga. Consequently a broad history of raranga can be best conveyed in relation to processes of patriarchal discrimination over time, especially since the 19th century advent of British colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand. Most attention is therefore paid in this section to raranga, Māori women and patriarchal power in historical terms including recent history.

COLONISATION AND RARANGA

The history of British colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand is one of indigenous cultural devastation as much as is the case in many other countries of the world. New European-borne diseases and the increased casualty rates of inter-iwi warfare adversely affected Māori populations where new technology, such as muskets, became common. British colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand brought an assortment of other new influences, particularly capitalism and Christianity that usurped earlier modes of production and belief systems. For many Māori people, a patriarchal god replaced or dominated over a Māori pantheon of female and male deities, for example. Metal implements replaced stone. Machines replaced hand-
tools and printed material such as paper money, certificates of sale and books replaced oral and memorised accounting.

Introduced Government legislation and policy that favoured British commercial domination in Aotearoa New Zealand effectively quickened Māori socio-economic decline. Land loss through confiscations and exploitative transactions deprived many Māori people of traditional resources making their survival overly dependent on the new economic system. Some Māori were, however, actively involved early in this system, interacting with capitalism at least until the mid-19th century. By then, however, wars against Pākehā authorities had either begun or were imminent. Such conflicts reflected an ‘increasing economic and political marginalisation and anxiety about the inability to stem the tide of [Pākehā] immigration [that] led to the rise of Māori nationalism’ (Petrie, 2002: 17). Most notable examples of this Māori nationalism were wars in various locations against Pākehā settlers, soldiers and government from the 1840s to the 1860s.

Life-threatening problems such as disease, poor diet and housing, and warfare more likely precluded any creative acts beyond basic survival techniques. To date, however, there has been no published examination of a correlation between the decline of social conditions of Māori people and the decline of creative activities such as raranga. It is possible that this kind of research has been de-prioritised because of the scale of social problems for Māori since the mid-1800s and the increasingly urgent need to remedy them.

Nevertheless, some correlation between social decline amongst Māori and raranga can be safely assumed by referring to the recorded fate of Māori language and other aspects of Māori culture, once education systems had been introduced with British colonisation. An early example of legislation that directly and adversely affected Māori modes of education came in the form of the Education Ordnance Act in 1846 that officially sanctioned Christian Missionary schools. The establishment of such schools systematically dismantled established Māori modes of education,
supported by a new law. However, this Act cannot be seen in isolation from others that curtailed or drastically hindered Māori cultural practices.17

The Tohunga Suppression Act of 1907 is another example of legislation in Aotearoa New Zealand that overtook Māori practices, replacing them with newer introduced lifestyles. Its adverse effects on Māori methods, particularly those medicinal and health-related, are made patently clear in recent analyses (E. Durie, 2000). The most directly affected by this Act were Māori healers. Whilst the Act had anti-quackery and some humanitarian intentions such as the alleviation of existing Māori social problems, entire tracts of alternative philosophy and health regimes were swept away in a self-righteous Christianity based campaign that placed higher value on European science. Recovery of Māori alternatives is only a more recent priority in schools, universities and other community-driven projects, but much has been lost.

The fate of other tohunga (beside healers) currently receives less notice, though one Māori academic observer (M. Durie, 1998: 76) has observed that the Tohunga Suppression Act:

Although purportedly about positive health promotion, outlawed the guardians of Māori knowledge, tohunga, and their distinctive methodologies. Moreover there was a lack of government tolerance of Māori culture for any other than ceremonial purposes. From a Māori perspective it became extremely difficult to have Māori culture recognised outside an academic context, and even in that situation it was regarded with either suspicion or anthropological curiosity.

A plausible deduction (in the absence of a supporting written record) is, therefore, that this, and other legislation adversely affected raranga expertise along with other forms of Māori cultural knowledge.

It is clear from oral accounts (T. E Diamond, 2001; Gordon-Jones, 2000) that by the 1950s raranga, as an available specialised system of knowledge in Aotearoa New Zealand, had dramatically decreased. In the face of declining respect, raranga exponents and their work virtually became defunct. Lacking public recognition,
raranga activity reduced almost to a secret society of kairaranga within private homes. The gradual though incomplete disappearance of raranga and kairaranga exemplifies gendered aspects of the decline of Māori culture since British colonisation because it pertains particularly to Māori women.

Other technological options such as knitting, crochet and sewing took precedence during this era with notions of the ideal ‘modern’ housewife now in fashion. Some Māori women endeavoured to meet this modern ideal and in the process abandoned the older home based ideas and habits, including the raranga practices of their mothers, aunts and grandmothers. One of my father’s late sisters, for example, who lived through those years, once expressed great regret to me that she had never ‘bothered to learn how to weave’ (Gordon-Jones, 2000). This regret was made more poignant for my aunt by her recollection of her late mother (my paternal grandmother – see conversation with my father at the beginning of this chapter) who was a very active and capable kairaranga during her lifetime. I revisit the important issue of such family recollections in chapter 4.

I was born into the consequences of this 1950s era that had seen increased urban migration of Māori and a resulting alienation from and breakdown of tribal systems. Not long before I was born my parents moved away from the rohe of Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu, which partly explains their cultural alienation in our new home. Effectively, we were international migrants even though we had not at this stage left the country that at that time was known by the dominant Pākehā culture as New Zealand. Our migrant status related to pre-colonial iwi and rohe demarcations (or ‘nations’) rather than a colonised New Zealand nation, bolstered by its powerful internationally recognised Pākehā hegemony. Alternative interests, mainly encouraged by a compulsory non-Māori schooling system and other features of European colonisation, also de-prioritised aspirations to learn or recall Māori culture of any kind. I was not,
therefore, actively encouraged to engage in raranga or any other form of local Māori culture.

Preferences for Pākehā lifestyles also compensated for conflicts between my parents' understandings of Māori culture and those of the local iwi. Yet, our physical appearances assured our family of difference from Pākehā. My parent’s, sometimes unspoken, attachments to their northern homes and a state of ‘not quite belonging’ to Pākehā society, insured our reduced sense of community belonging. In that process our family remained insular and partially disconnected from our extended family ties (Māori and Pākehā) and cultural knowledge. To obtain such knowledge meant active, and at times unpopular, pursuit on my part as much as that of my contemporaries and later generations of children.

REVIVALISM

Current awareness amongst Māori and Pākehā of Māori culture and a re-assertion by Māori people of their identity and culture is, therefore, historically linked to a period (most dramatic in mid-20th century) of Māori migration away from tribal lands. As with most global migration that continues today, this migration was motivated by a search for employment and improved lifestyles in the towns and cities. In the process of urbanisation, Māori ties to land and kin, Māori language, and other systems of knowledge including raranga were affected, often detrimentally.

A current reversion to the earlier forms of Māori cultural production, including techniques and materials not only signifies a Māori groundswell of cultural revivalism and re-assertion in the face of Pākehā domination. It also indicates increasing, though uneven, access via institutions such as school, universities, libraries and archives to information about those techniques and materials for Māori people. In earlier times such information was ignored, abandoned or locked away, perhaps as memorabilia of a ‘dying race’ that never, in fact, died out (Denoon and Mein-Smith, 2000: 80-81). Thus, somewhat ironically, the colonialis system has allowed for
the emergence of an educated and privileged Māori elite in Aotearoa New Zealand that can and does, despite the Māori population’s minority status, influence government policy at all levels.

Much of current Māori political effort at all levels was preceded by the activities of the Young Māori Party that reached political prominence in the 1930s (Van Meijl, 1996: 313) and also the earlier remarkable though largely unsung in published literature, parliamentary career of the Ngāpuhi parliamentarian, Hone Heke Ngapua. In this era male-based activity such as haka, whaikōrero (speechmaking) and whakairo (woodcarving) reached their zenith with a consequent male domination of all Māori activities in the public arena at least. This political history influences current Māori political activism that gathered increased impetus in a Māori cultural ‘renaissance’ of the late 1970s and 1980s. These were well-meant attempts to raise the hopes, dreams and self-estimation of Māori people who as a group continue to be the most disadvantaged in Aotearoa New Zealand society.

Within this and later male-dominated social climates there appears to have been little effort to concentrate on raranga, or indeed any other kind of Māori women’s cultural activity. However, as I have commented elsewhere (J. G. Diamond, 1998 and 1999), this lack of published focus paid little respect to Māori women’s actual political and creative action. Respect for Māori women’s political struggle and creative contributions was sorely needed and has received special renewed attention from Māori women themselves since the 1990s. This thesis also contributes to that effort.

**SOCIAL VALUES**

Late-20th century Māori cultural revivalism in Aotearoa New Zealand therefore denotes changing social values at translocal, transregional and transnational levels. Efforts to revive Māori cultures have subsequently been made that involve the essentialising of Māori identity and practices. Traditional practices, creative innovation, cultural indoctrination via education (in the home, on
marae, and under Government or privately run institutional policy) and commercial enterprise are very much part of today’s Māori cultural production. Family connections and institutional policies play important roles in reshaping raranga, for example, and influence the social values applied to this and other kinds of cultural production.

Nonetheless, within the current Māori revivalist effort, a gendered hierarchy of values associated with cultural production persists. The defining of certain types of creativity as distinct from others, has established hierarchies of value that encourage exclusivity and elitism based on gender as much as skill. For example, Māori creative forms, such as whakairo (woodcarving), have survived colonialism in very different ways to raranga. This difference resonates with higher values placed by a dominant patriarchal system (now with Māori and Pakeha elements) that privileges men’s cultural production.

**Art or Craft**

The introduction since colonisation of categorisations of Māori cultural production into ‘art’ and ‘craft’ has an important bearing on raranga discourse due to gendered and market-driven values embedded within these terms. Put simply and at the risk of over-emphasising a cultural totalisation, many Māori people consider whakairo as a sacred act and this impression is based on a tradition that has confined the practice (and associated rituals) to men. European influences (including Christianity) have supported Māori associations between men, gods, sacred acts and ‘high’ or ‘fine’ art, also bringing forth notions of their dichotomous superiority over ‘craft’, hobby art, women and ‘women’s work’.

Nevertheless, art historians have appeared indecisive and confused in categorising Māori cultural production as either ‘art’ or ‘craft’. In one authoritative text (Barrow, 1972: 7), for example, raranga (along with separated distinctions between it, tāniko and tukutuku) is included in a list of ‘arts’. Cloaks, in relation to tāniko,
are described as ‘products of Maori textile craft’ (Barrow, 1972: 12). Also, a reification of whakairo (wood, stone or bone carving) as the most valuable and valid representation of Māori culture has overshadowed the ‘fibre crafts’ (Pendergrast, 1984: 9) that may therefore seem to the unschooled observer, as less important to that culture. Raranga has been relegated in this process to a lower auxiliary position than whakairo.

Exhibitions of Māori taonga only began in the 1980s to ‘redress the balance; placing weaving alongside carving and incorporating contemporary work to show Māori art as a continuing dynamic force’ (Tamati-Quennell, 1993: 6). Since the 1980s, a small number of exhibitions of raranga have acted as a counter-measure to the imbalance between displays of whakairo and raranga, as has an increased profile of woven items in public displays of taonga. I discuss implications of this cultural value creation within museums and art galleries more fully in a later chapter.

It is also possible to engage with values attached to cultural production using Māori language terms and philosophies. Eminent anthropologist of material culture and visual anthropology, Nicholas Thomas has made a similar point concerning notions of art criticism that run incongruously with indigenous cultural production:

...The accomplishments of indigenous art are too diverse to be contained by the terms of art criticism...they challenge the cultural premises of settler societies in radical ways... Our commonsense view of art as a branch of ‘high’ culture does not prepare us for the widespread and diverse visibility of a remarkable range of ‘low’, ‘middle' and high indigenous art forms, if we must use unhelpful terms that do not possess much salience for indigenous genres (Thomas, 1999b: 225).

Differences of value distributed between kākahu and pari support this point. The pari, for example, can be seen as relatively undefined in the art and craft sense, compared to kākahu (cloaks) that are usually valued by Māori and Pākehā more highly and therefore are more likely to be considered ‘art’.

To date there have been no exhibitions in art galleries or museums that specifically address the wide variety of pari that have
existed for at least a century. It remains to be seen whether such an exhibition would publicly and officially define pari as art or craft, as dance costume or national dress, amongst a number of possible categorisations. A hierarchy of social values persists in both Māori and Pākehā contexts. References to pari therefore recur in this thesis that contributes to future, broadened discourses regarding Māori culture beyond those that currently exist.

Additionally, in the next chapter I discuss ways in which kairaranga currently dispute the basis of a value-based relegation of raranga in a local context. They see raranga as equal and complementary to whakairo, rather than as an adjunct. Owing to their views and the contentious nature of values associated with Māori cultural production, I remain hesitant in defining raranga as either ‘art’ or ‘craft’. I prefer, instead, to associate it with the Māori word toi that veers in translation more toward the English word creativity or a concept of creative force and energy. The word toi can also be distinguished from taonga because the latter term indicates an object’s high value, at least to Māori people. Toi is a more value-neutral term. Although it distinguishes all creative acts above inactivity, it does not refer explicitly or implicitly to any other values hierarchy. It is an inclusive term for all forms of cultural production regardless of their commercial, aesthetic and cultural value. My preference for this term therefore provides some alternative ‘salience for indigenous genres’ (Thomas, 1999b: 225) of creativity such as raranga, that have never fitted comfortably in colonialist notions of high art and low craft.

RARANGA AND MĀORI WOMEN: FROM PRISON TO PRISM
The patriarchal viewpoint that privileges men’s cultural production, (including whakairo) misrepresents, trivialises, skims over and often completely ignores Māori women’s contributions to cultural practices. In a scheme of cultural understanding variously reinforced by religion, educational systems and tourism promotion since colonisation, raranga and Māori women have often been rendered as
merely 'domestic', more than 'expert'. They are also fantasised as politically silent and compliant, dominated by Māori men. Such renditions are far from realistic. Māori women’s involvement in emancipatory politics against race and gender-based oppression manifests cultural values that are at odds with dominant Māori and Pākehā patriarchal perceptions. It is therefore important to address this involvement more deeply.

The rising status of raranga has ridden on the tide of Māori cultural revivalism but, importantly, resonates with Māori feminism (Diamond, 1998: Chapter 2) ensuring its survival. Relationships between Māori women’s postcolonial politics and raranga are therefore contiguous, and as issues surrounding the pari exemplify, can be taken further. A more in-depth view of Māori women’s politics generally and in specific relation to raranga is therefore justified at this point.

PRISIONISATION AND BEYOND

In an anthology entitled *Bittersweet: Indigenous women in the Pacific* (Jones and Suaalii (Eds.): 2000), a woman scholar of Māori and Irish descent, Helene Connor, writes about the prisonisation of Māori women. She links their disproportionate imprisonment compared to Pākehā women in penal institutions of Aotearoa New Zealand, to colonisation and loss of Māori identity. Connor’s incisive analysis aided by recorded narratives from Māori women prison inmates, connects Māori women generally with historical details, statistics and theoretical concepts relevant to colonialism and Māori identity. She makes it patently clear that Māori women’s overall experience of British colonisation amounts to ‘both literal and metaphorical imprisonment’ (Connor, 2000:133). Liberation from a debilitating bind where ‘Historical constructions of Māori women steeped in racism and cultural imperialism, eroded and fractured our sense of identity as Māori’ (Connor, 2000: 129) comes in the form of recapturing Māori culture.
Connor’s vehicles for reapprehending the knowledge and wisdom of Māori tupuna (ancestors) consist of acquiring the reo Māori (Māori language), affirmations of connection to hakaheke (genealogical links) and connections with the natural environment (Connor, 2000: 131-2). Of particular relevance is Connor’s (2000: 130) observation that:

Discourses on gender constructions of femininity and sexuality, motherhood, class, education, penology, penal education, criminality of women and so on impacted simultaneously on the ways the [Māori] women [of her study] made sense of their lives.

Inspired by Connor’s eloquent notion of prisonised Māori women I posit an extension of her emancipatory insight in the knowledge that Māori women have variously resisted and accommodated the tentacles of power that include patriarchal aspects of European colonisation. As one Māori observer notes:

Without question, Māori women have been/are constructed from ‘outside’ by Christian, colonial, Western, patriarchal discourse. [Many Māori women] have written comprehensively about the marginalisation of Māori women through the destruction of our spheres and sites of power, and the imposition of colonial and Western ideologies of gender and race (Hoskins, 2000: 38).

Liberation from the oppressive strictures imposed upon Māori women, (diverse as their social situations may be) includes fostering assertions and re-assertions of Māori cultural referents. These referents are linguistically and genealogically based and sit alongside attachments to land and the environment. In a complex arena of resistance and accommodation such women have had to defend themselves against, or similarly negotiate Māori men. This action takes myriad forms and comprises a varied and prismatic notion of culturally based transcendence, as I now explain.

Not every Māori woman can be, or appreciates being, classed by a commentator as a victim of oppression. Speaking as a Māori woman, I consider our response to oppression as prismatic, implying a space where patriarchal and colonialist oppression invades our
lives as a harsh beam of glaring white light. Many of us negotiate this assault not by reflecting it back equally harshly, but by deflecting and splitting it via multiple forms of resistance. Aspects of raranga are part of this resistance. Many women undertake raranga, for example, as an act of resisting oppression. In this way, they formulate modes of protection for themselves and succeeding generations.

Our actions are not only based on love for offspring and self-preservation. They can also come from the meditative action and inspiration of raranga, its technical qualities, aesthetic sensuality and resultant intellectual sensibilities. Māori women’s emancipatory politics, for example, can be inspired by the same physical features attached to fibrous material used in its process such as its strength and beauty. The botanical features and habitat requirements of the various fibrous plants used in raranga often inspire increased awareness of environmental issues along with other social concerns, leading to political action.

RARANGA LEARNING, TEACHING AND POLITICS
An appreciation of Māori culture through formal and informal education can elevate Māori women’s self-estimation, sometimes leading to ardent involvement in Māori emancipatory politics and concerns for sustainable future existence. Raranga-based education warrants some protracted description and analysis on this basis.

THE WHARE PORA (WEAVING HOUSE)
Kaiako (instructors) of raranga generally expect some affinity between the weaver and fibre (Maihi, 2000; Te Kanawa, 1998; Puketapu-Hetet, 1989; Te Awekotuku, 1991). I describe this affinity with the following narrative that derives from my composite impression of the ideal relationship in raranga amongst kaiako, raranga students and fibre.

The akonga (student) is guided to a place near the kaiako. She first learns to feel the kōrari – touch and smell are very important even at this initial stage. Her kaiako strips the first blade as a demonstration and she watches attentively, and then picks up her own. Hesitantly
she copies, feeling the kōrari in one hand then tentatively pressing her thumbnail for the very first time along one edge. Going with the grain, her thumbnail splits the kōrari leaf and the student is delighted with this earliest connection with the inner ‘soul’ of the fibre. She continues as green marks spread from the kōrari over her thumbnail to the rest of her hand. Along with the colour, kōrari scent spreads too, wafting up to her face and she becomes one with the kōrari and its gentle intoxication. As a rhythm grows so does her focus and a beautiful trance lets her forget the passage of time. Then for a moment, this trance breaks as her kaiako shows her the next step. The pile of split flax needs to be softened so the akonga feels the shell-knife in her hand and sees her teacher deftly slide the kōrari across her own shell-knife. Again the akonga copies and though the earlier rhythm takes a moment to return, she eventually subconsciously submits to it.

All the while her kaiako continues with her own work. Only with occasional glances and upon assessing the rhythmic sound of the hapine (scraping) of the kōrari does the kaiako gauge her student’s talent and potential. She is pleased when a break in the rhythm is remedied by the akonga’s own eager efforts. Not all of her students have this early affinity with the kōrari. Some need to try another kind of fibre first before returning to kōrari. Some are even left longing for a better relationship with this particular fibre and only return to it after other explorations elsewhere. But the kaiako is usually pleased with every effort whether it is with the kōrari, pingao, kiekie, kata, ti or any other fibre.

Today is kōrari’s day though, and the akonga and fibre become fast friends. It is now inevitable that the akonga’s kōrari once placed into raranga will show balance and ideal tension. Only in small instances are her Ara (paths of weaving) lost. Less occasionally the kaiako needs to find them for her student. The akonga learns a rhythm that exceeds any need for patience or frustrated indulgence. Her raranga is smooth and the kōrari moves with her in her action and her spirit. Her teacher is very pleased. The akonga’s first attempt eventually produces a kete (bag) completed with a soft, quiet determination, much trust and aroha (love, compassion, and understanding) between teacher and student. For many years later they will weave together and never deny the deep relationship that exists between them and the fibre. For within the Whare Pora (weaving house), within the world of raranga, they are interdependently, simultaneously mother, daughter and sister.

This narrative conveys an ideal learning situation that is rarely met in these more modern days of competing commitments such as child rearing and other work. Today’s educational dynamic is a departure from the Whare Pora (house of weaving education) of
old, with its dependency upon such factors as peace with rivals (both intra- and inter-iwi) and adequate food and fibre supplies.

Today, other forms of pedagogy including acceptance (via more open attitudes and funding for example) into Pākehā run teaching programs, are a large contingency for raranga education. The Whare Pora is an ideal model that some raranga teachers heed today and attempt to promote and extend, despite a countervailing educational system that can be more equated23 with British colonisation. Under this system, raranga is often deprioritised in the curriculum as an inessential subject with little vocational promise for students. This culturally biased sleight-of-hand reflects patriarchal pedagogy and does little justice to the technical, philosophical, aesthetic and political attributes that can be credited to raranga.

THE MUKA METAPHOR
The importance of raranga has been acknowledged in Māori women’s discourses. In educational and political contexts, for example, metaphoric connections have been made between the kōrari plant muka fibre, mentioned earlier in this chapter, and women’s strength as seen in the following poem entitled Muka (to the weavers of Waiata Koa) by Trixie Te Arama Menzies:

So may I be as the muka –

My flax has been patu’d by stone pounders
I am dyed in the colours of my passions
But then taken and shaped by deft loving fingers

At the last, may I shine lustrous with inner fires

Which were fed through of the master craftswomen,
Disciplined into design
green blades
from the body of Papatuanuku
Alight with radiance of Te Ra
Fitted to serve.

This poem is part of an anthology entitled *He Wai: a song. First Nations women’s writing* (Te Arama Menzies, 1996). Trixie Te Arama Menzies, its editor, describes (1996: 9) all the poems in this anthology as ‘about the mana of women, the enormous resilient strength of the life-givers and nurturers, powerful but never aggressive, peaceful but never passive’. The contributors are part of *Waiata Koa*, a group of Auckland-based Māori women kairaranga, writers and artists.

In Te Arama Menzies’ own poem *Muka (to the weavers of Waiata Koa)*, muka is personified as the strong disciplined Māori woman, a product of the natural environment, creativity and life’s many lessons. It also brings to mind mythological narratives that contain raranga references. One example is the narrative concerning the all-important Māori creation god Tane-Mahuta (mentioned earlier in relation to kete), who according to Māori tradition, sought three kete of knowledge (Barlow, 1991:156-159), and endured many trials to obtain them.

Whilst an idealised Māori woman is the focus of Te Arama Menzies’ poem, she is not one that all Māori women can emulate. Nevertheless her image provides powerful impetus in an emancipatory politics that strives to encourage (and educate) such women to exceed their current limitations. Some of these limitations include prisonisation and other negative legacies of British colonialism.

Whilst many other raranga-based ideas comprise this anthology, Menzies’ poem is exemplary of the connections made between Māori women, raranga and the attributes of those fibres used in its process. Fibre, including muka, also remains at the heart of issues surrounding raranga and Māori women’s political struggles. In earlier discussion of techniques and items it was shown that the fibres used in raranga range from those deriving from
processed (cut, dyed, scraped for example) plant material through to other materials such as plastic and bronze. The introduction of other fibres, not previously available in Aotearoa New Zealand before Europeans arrived, became part of a changing body of raranga items and techniques.

However, as part of cultural revivalism, there has been a privileging of the indigenous sources of fibre such as kōrari, over the introduced varieties. Use of the latter can therefore be regarded by some kairaranga as 'un-Māori', an example of how raranga can be tied to essentialist Māori identity. Furthermore, the indigenous fibres are considered as fundamentally, and by nature, linked to Indigenous peoples more than non-Indigenous. This association between indigenous plants and people can engender essentialist pride and strength in Māori women, and as I discuss more fully in part 2 of this thesis, can be the impetus for new senses of identity and belonging.

At this moment, however, it is more important to this chapter's role of setting scenes for subsequent chapters, to focus upon essentialism and its affects on cultural revivalism. By using details of my family's history, I now illustrate how essentialised notions of Māori women's struggle may be enhanced and sometimes criticised via a personal narrative.

**Some Family History: An Anti-Essentialist Critique**

To illustrate Māori women’s strength and power along with the complexity of social identity amongst Ngāpuhi I need only look at some of my family history. The following narrative concerns Kaikohe, a small town in Aotearoa New Zealand, which prominently features at various points in this thesis (see figure 2.14 and other maps in chapter 3).

As discussed earlier, migration to other areas outside the rohe of Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu has complicated tribal identities. Such migration has occurred at short distance, between farms and cities along with international border crossing. One example of short
distance migration that has important implications for Ngāpuhi identity and Māori women’s relationship with colonialist hegemony comes from my family history. This example incorporates some of the life of my late maternal grandfather Hakaraia Karaka and grandmother Kahutaha Mita Morunga.

My grandfather and grandmother moved from Utakura to Kaikohe after their first child died at the age of two. My grandmother, particularly, feared living in Utakura after this death especially since it was her husband’s birthplace not her own and she had none of her own family’s support. She agreed to move the twenty kilometres to the town of Kaikohe because it was considered to be neutral ground situated between her birthplace, Whirinaki and that of her husband.

![Figure 2.14: Map including the town of Kaikohe and surrounding region (Adapted from McLintock (Ed.) 1966). Area discussed in this sub-section lies between Kaikohe and Taheke, Rawene and Kohukohu.](image)

Today the distance between Whirinaki, Utakura and Kaikohe by car can be covered in an hour and a half despite some of it being gravel road. In my grandparents’ time (1920s) the journey would not have ended in a day. The real decider for their move was, however, work opportunity. My grandfather found employment with the railway department where he could earn money to support his growing family.
Their first house on Kaikohe hill was rented from the Railways Department. The family eventually outgrew this house though and it was a well-known local kuia (respected woman elder and in this case a landowner) Pare Ngareta, who gifted some land to them on Rangihamama Road. Whilst my grandparents both had customary land entitlements further afield (under Māori and Pākehā law as later land court rulings would confirm) these did not extend to Kaikohe. It was here that my mother, the last of their children was born.

Upon reflection, my mother considers the move to Kaikohe the ‘worst ever’ (Diamond, T. E., 2001-3) because of the family’s subsequent displacement. In spite of the fact that all three areas, Utakura, Whirinaki and Kaikohe are within the Ngāpuhi rohe and my grandparents could claim membership of various hapū (sub tribes) of Ngāpuhi my mother has never felt as though she belonged to Kaikohe. To her, the primary identity of her family originates in Utakura.

The mixture of families of the children who attended the Kaikohe Native School in the late 1930s and early 1940s with my mother meant that many could not identify with Kaikohe as their own place of birth or that of their parents. Their hapū (sub tribal, localised) identity had fragmented due to their parents’ job opportunities and with this change came some of the schoolchildren’s first experiences of inter-tribal and intra-tribal difference.

Owing to my grandparents mixed race genealogy24 my mother was labelled along with others of similar blood ‘hawhe pihikete’ a half-biscuit, referring to her unusual fair colour and mixed ancestry. This labelling aggravated my mother’s diminished sense of belonging to Kaikohe. The family’s place in Kaikohe was established under Māori terms of land ownership by the gift of land to my grandfather due to his standing and respect amongst particular Ngāpuhi hapū. It has never been made clear to me whether this transaction also involved my grandmother though many kaumatua
(elders) recount her good standing in the Kaikohe community. However the gifting of land from Pare Ngareta to my grandfather was later undermined by the actions of the Māori Affairs Department.

In a dubious action, a Māori man and agent for the Department used land legislation of the day to outweigh Pare’s gift. His actions made it necessary for my grandfather to pay money to the Department for legal title. It is doubtful if this money ever reached anyone outside the Department. Pare, her descendants (Rankin, G. 2001) and members of my family considered her ‘gift’ as legal and binding, having no recollection of receiving money for it. My mother was not aware of class differences in Kaikohe, but the power of the Māori Affairs Department and the exchange of money that outweighed Māori economic transactions, did engender a new class structure where families of Department employees were often far better off.

Alongside the problems of recognised land ownership under a colonialist system ran the adverse influence of religion. Though my grandparents were Anglicans and raised their children accordingly, the counter-influence of other Christian Churches brought more ‘us and them’ mentality to Kaikohe. Another division existed between the officially recognised Christian Churches (including Anglican and Mormon) and Māori religions such as the Nakahi that contained some Christian elements but was more influenced by Māori cultural references. This division persists today, though in my mother’s day the religious differences prompted much more violent acts (Diamond, T. E., 2001-3). Religious differences amongst people who identify as Māori dismantle notions of a uniform Māori identity and have been made increasingly obvious since the introduction of Christian denominations. Such denominations, by very definition, encourage disunity in any community’s spiritual outlook. The notion of a homogenous Māori community, in terms of cultural identity and religion, is also a fallacy.
This centralised melting pot of difference in the 1940s meant that many people of Kaikohe felt alienated from their places of belonging. Their personal family pride was gradually whittled away. The social consequences of this history can be seen in the depressed economic situation of Kaikohe today as I discuss in more depth, later.

Memories attached to my grandfather’s move to Kaikohe not only brought persistent pain to my mother and her family. They also exemplify the complexity of Ngāpuhi identity, its history and the problematic application of its name to certain places, particularly since British colonisation. Though my grandparents move from Utakura to Kaikohe may be considered ‘progress’ in capitalist terms, as my grandfather found better employment in the town, it had disastrous effects for my mother’s own sense of identity and self-pride. My mother would be the first to admit that her situation was not nearly as bad as others amongst those people who made similar moves around the same time.

It is clear from this narrative that senses of identity and belonging to certain places have occurred prior to the 1950s Māori migration to the more populated cities of Auckland and Wellington. Smaller towns such as Kaikohe were the centres for many short distant migrations that often had adverse effects on both tribal and smaller family based identity.

However, it is also clear that power existed in the hands of powerful and respected women such as Pare Ngareta, who gifted land to my grandfather. She is part of a larger story involving Ngāpuhi Māori women that is yet to reach a published page. Their power and standing in the community was usurped by a colonialist system of which some Māori people took unfair advantage. Māori women’s unpublished biographies often challenge the notion of Māori women being powerless victims in their communities. They also act as a counter-measure against the notion that all Māori people suffered equally under a colonialist system. Their stories are complex mixtures of hapū and religious affiliation as well as the
pressure of an unequal division of resources and opportunities under capitalism. As will be seen in subsequent chapters of this thesis, their stories also relate to raranga.

Trans-local migration, complex tribal identities and negotiations with Pākehā hegemonies belie generalised and reified notions of Māori identity and economic standpoints. Ngāpuhi people, including my family, have had various amounts of successful negotiation with capitalism that replaced traditional Māori economies. Strict dichotomies between colonised and coloniser, Pākehā and Māori, rich and poor are complicated by a number of detailed variables beyond the question of identity, such as how raranga and Māori women relate to current Māori politics and distributions of power.

CHAPTER DISCUSSION
This chapter has shown that social issues including cultural representations, identity formations, revivalisms and political struggles are never far removed from raranga techniques and items. It is in this exploration of the embodied creative and social practice of raranga, that ‘art and culture are inseparable’ (Tucker, 1990: 7). I have shown that the importance of raranga in terms of technique, outcomes and social intercourse, has not been adequately addressed in currently published literature. As cultural theorist and Philippines textile expert, Marian Pastor-Roces (1991: 10) powerfully argues: ‘the traditional textile is precious because it is being sucked into oblivion’. Relationships between power and raranga have been brought into clearer focus via issues surrounding the prisonisation of kairaranga and other Māori women, including their false representation under colonialism.

Indeed this discussion is also relevant to all other cultures outside what is generally termed Māori (a term that signifies so much diversity rather than solidarity) that in the majority of the world privileges men above, and to the overall detriment of, women and children. This ‘common ground’ (Tucker, 1990: 7) between
Indigenous groups, women and other marginalised people, is becoming increasingly apparent. As Marcia Tucker rightly posits in the ‘Director’s foreword’ of the groundbreaking edited volume *Out there* (1990), it is only through this common ground that we can resist marginalisation and ‘ultimately ... deconstruct the problematic binary notions of center and periphery, inclusion and exclusion, majority and minority, as they operate in artistic and social practice’ (Tucker, 1990: 7). Likewise, Pastor-Roces (1995: 79) suggests that marginalisation creates ‘a longing for affirmation within history, however differentiated by the particularities of location’.

With its wide-ranging general discussion, this chapter acts somewhat as a ‘parent’ that links the introductory first chapter with subsequent chapters. Each of the following chapters relates in various ways to this one, but involves yet another social context or conceptual framework pertaining to raranga and Māori women.

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1 In his seminal study of Māori cultural renaissance entitled ‘Patrons of Māori Culture’ Steven Webster (1998:39) describes the history of Māori culture in relation to post-coloniality thus:

The Renaissance is only the most recent of a history of confrontations precipitated by conflicts of interest between Māori and Pākehā. Some of these confrontations have been successful for the Māori, but in the long run the results have tended to deprive the majority of them of the political economic resources necessary to control their own culture as ‘a whole way of life’. Thus the confrontations continue to recur. Indeed, in the history of colonisation and the continuing post-colonial struggle for a measure of independence, societies which have retained control of ‘a whole way of life’ are nonexistent. From this perspective, Māori culture is more clearly – and much less patronisingly – seen as ‘a whole way of struggle’ rather than as a whole way of life.

Webster (see p.261 in Notes) is responding with this statement to E.P Thompson’s critique of theorist Raymond Williams ‘functionalist and even Romantic assumption’ of British culture as a ‘whole way of life’. I concur with and emulate Webster’s view of Māori culture within a postcolonial frame of continuous struggle implicitly and explicitly throughout this thesis.

2 I refer to emancipatory politics where it ‘concerns the assertion of the claim for equality in relation to the wrongs of exclusion by policy’ (Yeatman, 1993:22). This is a politics that seeks to work tenably with prevailing systems by contributing principles and actions hitherto marginalised or ignored. Such contributions may risk being ‘subject to capture in order to further legitimate dominant views of what is of interest and of concern to indigenous people’ (Bishop, 1997: 29). They may also radically and profoundly change the inequities of those systems in the better interests of all affected parties.

3 Puketapu-Hetet (1989) has been instrumental in promoting a reassertion of pan-Māori cultural identity as part of raranga. The video film *Tu Tangata* exemplifies this politically laden effort: *weaving for the people* (Greenberg, 2000).

4 Some raranga items are a composite of diagonal weaving, squared weaving, tāniko and tukutuku. Often only the weavers’ imagination and technical expertise alone limits the choice of technique.
5 I use the word ‘modern’ here to describe materials introduced into Aotearoa New Zealand by Europeans.
6 This revival occurred as part of a general ‘renaissance’ of Māori culture from the 1970s on.
7 Throughout this thesis I employ the Ngāpuhi name for this plant (also known as Phormium Tenax and New Zealand Flax), kōrari, while acknowledging more southern iwi who more commonly name it harakeke and confine the name kōrari to the plant’s flowers.
8 It is rather simplistic to describe art schools in Aotearoa New Zealand as purely Pākehā as they can include Māori staff. However, I use this descriptor for those institutions that are predominantly run by Pākehā under educational systems where Māori input has historically been minimal.
9 Roger Neich (1993:), an authority on kowhaiwhai (Māori painting) has pointed out that the word whakairo as equivalent to the English word style. The current association made between whakairo and woodcarving alone therefore constricts this broader interpretation.
10 Māori dolls usually made from brown coloured plastic and dressed in ‘traditional’ Māori costume were a popular tourist-orientated commodity in the 1960s and 1970s. More recently they have fallen out of favour, as consumers become more aware that Māori people may feel the designers and manufacturers are degrading Māori people and culture.
11 Kākahau can be translated generally as ‘clothes’ or ‘garments’ as well as more specifically regarding particular items of clothing such as cloaks and capes.
12 According to experienced kairaranga Toi Maihi (2003) examples of whāriki constructed for specific people of high social status and/or for specific purposes such a resting whāriki for tūpāpaku (corpses) during tangihanga (funerals) currently exist on some marae in Aotearoa New Zealand. I have not seen such whāriki but delight in the possibility of future research with Toi and other kairaranga into the history and currency of such whāriki.
13 See chapter 3 for larger reference to mats including whāriki.
14 I hesitate to use the term taonga here because some Māori opinion would hold all items (whether they are woven, carved or painted) on a marae as being taonga regardless of their eventual fate if moved outside the marae. Some whāriki, for example, have been discarded because of ‘wear and tear’. Also their owners do not regard some whāriki in private homes as taonga until they are passed on to the next generation at least once. I extend this discussion of taonga in later chapters.
15 Such guests are not necessarily people of high official station such as high-ranking politicians or State Leaders. They also include whānau pani (bereaved close relatives of the deceased) during tangihanga (funereal proceedings).
16 The Act in giving educational responsibility to Mission Schools effectively hindered any unsanctioned, non-European religious contribution to the State school curriculum and severely diminished any respect for and furtherance of Māori knowledge systems including Māori language.
17 Māori academic and author Mason Durie (1998:59), for example, also identifies five other, more recent Parliamentary Acts that are detrimental to the common use and public broadcasting of the Māori language.
18 This ‘society’ of kairaranga was not actively secret. It was, however, marginalised to the extent that it is now silent in published records of Māori ‘art and craft’.
19 I must at this stage in keeping with Māori protocols acknowledge the Ngāi-te-rangi and Ngāti Ranginui iwi of Tauranga, Bay of Plenty where I was born and the Ngāti Hine hapū of Maromaku, Northern Aotearoa where I was conceived.
20 Author and academic Paul Moon is currently researching the life of this Ngāpuhi man who was one of the first Māori members of Parliament and whose very successful political career was cut short with his death at the age of 40. Moon’s appraisal may bring light on Ngāpuhi contributions to Māori cultural revival that do not yet appear in published text but are well-known amongst many Ngāpuhi people (Rankin, 2000)
21 Exhibitions of woven items include Karanga Karanga 1986, Te Ao Hurihuri 1996 and Pū Manawa 1993 (Tamati-Quennell (Ed.), 1993: 6) while larger international exhibitions that displayed raranga items in equal measure to other forms of cultural production include Te Māori 1984.

22 The author Helene Connor, the originator of the term prisonisation, best explains this concept as one

...That implies incarceration both within a penal institution and beyond the prison walls. In the metaphorical sense, prisonisation refers to the process whereby Māori became ‘captives of British cultural imperialism. In the literal sense, prisonisation refers to the high levels of actual incarceration in penal institutions of Māori (Connor, 2000: 126)

23 Such an observation should in no way detract from the valiant efforts of some Māori teachers currently working within this system to bring about change especially for Māori students who represent those least successful (M. Durie, 1998:87) in the educational system in Aotearoa New Zealand when compared to Pākehā students.

24 As mentioned in the previous chapter my hakaheke contains a number of Pākehā ancestors in the bloodlines of all four of my grandparents.
KA ORA ANO TE KAÎRARANGA (THE WEAVER REVIVES)

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INTRODUCTION

We slowly proceed along a secluded winding road from Mangamuka Bridge to Kohukohu. This road skirts the Hokianga Harbour. It is in the region of my family’s ancestral lands in northern Aotearoa New Zealand. My father’s eldest sister, Tina Gordon-Jones has passed away and her tangihanga (funeral) has begun on the Tauteihihi Marae, our destination. Although it is not a time for formalised ethnographic research, it takes place during my official doctoral ‘fieldwork’. My aunt’s death was, unfortunately, one of many that occurred during this fieldwork. There is solace in recalling those shared moments with a woman I admired especially because she had lived a long and full life. She had often indulged me when, during our many conversations together, I wove kete from pingao strands, that golden fibre from local sand dunes that she had been familiar with all her life. While she was pleased with the current revival of raranga, she also expressed regret at never undertaking it, given her mother’s raranga expertise. Her tangihanga proceeded over three days and her gravesite, despite its remoteness, is well tended by surviving relatives. Haere, haere e whaea atawahai i roto i the rangimarie, may she rest in peace (Diamond, J. G., 1998-2003)

This chapter has begun similarly to the last, with a glimpse of my family’s history. I incorporate some of my late aunt, Tina Gordon-Jones’ opinion into this thesis, acknowledging her contribution to my doctoral research with those hours of spoken recollection she so generously provided. As the primary focus of this chapter is on ethnographic research methodology (including its ethical foundations) and outcomes, I include as an example, one aspect of my aunt’s tangihanga in its first section. This section interweaves published recommendations for research amongst Māori communities with my own personal experiences.

In the second section, focus shifts to a localised context where raranga is undertaken on one Ngāpuhi marae and where the voices of kairaranga ring ‘loud and clear’ through spoken word, non-verbal communication and woven items. In an analysis of this context, raranga as a form of cultural production manifests Māori women’s lived experiences of colonialism and cultural revival. This marae receives such particular attention, including far deeper
discussion of raranga techniques, senses, sensibilities and politics of kairaranga, not least because it hosted a key portion of my doctoral research in northern Aotearoa New Zealand. The section therefore features a case study in which I participated, as a researcher, kairaranga and student amongst other roles such as ‘family member’ and friend.

SECTION 1: RESEARCH, RARANGA AND VALUE CREATION

METHODOLOGY
Māori scholars (Te Awekotuku quoted in Cram, 1997: 45) have stated that ‘research is about power’. Their view supports aspects of my recent ethnographic research as a doctoral student. An Australian Government Scholarship made this research possible with fieldwork funding from the Centre for Cross-cultural Research and the School of Anthropology and Archaeology at the Australian National University. With this support I gained power as a researcher; a privilege unattained by most of my family members and other Māori people who are, nevertheless, an indispensable part of this thesis.

However, within this privilege there are obligations. Whilst I am eager to promote and assert various aspects of Māori culture undertaken by Māori women, particularly raranga, I must also comply with certain rules and regulations in an effort to attain a doctorate that I trust will further empower me in my academic work. Such empowerment may eventually bring greater independence (financial and intellectual), yet my current capacity as a scholar is subject to a hegemonic system that does not originate from the culture of my Māori ancestors. I am mindful in the methodology of my doctoral fieldwork of the contentious nature of researching amongst Māori people in Aotearoa New Zealand. This methodology is also cognizant of cultural property issues in contexts where colonialist power still holds most influence and financial resources.

Māori scholar and champion of Indigenous rights Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999:1), has observed that many Māori people’s
negative attitudes toward academic research 'reflect a bitter memory about the role that research and theory have had in legitimating colonial practices in New Zealand.' Thus, current cultural property issues apply pressure to researchers, especially in relation to those groups of people, like Māori, who have borne the brunt of past research travesties. Current activities include politically led efforts to re-establish customary ownership of Māori culture by Māori, for Māori through legal process. There is, for example, a current claim (WAI 262) set before the Waitangi Tribunal in Aotearoa New Zealand, a body that hears all claims against the British Crown under the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi 1840 and subsequent Government Acts. The Tribunal recommends further action to Parliament and the Judiciary based on its findings. The claim Wai 262 seeks to protect Māori interests over cultural and intellectual property. The outcomes of this claim, and any subsequent and related claims may dramatically affect all researchers of Māori culture.

Efforts to protect and responsibly disseminate Māori cultural property are part of my own political and academic agenda. As discussed in chapter 2, colonialism has been detrimental to raranga and Māori women. Insensitive and irresponsible research methods add to those problems that I am committed to redress. Part of the process of revaluing raranga via this thesis is reclamation of, respect for, and understanding of this and other kinds of Māori cultural knowledge.

A COMMENT ON PHOTOGRAPHIC 'EVIDENCE'
Clear examples of where published research findings can misrepresent or fail to acknowledge Māori people, appeared in the previous chapter that featured photographs of raranga makers and wearers, whose identities are not recorded. The disservice to those 'silenced' women, as well as consequent sociological research about raranga, cannot be understated. A search for their identities (including consultation with possible family members) in a
concerted effort to pay them due respect, needs to be incorporated into a plan of redress in research methodology and reporting.

However, there is another aspect of photographic representation that also concerns research methodology in a different way. This aspect relates to the presentation of this thesis and its inclusion of photographs to support the text. To clarify this point I direct attention to my aunt’s tangihanga that I referred to at the beginning of this chapter. There was absolutely no way in which I would have considered taking photographs of my aunt’s tangihanga for the purposes of this thesis.

I consider it most inappropriate and inconsiderate to photograph the proceedings of a tangihanga and this position impacts on my research methods. It is a position that is also based on an awareness of my family’s attitude towards photography during tangihanga. This attitude does not dispel the importance of photographed images of our tupuna (deceased ancestors) that are displayed during many of our tangihanga. Nevertheless, it does not encourage the presence of ‘snap-happy’ photographers. Accordingly, throughout this thesis that frequently refers to tangihanga, I do not include images of those events, relying instead on written descriptions that are not so loaded with the intrusiveness and misrepresentation that can come with a camera. In this particular sense my research standards are based on my own discretion and my family’s wishes. I am not so bold as to prescribe these standards on other researchers, but offer them as a suggestion and as a glimpse into my family’s attitudes to research. I continue this exploration of research methodologies from an ‘insider’s’ perspective and in relation to published literature on the subject.

KAUPAPA MĀORI RESEARCH
Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999:7-8) recommends ‘Kaupapa Māori Research’ procedures and principles that take care not to degrade Māori subjects of research. She argues that research itself should be a collective effort where family, especially kaumatua (elders) take an
active and authoritative role. These principles and procedures should, according to this argument, be followed regardless of the researcher's background and identity. Such recommendations (supported by Bishop, 1997; Gibbs, 2001; G. H Smith, 2000) are a counter-measure to exploitative and inaccurate research methods and analyses. I now build on these recommendations in relation to some of my recent research experiences.

TRUST AND INTEGRITY
In the early stages of this research, Māori people of a variety of ages and social standing warned me not to 'be like [so and so] who came and ripped us off like most of you academics have done' (Diamond, J. G., 1998-2003). However, a question remains as to whether freedoms of thought and speech are being encouraged or limited by such warnings. Researchers need time to build trust, to make their intentions clear, and to prove their integrity with actions as well as talk. Risks exist on all sides for integrity. For example, a researcher of high integrity might not be welcomed because of the actions of a less trustworthy predecessor. Research that is valuable to a community may never come about because of sanctimonious decisions to exclude researchers, based on earlier experiences. My thoughts in no way exonerate those researchers of devious intent, inexperience or incompetence. They do, however, question blanket prejudicial assumptions that all researchers are the same.

KAUMATUA AND ÉLITISM
It also provides me with little solace to see fit to point out that the authority one should ideally seek amongst our elders, according to Kaupapa Māori research strategies, is sometimes sadly lacking in both Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. Death and impassable distance between the living and the dead have separated many of us surviving researchers from those fonts of dignity, merit and full knowledge who have passed away. Some of the older people who might have qualified as kaumatua in different circumstances do not possess adequate authority and mana (see chapter 4 for discussion of
this term that relates to social status). Indeed, some of them have not been immune from misadventure and a few have criminal records. At least some of this situation is attributable to the breakdown of Māori systems of authority following British colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand.

During fieldwork, I often needed to be on guard at one moment and to willingly comply at another, exercising my own judgement and opinions. Like many Māori people who have grown up in towns and cities, I have not had constant contact with Māori authority, and extended residence in Australia allowed freedom from many constraints that such authorities might impose. For much of my life, including the period of my doctoral research, there was no automatically available access to family members, including kaumatua. This fact bears witness to the effects of my family’s migration away from its ancestral land to urban centres. Apart from a small number of pre-fieldwork arrangements that were possible, contact with many of my kaumatua was more a case of being in the right place at the right time. Finding the exemplary kaumatua and tribal authority was not an easy task. It was usually based on recommendations from other kaumatua, though the ‘pool’ is rapidly declining in number given their advancing vulnerability to illness and death in advanced age.

Most kaumatua were generous and helpful though they made no concerted, combined or obviously planned effort to provide me with directives or knowledge. Many of them voiced strong views on many matters including the intellectual calibre and integrity of many researchers, or lack thereof. As a result, some kaumatua hesitated to help me more than others. Some would not, and never will, concur with their peers, and were at pains to convince me of the validity of their views over others. Still others imparted cultural knowledge, but left me to decide upon appropriate modes of research behaviour and thesis writing.

Nevertheless, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the invaluable assistance that kaumatua have given in my research.
efforts. One of many examples of their help came in the context of elitism. If I was ever regarded as part of an élite, a category that some relatives and associates have applied to me given my academic involvement, it was not an obvious feature of the regard or affection afforded to me by my kaumatua. Indeed, my awhi (assistance) with their political campaigns was requested and I was aware of their expectation that I would not refuse. In a Māori Land Court hearing in 2000, for example, I was appointed as a tonotono (runner) in between the presiding Judge and my kaumatua. My kaumatua did not raise me to heady privileged heights because of my ‘Pākehā’ education. They merely saw me as a convenient and eloquent ‘go-between’. In my eyes, and I daresay the Judge’s too, my kaumatua are the élite given their extensive cultural knowledge, life experience and business acumen.

My research efforts were enhanced, rather than limited, by this relationship that by no means victimised my kaumatua. However, I often ponder the outcome, had I not agreed in principle and practice to their plans, and had refused to be involved. It is nevertheless clear that participation in the élite world of academe did not necessarily qualify me as élite in kaumatua eyes. This was something I was grateful for because our relationship was far more convivial than it might have been had I adopted any superior attitude.

KUIA
When using the term kaumatua I am conscious of the fact that it is one that applies to men, though I have often heard it used generically to include women elders. The preferred term in many Māori circles for a female elder is, however, kuia, sometimes abbreviated to kui. My previous comments concerning kaumatua apply to both men and women elders. One distinction I do make between kaumatua (men) and kuia (women) is based on the fact that many kuia helped me with insights into philosophical thought, theory and practice of raranga. Their views sometimes differed from the men’s, as I explain
in the second section of this chapter. The main point to be made from this exploration of the involvement of elders in my research is that their responses varied depending on each individual’s personality and politics, their circle of associates and their impressions of me as a family member and researcher.

If my research methodology is to be seen as part of a collective effort amongst my Māori relatives, it needs to be emphasised that relationships within this collectivity required constant negotiation and careful maintenance. Active negotiation and maintenance of relationships takes up time and energy. Research by Indigenous scholars amongst their own families is therefore not necessarily a straightforward matter and can include variable situational circumstances. Emotional attachments are as much a part of this process as is a competent analytical approach. As mentioned earlier, many of my kaumatua and kuia, who I have regarded highly, have passed away since my official fieldwork in Aotearoa New Zealand from 1999 to early 2001. Much of my current work is in honour of their memory, signifying my emotional attachment to them as much as the high value I place on their knowledge.

**Objectivity**

I do not support the attitude that Māori people, including researchers like me, are inherently biased towards their ‘own’ and so should leave research to those who might be more objective and impartial. One legacy (and ideology) of hegemonic positivist science is a presumption of impartial and transparent vision that is beyond the capacity of disempowered groups of people, including Māori women (Cram, 1997: 44-5; Smith, L. T., 1999: 4-7). An alternative form of feminist-based objectivity has been suggested:

All Western cultural narratives about objectivity are allegories of the ideologies governing the relations of what we call mind and body, distance and responsibility. Feminist objectivity is about limited location and situated knowledge, not about transcendence and splitting of subject and object. It allows us to become answerable for what we learn how to see … Feminist objectivity makes room for surprises and ironies at the heart of
all knowledge production; we are not in charge of the world (Haraway, 1988: 583 & 594).

Feminist objectivity, in terms of feminist theorist Donna Haraway’s ‘limited location and situated knowledge’ and the principles of Kaupapa Māori Methodology (Smith, L. T., 1999) are guidelines for my research. This research constitutes ‘situated knowledge’ of raranga in particular Trans-Tasman locations that are indeed, replete with ‘ironies and surprises’ (Haraway, 1988: 594).

I am also inspired by my kaumatua who point to the complex interconnectedness of current and historical actions and events. During my fieldwork, it proved most important not to isolate particular moments as irrelevant to the entire research enterprise. Open-mindedness and a refusal to rigidly and permanently categorise both people and their actions into ‘closed’ camps (often competing with one another), remain imperative. A challenge of this doctoral thesis is to encapsulate that experience and insight in clear, coherent fashion that is itself subject to time-honoured academic rules and regulations. This thesis is a product of an inter-play of distinct, though fluid forms of value creation, maintenance and change, where I do not have all the answers and I am not ‘in charge of the world’ (See Haraway 1998:594 quoted earlier).

ENQUIRY
Māori ‘society’ is not one pure and unchanging entity. It is complex and prone to diverse influences. However, in many places including my Ngāpuhi ‘home’, it remains inherently hierarchical in nature and many of its members are content to do as they are told by elders, spouses, the local church ministers or priests and any other recognised authority. It is inappropriate, to say the least, for me to attempt to upset their equilibrium. Nevertheless, I consider it ethically wrong not to ask a comprehensive variety of questions and engage critically with the responses, especially in my role as a researcher. I also believe in the view that ‘There are no dumb questions. The only dumb question is the one you didn’t ask’ (Kehoe, 1997: 94).
More and more questions arise in this kind of inquiring milieu such as ‘Must I be muffled for the sake of adhering to tikanga Māori (rules according to Māori custom)? Is tikanga Māori unquestionable, allowing for no critique? Is it somehow ‘un-Māori’ to harbour such thoughts and where do my cultural loyalties lie?’ Thus, issues of knowledge accumulation, dissemination, protection and preservation rub against those of identity formation and assertion. These are issues I continually re-visit throughout this thesis.

POSITIONING
It can be seen from the discussion so far that within the processes of research there are ethical and identity-based political issues and problems. Māori efforts join others in seeking viable, honourable and sustainable research alternatives. In this thesis, however, issues of Trans-Tasman Māori identity and their inter-relationship with raranga take foremost importance and it is necessary to make my own position as a Māori scholar, clear. Given my identification as a Māori woman of Ngāpuhi descent funded by Australia’s government and academy, the insights of postcolonial literary critic Gayatri Spivak (Spivak and Papastergiadis, 1991: 65-66) hold some resonance with my position as a researcher:

We are shuttling between Narcissus and Echo: fixating upon the pre-fixed image, a pre-fixed staging, saying to other women within the culture that is how we should be identified. On the other hand, [in] the construction of ourselves as counter-echo to the Western dominance, we cannot in fact be confined to behaving as we have been defined. Where there is a moment of slippage there is also a robust aporetic position, rather than being either the self-righteous continuist narcissism in the name of identity, or the message of despair of nothing but Echo.

Although I repeat this reference to Spivak later in this thesis in relation to a vocabulary and rationale for future research projects, here it is relevant to note that my Māori cultural identity shifts according to context from extended family member, to friend, to woman and mother, to name some examples. As mentioned earlier, my official designation as a ‘researcher’ depended on my research
funding from Australia. Responsibilities and obligations to my family, to my ‘home’ university in Canberra therefore melded with a wish to ‘get along’ well with other people and to embrace an opportunity for learning and helping. These various positions cannot be clearly distinguished from each other. They remain interwoven throughout my everyday existence, at variance with any clear dichotomies between ‘profession’ and ‘private life’. Working within a framework of feminist objectivity (Haraway, 1988), my research position accepted multiple identities of others involved in the research as well as my own, but did not exclude critical and responsible engagement from that process.

I am also mindful of the academic discipline of ethnographic anthropology as it relates to Indigenous people and cultural prestation:4

...The play of assertion and negation is a condition of anthropological talk. Moreover, it is also a feature of indigenous peoples’ own coding of practices and ethnic differences. Forms of prestation are also signifiers within similar debates about cultural contrasts and social alternatives among tribal peoples. This is another way of recognizing that they have their ‘anthropology’ – if anthropology is essentially discourse upon social and cultural values based on material about others – and thus leads us to a more realistic and immediate sense of indigenous peoples as co-subjects in a wider system (Thomas, 1994:13-14).

I have adopted a particular Indigenous ‘pre-station’ in critically examining discourses surrounding raranga and Trans-Tasman Māori identity formations. In doing so, I engage in this anthropology, this ‘discourse upon social and cultural values’ that is based not only about ‘others’ but also upon material about myself. These discourses exist in ‘idiosyncratic’ (Seremetakis, 1994b: 134-135) relationship with raranga and are emotive, political and affective.

Dual citizenship of Australia and New Zealand automatically places me into a liminal position that invites me to participate in the political processes of both countries separately, and together. I, along with others in this citizenship paradigm, have an opportunity
to contribute to at least two legally defined nations and their respective polities. My Indigenous social and cultural values exemplify the notion of ‘indigenous peoples as co-subjects in a wider system’, yet they may also detract from some of the diverse Indigenous viewpoints that are part of this system. This situation of being can test some notions of loyalty and in a wartime situation I might be suspected of not belonging to either country, to my eventual detriment. Even in peacetime, questions on my authority pertaining to either country may, quite understandably, be asked.

Knowledge of the Māori concepts of ahi kā, tūrangawaewae and ūkaipō that signify attachments to iwi and rohe (tribe and territory) played havoc with my mind and motivation early in my fieldwork. I had returned after a twelve-year absence to the country of my birth. I had never previously taken up residence in the Ngāpuhi rohe where generations of my family have lived. Importantly in Māori cultural reckoning, a rohe is also where they were born, died and buried. In Māori terminology, all these people to whom I refer are ‘tangata whenua’ (literally translatable as ‘land people’) of various localities of the North. I could, in keeping with this family history, invest a whole sense of belonging into these places based on Māori cultural premises.

I am expected to do so by many of my kaumatua, despite my protracted absence. This lenient attitude reflects changing attitudes to those of us who move away from our rohe. The customary principle of ahi kā linking family responsibility to home locations can now be broadened to those members who return after a long absence. However, research sponsorship from outside, birth elsewhere and long absence had in some senses placed me on the ‘outside’, into a location of non-belonging amongst my relatives. Obligations to family and Australian sponsors complicated issues, as some of my relatives, despite their generous assistance, feared I would take the fruits of my research elsewhere without benefiting ‘my own people’.

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With these factors in mind I nevertheless remain steadfast in my determination to contribute to a revaluation of raranga via the 'discursive marae' of this thesis. My research agenda recognises and respects the presence of raranga and the valuable agency of Māori women in cultural discourses worldwide. In this effort I have been required to justify its importance to people, Māori and Pākehā, including my relatives.

I do not, in this effort, purport to be a raranga expert yet I pay homage to many great, and hitherto unsung, exponents of raranga. In doing so, my raranga research methodology includes a rigorous, critical engagement as well as a personal choice. In this sense, I speak for a community of people with similar views. Not all of these people are Māori and it can never be presumed that I represent an entirely Māori collective. This kind of engagement must nevertheless take into account a social and financial investment in research that can bring harm to Māori people through inaccurate and insensitive representations.

In writing a thesis that stems from raranga-based research, I contribute to the feminist recognition of the 'importance of writing in the production of self- and collective consciousness' (Mohanty, 1991: 33). I also acknowledge the fact that Māori worldviews can sometimes merge quite snugly into the commodifying nature of capital-based economies and that my research agenda may not concur with some Māori opinions on valid resource allocation. The difference between whakairo (woodcarving) compared to raranga, in terms of published research is an example of how research funding and public recognition can privilege one kind of knowledge over another. Money matters to raranga for as long as there is no alternative to the prevailing capitalist system that has at times unjustly ignored or belittled its importance to cultural discourses. It is with this fact in mind that I devote the financial and intellectual resources at my disposal to build upon the discourse of raranga. In terms of funding, family connections and personal commitment, I am an active contributor to further value creation of this activity.
Marae-based Knowledge

Māori people are understandably cautious about imparting their marae-based knowledge to researchers, as many appropriations and mishaps have occurred in the past. A strict and standardised set of Marae protocols, sometimes lacking in good humour, currently undermines or belies more charitable preferences to inclusively welcome guests and impart knowledge to them. Some calculated guesswork of the correct protocols and procedures on marae also occurs because of the destruction of customary forms of teaching and learning since the advent of Christianity and British colonisation.

As is the case with other social institutions, knowledge is often produced, accessed and preserved on marae. That knowledge, its ownership and dissemination, is highly dependent on power. In turn, this power depends on gender, age, and family position (whether you are an older or younger sibling), whether you reside locally or not, your general rapport with people, mana or status, and if you have enough time to learn. There are of course, values attached to marae-based education, such as the privileging of Māori culture over other cultures. However, as I stated earlier, marae do not escape Pākehā influences and external laws imposed by the predominantly Pākehā governmental system. Marae pedagogy therefore competes with extra-Marae educational and social alternatives. It depends on the willingness and aptitude of instructors and students, and available funding. Instruction is often undertaken on a voluntary basis and the imparting of knowledge more often occurs without the formal course structure of Pākehā-based institutions.

Links between raranga and Māori women’s roles on marae also need to be understood because they are indicative of uneven distributions of power, social status and values within this kind of institution. Māori observers (Tauroa and Tauroa, 1986: 59-60) have placed Māori women, men and Pākehā influence into a context of marae protocol:
Generally speaking, women do not have a speaking role on the marae-atea [marae reception area]. Many of those who argue that women should have the right to speak on the marae-atea claim that this situation is one of female suppression. Such an interpretation might be upheld were the situation to be evaluated solely from the Pākehā perspective.

However, for identity-based reasons discussed earlier, this distinctive ‘Pākehā perspective’ remains elusive and untenable. Gender-based allowances and prohibitions reflect a relationship of power between decision-makers and their followers, regardless of their identity. As also discussed earlier, the tikanga (rules, protocols) of individual marae are not uniformly spread amongst all marae. There remain degrees of marae-based autonomy that differentiate some marae from others.

Differences often occur because of the decision-making and implementation power of key players, including kaumatua and marae committees. For example, a marae complex has been established by Māori people in the northern town of Kaitaia in Aotearoa New Zealand. On this marae, both men and women are instructed in all Māori arts, including whakairo that is regarded in other marae contexts as a form of cultural production exclusive to men. The mana (status) of raranga on this marae is considered as equal to other forms of Māori cultural production. Its Māori manager, Peter Kitchener (2000) insists that the spirit of Māori customs are maintained and enhanced in all activities, including its formal education programs and its on-site commercial outlet, that sells a range of raranga items and other merchandise made on the marae. Some opinions, including those of some of my kaumatua, see this enterprise as running against tikanga and the non-commercial sanctity of a marae, whilst others acknowledge it as innovative and in keeping with time-honoured Māori pragmatism and entrepreneurship. None the less, management on the Kaitaia marae can also be seen as an agent of social change that departs from older distributions of power and cultural production on marae.
INTERIM SUMMARY

Connecting threads exist between the status of women on marae and the status of raranga, compared with other forms of cultural production. For example, raranga can be (Maihi, 1999-2000) used metaphorically during political Hui (meetings) in attempts to unite people in a political campaign, as different strands are united in raranga. In whaikōrero (speechmaking) this metaphor can be used to comment on inter-iwi genealogical links, indispensable relationships between all strands of an interwoven societal fabric and the political struggles of Māori people. These references are optional and depending on speakers, the status of raranga on marae is variously promoted or ignored via the whaikōrero. It remains to be seen whether overall changes for women on many marae will also directly affect the status of raranga in these contexts. It also remains to be seen whether or not my doctoral thesis is accepted on marae, without male intervention, as the metaphorical ‘whaikōrero’ (formal speech) of a Māori woman. Its acceptance as such could essentially mean that marae-based traditions, those that have prevented women from formally ‘speaking’ (metaphorically or actually), have been broken.

The process of converting or translating the analysis of the praxis of raranga into academic writing in this thesis complies with what Black American scholar bell hooks has described as ‘an important feminist agenda’ (Olsen and Hirsh, 1995: 105). In the terms discussed in chapter 1, it is a postcolonial feminist agenda. Exploring the possibility of this thesis, as a ‘written whaikōrero’ being presented on marae, a social context where oral conveyance of knowledge currently dominates, as well as in academic contexts outside marae, is part of this feminist agenda. While the struggle for speaking rights is a major part of Māori feminism today, it is another step in this struggle to think of the possibilities attached to postcolonial feminist writing for Māori women’s political struggles within and beyond the marae, and the university.
SECTION 2: RARANGA IN THE FIELD

I am forty years old. A while ago, before I learnt to weave, I almost died. My kidneys failed. Too much drinking, drugs – you name it. Now that I weave, my spirit has come back to me. I’m fit and healthy again. I have big plans for my future and I know the whenua (land or ‘environmental’) issues at stake. I want Ngāwhā Springs, where I live, to be something great, a healthy place for our kids to live in. (Ani, 2000)

Discussion of research methodology in this chapter has thus far leaned more towards theory than practice. Therefore, this section’s focus now shifts to research outcomes involving raranga praxis. It features a case study of raranga on Kohewhata marae in northern Aotearoa New Zealand. In this section I describe and analyse raranga praxis on this marae that took place during my doctoral research from December 1999 to August 2000. I specifically refer to the actions and perspectives of kairaranga, privileging them as the epicentre of social interaction on the marae. In doing so, I show that social interaction at Kohewhata marae is hierarchical in nature, and relates to customary understandings of gender differences. Views, including those of Ani, a Kohewhata marae kairaranga, that begin this section, clearly connect raranga praxis to intra-marae and wider community-based social contexts.

However, I do not limit my writing by referring to verbal communication alone. ‘Talk’ or conversation is not the only source of kairaranga-based perspectives and raranga-based social interactions. Here I am mindful of a common saying amongst kairaranga that: ‘we talk with our hands’, meaning that raranga production takes primacy over other actions, including conversation. ‘We talk with our hands’ can also refer to the methods in which raranga is taught and ‘discussed’ by silent demonstrations and bodily gestures, rather than talking. As I explain more fully later, various forms of non-verbal, half-verbal and indirect vocal references meld with other sensory perceptions that do not involve speech and writing, but that none the less constitute raranga-based discourses. Nor does in-depth analysis of raranga production at Kohewhata...
Marae only involve visual, aural and tactile aspects. It also involves other senses, such as aural appreciation of rhythmic sounds and the presence of smells, especially those of plant fibres. In analysing Kohewhata raranga in terms of many and varied modes of communication, I therefore posit that raranga should not be epistemologically disconnected from the senses.

I therefore analyse raranga praxis at Kohewhata with references to the five senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell, positing these senses as all-important aspects of raranga production. To demonstrate this point, I describe various aspects of the raranga process at Kohewhata that surround one particular kind of fibre and that depends greatly on various forms of communication and social interaction. References to the five senses are included in this description and analysis. The chapter concludes with a summary of raranga in this case study, particularly in relation to my research methods and academic writing.

Kaikohe and Kohewhata Marae - a case study
To introduce this case study it is necessary to recall the town of Kaikohe discussed earlier in relation to the lives of my maternal grandparents and my mother. Kaikohe is a town of some 3000 people that stands at high altitude on a plain in northern Aotearoa New Zealand (figure 3.1).
Figure 3.1: Tourism map of northern Aotearoa New Zealand (Destination Northland, 2003). Kaikohe is centrally located in this region.

Nowadays it is dubbed the ‘hub of the north’ by tourist pamphlets that extol its scenic virtues and historical sites (figure 3.2A).
Figure 3.2 A. Kaikohe: a tourism promotion brochure describing the town as the ‘Hub of the North’. B. The town of Kaikohe, adapted from a street directory (Telecom, New Zealand, 2000).

The town’s name refers to the eating of the Kohe, an Indigenous fruit, by long-dead ancestors including Hone Heke Pokai who is noteworthy for his stance against British colonisation, and who features later in this thesis. Kaikohe’s main street is called Broadway, accessible by crossing the Taiaiai Plain from the east, through numerous old battle sites.6 Broadway serves the local
residents and the surrounding area that is predominantly a farming community. Some people regularly travel at least an hour over hilly and windy roads to reach this town for shopping and other business.

If they turn south off the Broadway onto Station Road, they are usually on their way to the supermarkets. The *Price Choppers* supermarket is conveniently placed next to the *Warehouse* variety store adjacent to a *Macdonalds* fast-food outlet. Of course, such convenience attracts business. Efforts to attract tourists have also been made by local businesses and the Pioneer Village museum that is located a heavy traffic by-pass on the south side of town, around a corner from the supermarkets. However, tourism is not so great a feature of this town as it is further east in the Bay of Islands area. In terms of capital enterprise, the town is not so successful. In historical terms the surrounding region of Kaikohe is very significant to Māori people as it was once an administrative centre for our most notable rangatira (chiefs).

On visiting Kaikohe, some people prefer to turn off Station Road and drive along Memorial Drive (figure 3.2B). They pass a well-manicured cemetery and park outside the *New World* supermarket, across from the old Memorial Hall, built in remembrance of local soldiers who served in the World Wars. The hall is now rather decrepit, standing between the newer Council and WINZ (the national Government’s social security department) buildings. At one time all of these sites, including government buildings, car parks and supermarkets consisted of Māori gravesites. ‘Progress’ in terms of capitalist expansion reduced that function down to the present remnant of two acres of wāhi tapu (cemetery). There is no longer an active political protest regarding this change from sacred land to shopping mall. However, it exemplifies a local history that was frequently punctuated with Māori political protest.

A short distance south of the town is Kohewhata Marae (henceforth referred to as Kohewhata), currently under construction (figure 3.3). Most visitors reach it via Kaikohe though it sits on an alternative route from the larger town of Whangarei; an hour’s drive
southeast. A primary aim amongst the people involved in its construction is to assert Māori cultural presence in the town and surrounding region of Kaikōhe that has existed for centuries, continuing after the arrival of the Pākehā.

Figure 3.3: Kohewhata Marae, Kaikohe under construction in 2000. The whare (main building) with its red roof is shown in the centre of the photograph. The pink and white (primer painted) building to the left will be a whare kai (dining room), once the marae is completed. During my doctoral fieldwork, the latter building served as a site for raranga production. Completed raranga items are progressively transferred from here to the whare.

**RARANGA ON KOHEWHATA MARAE**

Eminent Pākehā anthropologist Steven Webster (1998: 257) has discussed marae and Māori culture recommending: ‘incisive critical analysis of key examples [which] can reveal the social whole’. Kohewhata is a key example of trans-local Māori cultural production in the Kaikohe region. It cannot be seen as separate from its surrounding community though, like most marae, it is partly autonomous relying on its own internal organisation as well as legislation and labour that comes from outside. Webster’s notion of ‘key examples’ in relation to a ‘social whole’ guides my critical analysis of raranga at Kohewhata.

Raranga is primarily though not exclusively, undertaken by Māori women of Ngāpuhi descent, reflecting Kohewhata’s central location in the rohe of Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu (see figure 1.3). At Kohewhata, raranga processes and procedures exemplify historical,
educational, political and philosophical investments that people make when they weave. These discourses reveal much about the ‘social whole’ of the marae as well as wider translocal, transregional and transnational contexts.

Raranga cannot be seen as isolated from other creative efforts on this marae. During my fieldwork at Kohewhata, raranga production coincided with whakairo (woodcarving), which was undertaken by men only, in the whare8 (main ‘house’). Raranga and whakairo are generally regarded by kairaranga at Kohewhata as complementary artistic9 projects, even though raranga and whakairo production took place in two separate buildings. I never witnessed anyone on the marae saying that raranga is inferior or superior to other modes of Māori cultural production at Kohewhata. However, the elevated importance of whakairo to the marae is implied by the fact that the tohunga whakairo (master carver) Allen Wihongi was commissioned by the Kohewhata Trust, the organising committee of the marae, well before his kairaranga counterpart.

Different points of view at Kohewhata relate to the gendered nature of knowledge transferral on marae, which bifurcates cultural production into ‘men’s work’ and ‘women’s work’, effectively relegating the latter. Cultural production on this marae can therefore be critically analysed in terms of intra-marae, gendered work distribution. I begin discussion of this marae with references to divisions of labour that involve semi-permanent volunteers and occasional visitors, associated cultural property issues, a ‘fluid’ social hierarchy and a flexible naming system that is applied to expert participants. This discussion sets the scene for later insights into the thoughts and actions of Kohewhata kairaranga.

DIVISIONS OF LABOUR: VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS
During the early days of construction work at Kohewhata, some seven years ago, there was a large response from members of the local community offering voluntary help (Maihi, 1999-2000; Davis, 2000). By the time I arrived this number had dropped.
interests figured prominently in this change. Some of the earlier participants had found other activities on which to expend their energies. A few had found paid full-time employment, for example, that took them elsewhere. Others had family commitments that competed for their time. Still others expressed (to me in confidence and away from the marae precinct) that they had experienced personality clashes with some of their fellow workers and had therefore left (Kohewhata Marae, 1999-2001). The problems of maintaining a reliable workforce came mostly because of a dependence on voluntary labour.

When I first arrived at Kohewhata, there was a core group of workers, including the main whakairo and raranga experts Allen Wihongi and Toi Maihi. Allen and Toi mainly relied on incomes from work undertaken outside Kohewhata. They were given free accommodation, however, in the adjoining pensioner flats (built for marae kaumatua and kuia) in return for their work on the marae.

Not all of the workers attended full-time while I was at the marae, but they generally numbered around ten, six men and four women, during the working week. Apart from the core group, other people attended periodically and usually on a short-term basis. Some came for a few weeks (usually between two and ten) to learn raranga and whakairo during university breaks or periods of unemployment – a common feature of Kaikohe’s socio-economic reality. There were also supporters who came to share food and conversation with the workers or to monitor and discuss funding or fundraising. Occasionally there was a visit (mostly pre-arranged, but not always) from school staff and students from the local area and beyond, as well as curious friends and passers-by.

PROPERTY AND FINANCE
The pressing priority of Kohewhata management to raise funds for the marae construction also entailed advertising the aims and rationale of its construction project. Kohewhata’s construction attracted interest from local and national media that provided
advertising opportunities as well as some impetus to formulate in-house cultural property guidelines. For example, there was one visit while I was at Kohewhata from a film crew wanting to produce a documentary on marae-based projects. I have yet to determine its outcome, whether it has been publicly broadcast or not. The organising Kohewhata Marae Trust committee, along with those of us who were filmed, had not been advised of its public release by the time I left Aotearoa New Zealand to return to Australia. Thus, the outcomes of some visits were beyond the control of the core group. Attempts at producing a written constitution, with consensus support from all tangata whenua of the marae, that covered cultural property issues were in progress. Nevertheless, an official marae policy is not yet in place.

A cultural property policy could have implications for future academic research at Kohewhata. For example, I undertook to explain my research to the core group of workers and elders on the marae though they did not openly demand this of me. The issue of cultural property on the marae was therefore not so firmly in place that it dictated rules for my research yet I remain convinced that had I not been so forthcoming about my research it would have been difficult to gather information. Subtle sanctions therefore existed during my time at Kohewhata in lieu of officially laid-down directions. Part of my participation at the marae also included contributing to the wording of draft documents such as the constitution and participating in the debates over them during the marae’s organising committee’s meetings.

My arrival, by chance rather than pre-arrangement as I explain later, meant that I needed to explain my reasons for participating on the basis of my doctoral requirements as well as my personal interest and background. Owing to a developing cultural policy, such ‘by-chance’ research methodology might not be so possible in future.
HIERARCHIES

Learning raranga at Kohewhata provided a particular perspective on hierarchical power systems and their negotiation within public and private spheres. At Kohewhata, a hierarchical system existed because of differences in age, gender and expertise, but it also related to colonialist influences. Such colonialist influences are best summarised with the point that: ‘marae autonomy, even in optimal circumstances, is relative and subject to the laws of the land’ (M. Durie, 1998: 223). Such ‘laws of the land’ remain under the control of Pākehā hegemony.

The older Māori hierarchical system that includes ariki (paramount Chiefs) and rangatira (a chiefly class similar to aristocracy) in strict descending order did not exist at Kohewhata, during my fieldwork. There was, instead, and as discussed earlier, a diversity of opinions amongst kaumatua and kuia, some of which were respected more than others. There was also a competing hierarchy between parents and children – regardless of their age in a ‘nuclear’ configuration rather than that of a hapu (extended family) configuration. People who lived in the ‘pensioner flats’ within the marae precinct were generally accepted as kaumatua or kuia, though younger people on the marae did not necessarily heed their advice. Kaumatua of the wider local area were not always given the same acknowledgement. Often, kaumatua had minimal involvement with the day-to-day work, including raranga, at Kohewhata. It was nevertheless generally acknowledged, that these kaumatua were contemporaries of the late kuia (female elder) Hoana Wihongi, who first instigated the construction of the marae. Many members of Hoana’s extended family have subsequently played essential roles in the marae’s construction and they have afforded surviving members of her age group, high regard and respect.

The democratically elected Kohewhata Marae Trust committee, often though not always, supported by the kaumatua and kuia, exercised most operational power at the marae. Their role focussed mainly on budget, accounting procedures, strategic and
contingency planning. Other issues, such as permission for my doctoral research at Kohewhata were also left to its discretion and my active negotiation. The Marae Trust committee did not, however, interfere with the teaching and undertaking of raranga or any other type of cultural production at Kohewhata, leaving this responsibility to the kaiako (instructor), Toi Maihi, who was periodically asked to report on the work’s progress. The standard of our work needed to satisfy my raranga kaiako who in turn needed to satisfy the Trust committee, but this hierarchy depended more on sociability than exact and established codes of practice.

Informal hierarchies therefore existed because of various levels of expertise, an issue I return to later, when discussing designated titles on the marae. Levels of expertise impacted on the authority of local kaumatua and kuia. On occasion, their participation in marae matters was de-prioritised, outweighed by creative visions that they did not, or could not share because of a lack of expertise or an unwillingness to divulge such expertise. Some of this unwillingness rested, unfortunately, on failing confidence in the face of ‘educated’ experts who came to Kohewhata from Auckland or other cities. Such cities represented ‘Pākehā’ or colonialist modernity, in stark contrast with the less urbanised views of some Kohewhata and Kaikohe residents, including the elders. My experience of learning raranga on this marae therefore included the realisation that some ‘elders’ were not respected by Māori and Pākehā on the same terms as others were.

The social hierarchy system at Kohewhata was therefore highly convoluted, not distinctly formal or informal, and its various levels were totally interdependent, relying heavily on voluntary participation. Hierarchical distinctions on the marae were fluid and in some situations, contingent upon personal relationships rather than official rules and regulations. Indeed, much of my research at this marae was self-regulated. My work, including ethnographic research and raranga was subtly monitored rather than officially and forcefully guided.
TITLES AND NAMES FOR EXPERTS

As mentioned earlier, social stratification existed in terms of various levels of expertise amongst volunteers as well as the general status afforded to kaumataua and kuia, generally. Clear indicators of such expertise manifested at Kohewhata via titles and names. To explain this point further, I need only provide some biographical details concerning my raranga kaiako (instructor) Toi Maihi and her whakairo counterpart Allen Wihongi, whose contributions to Kohewhata cultural production were indispensable.

Along with genealogical links to people of Yorkshire, England, Toi Maihi identifies as belonging to the Ngati Roroa iwi, part of Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu rohe as well as to the rohe of the iwi of Ngati Kahungunu, located in more southern reaches of the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. She is an internationally recognised artist, poet and writer, and has, as one of her many artistic specialities, raranga. She also has an extensive teaching background. Although Toi received raranga instructions from some of the country’s most experienced kairaranga, including the well-known Diggeress Te Kanawa (see figure 2.7), there is no ‘school’ of raranga, which could have awarded her ‘official’ qualifications in line with those of ‘Pākehā’ educational institutions of Aotearoa New Zealand’s colonialist system. Although in the past, as discussed earlier, raranga was learnt under strict rules in a whare pora, such specialised institutions survive only in essence through the practices of some expert kairaranga, including Toi and Diggeress. Toi continues to teach raranga and other forms of cultural production in various venues, though her methods and views are not necessarily representative of all currently practicing kairaranga. Toi was invited by Allen Wihongi to direct raranga production at Kohewhata because of her artistic skills rather than any close genealogical connections to the marae.

Allen does have direct genealogical links with the tupuna (ancestors) most associated with Kohewhata and its locale. He is also an internationally recognised artist and art educator who has
completed whakairo in other marae. For example, he contributed to the whakairo of my father’s home marae Te Kaiwaha in Waiwhatawhata near the Hokianga Harbour of northern Aotearoa New Zealand, a half-hour drive west of Kaikohe. In the past, most tohunga whakairo (master carvers) were rigorously educated in wānanga (specialised Māori schools). It should be noted that such institutions remain in various locations in Aotearoa New Zealand, having to some extent survived British colonisation. However, Allen was not taught in a wānanga. Although untrained in customary Māori educational institutions he is, nevertheless, acknowledged as a ‘master carver’ by many Ngāpuhi people, including his close relatives at Kohewhata. The Māori term tohunga whakairo was publicly assigned to Allen in formal hui (meetings) and while his artistic expertise was generally accepted at Kohewhata, his decisions did not always escape questioning and criticism.

It was never clearly and openly established that Allen Wihongi and Toi Maihi were elders of Kohewhata, though some of the people at Kohewhata certainly thought of them as such. Their designation as artistic experts outweighed other factors such as advanced age that are often attributed to kaumatua. When asked, many participants at Kohewhata agreed that these two people, given their expertise, do qualify as kaumatua. Some addressed them as Matua (‘father’) and Whaea (‘mother’); titles usually attributed to parents, aunts, uncles or respected elders. Although Toi Maihi was not prepared to place herself on equal footing with elders whom she greatly respected, she was free to assert her station as expert and elder in any public forum. Owing to what I interpreted as humility, she along with many others of similar expertise and experience was never inclined to do so at Kohewhata.

Allen Wihongi is conscious of his importance to the whakairo of Kohewhata but never insisted on being given a special name or work title for his efforts. We more ‘junior’ participants (in terms of both age and expertise) were not strictly required to address
either Toi or Allen as kaumatua. Many of us usually addressed them on a first-name basis.

The naming of people as experts or elders at Kohewhata was therefore complicated by the hesitation of some participants to accept individualised credit on the marae, and the preference for collective praise for the group for any completed project. This kind of humility did not necessarily prevail outside Kohewhata, as I describe in relation Toi’s contribution to an Australian war memorial monument later.

Discussion of expertise and status points directly to the complicated nature of assigning names and roles to people on a modern marae. At Kohewhata, social status needed to be built and maintained. It was not automatically given. It relied on collective memory of events, reputations that had been built earlier, outside the marae, and winning respect within the marae and its surrounding communities, if not further afield.

As I discuss in more detail later, I was supported and accepted by senior kairaranga at Kohewhata including Toi, Kataraina Wihongi and the other raranga kaiako and akonga (teachers and students) of the marae. The accomplishment of certain tasks did result in the assigning of particular types of title; especially for raranga akonga (students) and confirmed the strong emphasis that was placed on raranga and whakairo at Kohewhata over and above other aspects of marae participation. Nevertheless, the voluntary and changeable nature of the workforce at Kohewhata also hampered the formation of solid hierarchies between experts and students. Transferral of knowledge therefore took place on an informal and flexible basis. Relationships between participants were often tenuous and vulnerable to various interpretations, misinterpretations and occasional in fighting. Group solidarity did not manifest in any concerted or substantial fashion, yet as I soon describe, various stages of the Kohewhata construction were successfully attained, none the less.

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A WHAKAWĀTEA (ALLOWANCE) MADE FOR KAIRARANGA

Amongst the kairaranga, occupational designation was never clearly stated except where we achieved some graduation point with our raranga. For example, we were not considered to be qualified kairaranga until we had satisfactorily (decided upon by the raranga kaiako) completed our first piece of raranga.

On becoming kairaranga we were permitted to enter the whare, a privilege not afforded to other women. Under Māori tikanga (customary unwritten rules) women are not permitted in the vicinity of uncompleted whakairo (woodcarving). By a special arrangement called a whakawātea agreed upon by Allen Wihongi, Toi Maihi and the Marae Trust committee, kairaranga were given permission to enter the whare that housed unfinished whakairo. Toi Maihi argued for this arrangement on the basis that the kairaranga needed to assess the whakairo so that the scale and appearance of the raranga could complement it most suitably. The practical wisdom of this whakawātea succeeded in over-riding the usual prohibitions and restrictions placed on women.

Raranga qualifications, or more accurately, modes of gathering raranga expertise, rested on motivational strategies of the kaiako, Toi Maihi. Apart from her extensive experience as a painter and kairaranga, Toi’s raranga teaching strategies were based on a convenient rule-of-thumb that had the two-fold function of directing us towards completing a raranga piece as well as encouraging us to progress to larger more difficult items. The majority of raranga at Kohewhata contributed to wall panels and tapou (mats) that would eventually be attached to the walls of the Whare. I discuss these panels in more detail later.

However, it was incumbent upon the kairaranga to prevent other women from entering the whare, because women are liable according to a belief, the origins of which are now fairly obscure, to contaminate the tapu (sanctity) of an unfinished house, leading ultimately to its destruction. Many of us, women and some men, genuinely question that rule when we consider oral (not written
unfortunately) accounts that place strong outspoken tupuna whaea (women elders) within our family histories. By enforcing the prohibition, we women kairaranga contributed to our own stigmatisation and unequal relationship with the kaiwhakairo.

Some of the Kohewhata kairaranga felt very intimidated at the prospect of entering the whare, fearing their presence would harm the whakairo. Consciousness of gendered difference convinced them that nature dictates their contaminating powers. Our parents, including in some instances, our mothers, hand down these impressions to us. It therefore takes considerable resolve to ignore such prohibitions. The establishment of a whakawātea at Kohewhata alleviated much of this hesitation and the women kairaranga visited the whare on several occasions.

Generally speaking, men on the marae seemed more inclined toward whakairo (carving) than raranga. This was especially the case amongst those men who had whakairo experience. However, some men began with raranga because of their lack of whakairo knowledge when they first arrived at Kohewhata. They expressed a discomfort with their lack of whakairo knowledge and experience. They seemed to feel safer with their ignorance of raranga and this condition seemed to make them more open to learning raranga than whakairo. Knowing whakairo appeared very closely linked with their understanding of Māori masculinity, regardless of their raranga abilities.

In situations where there was a mixture of men and women, when men were moving through the weaving room and on other occasions over lunch or tea-breaks, casual discussion on the subject of men necessarily needing to undertake whakairo, occurred. From these conversations it was clear that some of the men saw raranga as one of the steps along with cooking, cleaning and ground maintenance leading to the ‘higher’ practice of whakairo. Raranga was not therefore taken as such ‘serious’ work as whakairo. Understandably, this view was not shared by the women kairaranga.
Gendered distinctions of work roles also manifested in other ways. Boys were rarely directed to assist with dishwashing or other kitchen duties by either the men or the women. The same could equally be said for raranga where I never witnessed a boy being directed by the men towards raranga. Women generally took it upon themselves to carry out raranga and kitchen related work. They accepted the presence of men in these quarters albeit ‘in the way’ or not belonging. This subtle though obvious separation between males and females based on cultural production and kitchen chores also contributed to the fact that at no time did I ever hear kairaranga expressing a wish to undertake whakairo or other ‘men’s work’.

Gender distinctions that physically separate whakairo from raranga and boys from the kitchen sink at Kohewhata also help to bring interwoven relationships between, social values, social justice and raranga into clearer focus. For example, some kairaranga at Kohewhata knew the harsh realities of domestic violence first-hand and undertook raranga at least as a momentary ‘escape’ from men’s violence that they had personally experienced. Yet, they did not escape the realities of gendered prohibitions that confined their marae-based activities more than those of the men. Therefore, a mixture of subjugation in the social scheme of the marae, elation at learning new skills, and motivation to move beyond current personal difficulties all contributed to raranga discourses on this marae. As I discuss in more detail later, growing political awareness was also an important part of this experience, where kairaranga invested their energies, not only into the raranga, but also towards a brighter future for themselves and their children.

**JOGGING THE SENSES**

‘Surely’, I felt, ‘someone or something was smiling on me, to have brought me, quite by chance to this place’. Here I found joy on a site of struggle (Diamond, J. G., 1998-2003)

The first sensation that struck me at Kohewhata, apart from the usual self-consciousness that I feel in strange places amongst strangers, was a smell. It was a subtle smell – barely discernible but ever-
present. It was the smell of fibre. Only later was I able to name it. My knowledge of such fibre was limited to rudimentary appreciation of kōrari gained since my childhood. Its presence, for example, still reminds me of the ‘patch’ (usually referred to by kairaranga as a pa kōrari or pa harakeke) that our next-door neighbour kept on the boundary between our _ acre property and hers. In those days many people regarded kōrari, as well as various other indigenous plants, as weeds to be replaced by exotic plant varieties. The next-door neighbour’s ‘patch’ was a rarity in our street and the surrounding town. It is only in more recent times that, riding the tide of environmentalism, kōrari and other fibrous ‘natives’ have regained popularity. A concerted drive is currently underway to replenish stocks.

Sight, hearing, taste, touch and taste are all senses that were intrinsic to my experience of raranga at Kohewhata. Childhood associations and other memories were also an important part of my participation that included learning raranga, getting to know the people and their inter-relationships, and botanical attributes of raranga materials. My research needed to constantly acknowledge the relevance of sense-based experiences, my own and other people’s, to analytical processes. Such aspects have not featured in discourses on Māori culture. Their absence relates to the discursive relegation of raranga, and subsequent denial of kairaranga experiences, discussed in the previous chapter. Indeed, this absence fits well into the Greek theorist Nadia Seremetakis’s (1994a: 12) notion of analytical ‘dust’:

The memory of the senses runs against the socio-economic currents that treat artifacts and personal material experiences as dust. Dust is created by any perceptual stance that hastily traverses the object world, skims over its surface, treating it as a nullity that casts no meaning into our bodies, or recovers no stories from the past.

My analysis of raranga at Kohewhata therefore proceeds from sense-based recollections. My reasons for privileging all senses relate to the fact that raranga-based communication at Kohewhata
was not always oral. Raranga actions and sensations were as much a part of my research as shared conversations. If such modes of non-verbal communication amongst kairaranga fail to be heeded they may, indeed, pass as analytical dust that settles after my research ‘flurry’, yet again ‘unheard’ and unacknowledged.

On my first visit to Kohewhata I noticed, amongst a copious amount of fibre, and not surprisingly, people. Their warm first greeting was directed towards my cousin, who first introduced me to Kohewhata, as much as myself. My cousin (who qualifies in a Māori worldview as my sister because she is the child of one of my parents’ immediate siblings), Horace Davis, a long-time resident of Kaikohe, had helped for many industrious hours with the gathering and processing of the fibre some months before my arrival. Although Horace declined to attend Kohewhata with me following this first introduction, due to commitments elsewhere, she remains a firm supporter of my academic efforts. Horace asked me on this visit whether or not the work appealed to me and might be applied to my doctoral research. In excited and surprised response I quipped: ‘Is the sky often blue?’ pointing to the potential I saw in this first encounter with a context of learning that was new to me. Horace’s help in introducing me to Kohewhata was very much ‘by chance’, rather than pre-planning. I remain eternally grateful to her for providing me with this first opportunity, this first ‘taste’ of raranga.

Although I describe this initial meeting with kairaranga at Kohewhata in more detail later, it is important to note here that my first olfactory sensation of fibre was followed by many other tactile and visual experiences with it. It is difficult for me to separate these direct raranga-based experiences from the people whom I first met amongst that fibre. The senses and sensibilities of those people often seemed in an intangible way, to be intrinsically connected to the fibre. In Māori terminology this connection relates to wairua (spirit). My kaumatua and other Māori people often connect wairua to all matters of importance. Toi Maihi voiced this connection between wairua and raranga in various ways during my nine months at
Kohewhata. Her general view of the close connection between raranga and wairua is encapsulated by her comment that: ‘if your wairua is alright, so is your weaving’ (Maihi, 2000-3). I return to the issue of spiritual considerations in raranga later in this thesis.

In more tangible terms, the connection of kairaranga to fibre manifests in various stages of raranga production. At Kohewhata, these stages progressed from gathering fibre from local sources, through to the completion of each raranga item. These stages depended heavily on collective will and action amongst kairaranga, supported by other people of Kohewhata. I revisit these points later in this chapter but before doing so, it is important to discuss various value systems on this marae as a precursor to senses-based analysis.

**VALUE CREATION AT KOHEWHATA – A FIRST TASTE**

In drawing attention to values-based recollections of Kohewhata, I engage the following theoretical possibility:

The apparently ‘idiosyncratic’ investment in objects and substances may be the tip of a submerged social language of materiality that has not achieved formal legitimation, but which may have a firmer grasp on the mutable structure of experience in which all things undergo recontextualization into novel and as yet unnarrated constellations (Seremetakis, 1994b: 135).

There are numerous opportunities in raranga discourses to examine the notion of a ‘submerged social language of materiality’, given the absence of raranga discourses from dominant discourses on Māori culture. Outside kairaranga circles, these discourses may appear as ‘idiosyncratic investments in objects and substances, [without] formal legitimation’. However, inside kairaranga circles and raranga-based discourses they have legitimacy and should not necessarily be regarded as ‘novel and as yet unnarrated constellations’. Along with their sensate characteristics, raranga-based ‘investments’ at Kohewhata resonated with innovative thoughts and oral expressions as well as adherence to, and divergence from tikanga (customs). To illustrate this point in more detail, I now focus on Kohewhata kairaranga and value creation that
is based on memories, accepted customs, innovation and pragmatism.

The smell of fibre was not the only feature of my first visit to Kohewhata. There was also a mixture of food restrictions apparent amongst the fibres, which convey the complex nature of cultural values on this marae. For example, my son, who accompanied us on my first visit to Kohewhata, did not know of tapu restrictions and was neatly directed to the kitchen to eat the bun he had brought along. In the room in which raranga took place at Kohewhata, and which is destined to become the wharekai (dining room), food and fibre were not permitted to mix. This prohibition relied as much on custom as practicality. As discussed more extensively in chapter 4, food is assigned particular contaminating affects in Māori tikanga (customary rules) that harm or negate the sanctity of objects, people and places. Foods can also ‘mess-up’ raranga fibre and distract the kairaranga away from the weaving. Owing to prior knowledge of Māori tikanga, I respected this rule, though I may be forgiven for misinterpreting the said building as an eating-place, not a weaving-place.

There was, in this first encounter, a convergence of raranga and value creation as a contingency during the construction stages of the marae. Different values manifest in the function of each building at Kohewhata. In the case of the ‘weaving-room’, the building’s function remained flexible. This flexibility did not extend to the whare that, due to its current function of housing unfinished whakairo and its future role in hui (gatherings) and sleeping accommodation, it remains permanently sacred. Although the weaving area also had restrictions placed on it excluding food and eating, these restrictions do not necessarily apply because of sacredness.

I was also in the course of our first visit, cordially advised that the kairaranga present did not bring their small children to this workplace. Whilst an idealisation of inclusivity, welcoming all people, exists on a marae it is not always feasible in practical terms.
At Kohewhata, childcare facilities were not available on either a formal or informal basis. I could not completely rely on my relatives for childcare help with my son, given their own childcare demands, and needed to find it elsewhere in Kaikohe. This need especially relates to Māori mothers, often the main if not the sole carers of children. With deepest love for my son, I nevertheless reflected on the distraction to weaving along with many other pursuits including university lectures, which both children and food can bring. Distinctions were therefore made at Kohewhata between workplaces and a more domestic space where children (and food) were made welcome. Childcare considerations have yet to become important factors in considering Kohewhata’s construction plans. Those kairaranga who are mothers must consider extra-marae childcare options as Kohewhata lacks resources, if not the will, to provide help.

The current disparity between tikanga regarding marae-based childcare and the actual experiences of working mothers, illustrates a schism between idealised Māori cultural practice and the realities of a capitalist economy. Although I was able to afford to pay for childcare, this is not an option available to all women, especially those living in towns with high unemployment rates such as Kaikohe. My ability to arrange childcare in order to learn and participate as a student of raranga is mirrored by other Māori women’s lives, yet some have a more difficult experience in this regard than others do. I gained support (and therefore power) as a researcher because of sponsorship from outside the marae. Innovative ways of coping with a system, including and extending beyond marae that does not generally encourage mothers working outside their home, are adopted similarly by many women around the world. Their efforts exemplify that de-prisonisation that allows women to resist constraints placed upon them in a system that privileges men over women in the workplace. Those kairaranga mothers in the Kohewhata workspace were no exception.
On my second visit to Kohewhata I became more acquainted with both the fibre and the people. Some recollections are particularly strong: Kataraina’s beautiful eyes, strong physical appearance and semi-shy smile, the guarded but congenial regard of Maro and Ani, and, very clearly, the most charismatic appeal and wonderful sense of expertise apparent in my main kaiako Toi Maihi. They were all experts to me at this time, so obviously involved in the task at hand – raranga. Now and then laughter (even giggles) added to what seemed a joyful endeavour. There was something pleasurable amongst this fibrous work for these women.

Only upon reflection, can I appreciate the complex weave amongst these people and others I have met at Kohewhata. The raranga in which we were all involved freed many of our creative tendencies and talents that literally brightened our outlooks on life. I shared the experience of learning raranga amongst women who had embarked on personal journeys leading away from harmful lifestyles that often included physical abuse, drug habits and alcoholism. Their raranga, at least in part, represented resistance in the prismatic terms I have described earlier. I am indebted to them for their warmth and forbearance as much as their belief in my ability to convey their stories in a responsible manner.

**SIGHTS AND SOUNDS: KUTA FIBRES**

Focussed attention on one particular type of fibre of a plant called *kuta* reveals various aspects of raranga practice at Kohewhata in sensate terms as well as in terms of social values. Kuta fibre has not yet featured in published texts on raranga or any other aspect of Māori culture. In my discussion of kuta at Kohewhata, I particularly focus on visual and aural experiences attached to raranga praxis. This study of kuta reveals methods in which kairaranga exert control over the procurement and preparation of material for use in a social context that relies on voluntary unpaid labour, cooperation, compassion and congeniality.
Kuta plants
Kuta is a tall reed that grows in placid fresh water such as in lakes and large ponds. Nowadays, because of environmental changes, pollution and commercial greed, the remnants of established kuta stands are either protected by secrecy or in some cases, by enforced law. For example, kuta that grows in Lake Nga Tu, near Kaitaia in northern Aotearoa New Zealand is protected by Treaty legislation and environmental protection Acts. Kuta’s popularity amongst kairaranga has revived in the last ten years (Maihi, 1999-2000). On-going efforts to conserve dwindling supplies include replanting and regenerating kuta stands not only for weaving purposes, but also as natural water filters. The northern climate of the Ngāpuhi rohe (territory) is ideal for growing kuta though the plant is found to a lesser extent in more southern regions. As I soon discuss in more detail, kuta has cultural significance at Kohewhata where raranga designs emphasise the connections between kuta growth and the northern-most rohe.

Figure 3.4: Stages of kuta gathering, cutting, retrieving and stacking, by Kohewhata volunteers, Riana Wihongi, Ani and others. Lake Owhareiti, near Kaikohe 2000

The kuta reed can grow to 2 metres in height. Each reed, depending on its maturity measures up to approximately 2 cms in
width. The reed tapers up to a tip (it is in fact a small inconspicuous flower head) the shape of which indicates its sex. It is hollow from root to tip but each reed has thin internal membranes that occur at frequent intervals. The membranes extend horizontally across the reed’s vertical tube and divide the reed into small hollow compartments. As I explain in more detail later, the plant is dried and woven either completely intact, ends removed, or is split lengthwise and flattened before weaving.

**Kuta collection and preparation: a social undertaking**

Kuta gathering is usually a collective effort undertaken by at least three people. During my fieldwork, I helped to gather kuta on three separate occasions as part of groups ranging in size from five to seven people (figure 3.4). The groups mostly comprised women, though on some occasions one or two men accompanied us. A three-stage system was sometimes adopted to organise the kuta collection. Whether this system was adopted or not depended on the number of available and willing hands. This system demonstrated the kaiako (instructor) Toi Maihi’s experience, skill, innovation and powers of persuasion. It is not necessarily adopted in all instances of kuta collection.

Anyone who had brought a knife was responsible for cutting. Whilst some of us had more experience than others, it was nobody’s ‘special job’ to cut the kuta. We were allowed to decline to undertake this part of the collection and elect to instead help elsewhere in the collection process. As collecting could take a number of hours it was definitely ‘wet work’ and those of us wearing wetsuits, especially close to winter, were fortunate. Once cut, the kuta floated to the surface and every effort was made not to bend each reed. Although the reed does not snap apart when bent it retains telltale marks that eventually have a bearing on the appearance of the woven item. During my first effort at kuta cutting I bent the kuta out of ignorance. Each bend made the reed audibly ‘snap’, then bend. Though the kuta remained intact its bending was
signalled by the ‘snap’ sound that alerted my kaiako. I was diplomatically chided and learnt my lesson for that day.

The next stage of the gathering process involved catching the kuta as it floated or was pushed away from the cutters. Bunches of kuta reeds were then collected together and loosely tied by sections of reed that had dropped from the stand naturally or that had been rejected because of shortness or poor quality. Bunches of kuta therefore became ‘rafts’ that were easier to float toward shore. Those workers on or close to shore were responsible for carefully loading the untied kuta onto an available truck.

Arguably, the most difficult aspect of kuta procurement is, apart from gaining access to a depleted supply and waiting for the best weather, the need to enter chest-deep water. However, the growing kuta reed is most colourful underwater. It is therefore best to cut the reed as far down as possible if such colour is required in a raranga item. Otherwise, it will not have as much enough colour variety (figure 3.5), once it has dried and the plant will not regenerate itself as efficiently. Once transported, the kuta was carefully unloaded and then thoroughly washed with fresh running water. Throughout the gathering process every precaution was made to place the kuta so that all the tips were together or to adopt the phrase we used during collecting, so it was all ‘the same way up’. A joke referring to the difference between male and female tips prompted some ribald laughter that relieved the meticulous and repetitive nature of this work that would be difficult to undertake single-handedly.
Figure 3.5: A visual feast. The variety of natural colour displayed by kuta as it dries.

The practical expediency of placing the reeds ‘the same way up’ became more obvious once the kuta had lain flat for 2 or 3 days and was ready to hang for drying. The kuta was gathered and tied into bunches again but this time, with twine that secured the kuta reeds at their tips. Two bunches were then harnessed together (again at their tips) so that interconnecting twine measuring some 3-5 cms could be hung over a metal hook. The two-ended hook held the kuta bunches onto a bamboo rod that had been prepared and hoisted earlier. The kuta would hang for at least two weeks before being ready for raranga (figure 3.6). Drying time depended on temperatures and aeration within the drying space.
In the meantime the kuta was protected with cotton sheets against dust, mould and sunlight. Sunlight was a concern because kuta rapidly fades when exposed to it. Although some kairaranga have bleached kuta then dyed it with natural or artificial pigments, this was definitely not encouraged at Kohewhata, reflecting Toi’s preference for using the plants’ natural colours. This method of preparation relates to a particular time and social context. It was a process that took place in accordance with instructions, mostly provided by Toi Maihi. On occasion, we were accompanied by a kaumatua who talked to us about local history and Māori culture as we worked and during our breaks.

These collection methods were therefore unique to one project. Materials at hand were employed pragmatically, as were volunteers. Although these procedures are not necessarily carried out
elsewhere, however, principles such as organised collective effort are often adhered to in other projects. The kaiako's special requirements such as 'no bend marks' and natural rather than artificial colour determined some of the finer details of this particular kuta collection.

**Kuta Raranga**
As mentioned earlier, kuta is woven in complete form or in split strands. The weaving process flattens each reed whether it is split or not. The function and appearance in the creator's mind eye determine the choice. Kuta is usually but not only woven into whāriki.

The air pockets of the kuta 'tube' provide cushioning. The tension of the weaving not only determines how loose the item becomes, but also especially in the case of kuta, how much air remains and how much cushioning results. The air within the kuta strands is also warmed by body heat ensuring comfortable repose. So, for comfort alone, not to mention its visual qualities, kuta whāriki are highly prized (Maihi, 1999-2000). It is remarkably easy to weave with kuta compared to other fibres that are less flexible and even in length and shape. The one main challenge is to manage the long strands that sometimes need to be dodged during weaving (figure 3.7). The kairaranga sometimes needs to 'toss' one strand over the shoulder in order to be able to weave it with the next one. It is therefore quite a different physical exercise from that required for smaller items made of other plant fibre. There is, for example, more body movement and a longer rhythm of weaving associated with kuta raranga.
I recall, for example, the necessity to anchor a piece of kuta raranga not only with available weights such as river stones on the floor where I was working, but also with my foot holding one corner while I wove at another that was a body length away. Similar ‘gymnastic’ feats were a regular occurrence amongst the kairaranga
at Kohewhata and were sometimes accompanied with a few giggles, humorous remarks, grunts and groans. Other fibres do not need the same corporeal engagement, though the actual weaving techniques may remain similar.

Kuta fibre is valued highly by kairaranga at Kohewhata and is recognised for particular characteristics that differ from other fibres. Its comparatively uniform width and shape, for example, differentiates it from körari. It was also valued by kairaranga, along with other fibres, because of its association with the Ngāpuhi rohe, as I discuss later.

Figure 3.8: Kuta whāriki, also known as tapou, the work of kairaranga at Kohewhata Marae 1999-2000.

The raranga items resulting from these techniques at Kohewhata mainly comprised whāriki (figure 3.8) and various shapes of diagonal raranga. The latter went towards the construction of Kohewhata ‘tukutuku’, an innovation based on more traditional wall panels, but incorporating new technical combinations and a variety of different fibres. References to these panels form an
important part of discussion in the second section of the next chapter that discusses social status and sanctity in Māori cultural production.

Some two years after my fieldwork at Kohewhata, I was presented with a kete made from split kuta fibres by its kairaranga, my kaiako (teacher), Toi Maihi. I have named it my kete kahurangi, my kete of precious jewels, in recognition of Toi’s raranga, our high regard for kuta fibre and our combined exploration of raranga-based discourses that has continued ever since. My kete kahurangi appears as images in most of the chapter heading pages of this thesis.

Kuta and cultural pride: talk and laughter
From this discussion of kuta and the raranga that results from its collection it can be seen that the process takes collective effort, dedication and motivation. Its foundational tenets relied on experts who knew how to motivate their assistants into collective enterprise that involved drawn out procedures. Much of the motivation resulted from value assigned to the construction of marae that symbolise senses of belonging to a group of people and to a place. Without exception, people involved in kuta raranga were conscious of the importance of belonging as a ‘Māori’. This consciousness came from ‘conversation’, spoken and unspoken while weaving, that instilled pride in our collective effort, affirmed the importance of Māori identity and culture, and referred to our important role in fostering the health of humans as well as the environment.

Every occasion that I participated in kuta collection was filled with laughter and talk, varying from serious history lessons based on references to the surrounding landscape, to gossip, all amongst intense kuta-gathering sessions that were followed by a shared picnic. Connections to land and genealogy were a topic of enthusiastic conversation on these, and other occasions during my participation at Kohewhata. These occasions helped to promote educational enquiry and self-appreciation that some kairaranga had not previously experienced.
Raranga-based processes also had a positive effect on participants in that their awareness of the environment in which kuta and other fibres grow was reinforced by the careful deliberation that went into gathering methods and the conversations that accompanied them. Instances of self-renewal and cultural affirmation, comparable to the deprovisionalisation of Māori women, were therefore brought about deliberately at times when a particular social problem such as drug abuse, was the topic of conversation. A frequently discussed issue was the Corrective Service Department's plans to build a prison in the nearby Ngāwhā area. Such concern extended to a very active and highly publicised campaign against the building of a prison in the Kaikohe region on social, cultural and environmental grounds. Toi Maihi, Kohewhata kaumatua Ron Wihongi and his daughter Riana, continue to be active in this anti-prison campaign. Their discussion of this campaign and its associated issues helped to attune kairaranga at Kohewhata with local and national social and environmental conservation policies.

Raranga praxis also engendered efforts to escape or transcend at least, untenable situations such as domestic violence, alcoholism and drug addiction that some of the women know only too well. It was also not only a matter of physical abuse, though as Ani’s words quoted at the beginning of this section testify this was a common feature. Amongst the elder kairaranga, for example, it was an affirmation that their cultural production was important; that it mattered in the broad scheme of what they understood as 'Māori culture'.

Creative skills therefore developed during the various stages of kuta collection that held for some, the promise of a better life. For others, particularly the elder kairaranga, it provided joy and hope that raranga would remain important, beyond their lifetimes. The kuta collecting and preparation was for many of us, an experience that made life as a kairaranga, truly meaningful. Acculturated affinities between Ngāpuhi kairaranga and kuta were discussed and actively encouraged. The marae-based emphasis on landscape and
botanical features of the rohe, including kuta, acted as an effective backdrop for this burgeoning self-realisation.

CHAPTER DISCUSSION

Raranga at Kohewhata adds to the ‘whole way of struggle’ (Webster, 1998: 39) referred to earlier, that is involved in asserting Māori culture. None the less, Kohewhata is a nexus of many different sources of power and collective will. Such sources come from within the Māori communities who live near or on the marae. They are also subjected to ‘outside’ influences, such as the tikanga models of other marae, and competing employment (and income) needs and opportunities. Such influences can act as counter-measures to the social value placed on marae construction so that less time and resources are available to the construction of the marae. There is a resulting need for innovative management of scarce resources and the work undertaken so far on this marae is a credit to all those involved. Critical analysis of Kohewhata raranga, and other forms of cultural production on this marae is unfinished. A variety of different sociological analyses may occur, for example, once this marae reaches its completion.16

The embodied identification with smells, tastes and touch in this chapter are all linked to deep memories of, and identification with genealogical connections and significant places. My own feelings, now committed to writing in Australia, a considerable distance from Kohewhata, resonate with Gloria Anzaldúa (1990: 209), a Chicano woman, describing these linkages and sensations:

There are more subtle ways that we internalise identification, especially in the forms of images and emotions. For me food and certain smells are tied to my identity, to my homeland. Woodsmoke curling up to an immense blue sky; woodsmoke perfuming my grandmother’s clothes, her skin ... Even now 3,000 miles away, I can see my mother spicing the ground beef, pork and venison with chile. My mouth salivates at the thought of the hot steaming tamales I would be eating if I were home.

I hold the memory of Kohewhata raranga and kairaranga as palpably at Anzaldúa holds woodsmoke and tamales of a distant
place and a different time. I continue a re-evaluation of raranga at Kohewhata that is largely based on recollections of nine months of doctoral research; yet I retain the conviction that engaging with this form of cultural production is timely and much needed. From my discussion of kuta raranga, for example, some aspects of the ‘language’, spoken and unspoken, and actions of kairaranga are revealed. In my focus on Kohewhata raranga, exemplified in a discussion based on kuta fibres, I have shown that raranga, as well as raranga-based writing, is a complicated and worthwhile undertaking that necessarily includes elements of self-reflection.

I have endeavoured throughout to undertake research with what feminist theorist Sandra Harding has called ‘strong reflexivity’ (Hirsh and Olsen, 1995: 7), an attempt ‘to theorise as rigorously as possible [one’s] own position as socially situated subjects of knowledge’ (Hirsh and Olsen, 1995: 3), but my analysis also problematises Indigenous knowledge. My research at Kohewhata, and this resulting written thesis, for example, acknowledges that customs that are generally accepted as ‘Māori’ can disadvantage Māori women as well as benefit them, depending on the strengths and weaknesses of those people in authority.

I also support Donna Haraway’s suggestion that one should foreground ‘the writer’s own situatedness in history’ where power and authority are apparent in all discourses (Olson, 1995: 45). Likewise, and as I have mentioned earlier, feminist writer Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1991: 33) emphasises ‘the importance of writing in the production of self- and collective consciousness’. I have therefore shown that raranga at Kohewhata is not reliant on unchanging tikanga (rules), and that my writing about it influences and is influenced by the collective consciousness of other women kairaranga at Kohewhata, as well as a hierarchy of power with which we needed to interact in this marae context.

Although my current understanding of Kohewhata raranga and related marae processes came with a research methodology that was versatile and open to chance encounters and change, it also
incorporated recognition of complicated and unclear social hierarchies. In analysing such indistinct, interdependent and yet fluid hierarchies, I recognised their effects on raranga production and producers, but could not deny the active agency of Māori women in marae-based activities.

The general nature of my research and writing, for example, greatly depended on my kaiako Toi Maihi whose teaching skills and personal commitment to Māori politics are exemplary. It resonates with Toi vocalised thoughts as well as her non-verbal communication that derives from ‘unspoken’ attributes of raranga praxis or as Toi would express it: ‘the doing, more than the talking’.

Ani’s words that began my case study of Kohewhata also point to the unfolding political consciousness that comes with raranga praxis. Her environment-based political aspirations and activism along with that of other Kohewhata kairaranga joins networks locally, further afield regionally, nationally and internationally. My research and this thesis are therefore intertwined with the fostering of raranga education and the revaluation of raranga within and beyond Kohewhata. Recording the words and actions of kairaranga in written form is an important part of this process, particularly since there is a danger of them passing unnoticed in dominant discourses on Māori culture.

I therefore see the research/writing project comprising this thesis as one that has numerous important elements – both as a corrective to previous knowledge and also a contribution to political consciousness. As Mohanty (1991: 34) powerfully argues:

This is a process which is significant not merely as a corrective to the gaps, erasures, and misunderstandings of hegemonic masculinist history, but because the very practice of remembering and rewriting leads to the formation of politicised consciousness and self-identity. Writing often becomes the context through which new political identities are forged.

I return to the idea of Mohanty’s ‘new political identities’ later when I write about a globalised kairaranga-based ‘politicised consciousness and self-identity’. I also take up the related theme of
flexibility in raranga discourses that contrast with prevailing rigid interpretations of tikanga and other aspects of Māori culture in forthcoming chapters. The importance of my fieldwork at Kohewhata becomes increasingly apparent as these chapters progress. In the next chapter, for example, I address the importance of prevailing notions of social status and value, their implications for women kairaranga and the indispensability of cultural memories in raranga-based discourses. I will link these observations to the raranga of the Kohewhata wall panels.

1 I find the term ‘field’ to be problematic given my family connections and the constant existence of being a Māori woman, one who never leaves my intellectual and scholastic ‘field’. The field constitutes everyday existence that I cannot move away from except in the sense of having rare moments on my own. Leaving the field only happens to my way of thinking when I sleep though I would argue that I then enter a ‘field’ of dreams. I therefore add the term ‘official’ to describe those instances where my research is sponsored by an institution that labels my research as ‘fieldwork’.

2 I have in my keeping highly confidential information regarding criminal records that I cannot divulge sources for. Whilst I do not intend to dwell in detail on such matters I refer to sources such as local media, who do not necessarily name offenders, local gossip and criminal court cases I have witnessed in a personal capacity. These sources offer at least a surface indication that some older offenders exist and that some elders are known to err in their judgement and honesty.

3 I designate this world as elite given the fact that many Indigenous people continue to be poorly represented within it and their non-inclusion sharply contrasts with that of non-Indigenous people.

4 In contemplating economic systems beyond his own ‘Western’ parameters Thomas distinguishes them from those of indigenous peoples in terms of social values and transactions:

Our common sense does not, however, extend to the principles and values, which are implicit in other economic systems – not even, necessarily, to other people’s forms of capitalism, let alone to tribal economies which seem more intrinsically unlike and more removed from our own culture and economy. The distinctive prestations and value in such systems deserve to be recognised (1994:8)

Thus Thomas posits cultural difference as existing between his notion of ‘our’ Western culture that ‘should not occasion a kind of writing in which tribal people inhabit a domain completely separate from our own’ noting further that:

Everyone is now tied up in a historical network of global relations; this assumption does not determine everything at a local level and does not specify cultural distinctiveness of modern life in the West as well as the peculiar combinations of transformations and intransigence on the colonial periphery (1994:8).

Such prestations most surely blur and bleed into each other where tribal people like myself, making that identification on the basis of my Ngāpuhi genealogy, cannot easily separate themselves off from the long arm of ‘Western culture’. The notion of ‘Western’ distinctions from other ‘prestations’ and values is loosened by instances, for example, of intermarriage and ‘mixed blood’ progeny not to mention Westernised education systems. For further discussion on this point see chapters 1 and 6 regarding genealogical ‘mixtures’ with ‘tribal peoples’.

5 Provide more details for example its role in tourism as part of a network in the north.
6 Some of these battles include the British assault at Ohakea in pursuit of the Ngāpuhi Chief Hone Heke discussed later in this thesis.

7 Owing to Kaikohe’s geographic location and its commercial role in attracting diverse hapu (sub-tribal) groups seeking work (see chapter 2) various contestations for local power have taken place. These contests harmed Māori political solidarity against ‘modernisation’ that swept away the wahi tapu. Family members (Rankin Family, 2001-2) of the late Kaumatua Graham Rankin assure me that protests to this action most certainly occurred. They eventually lost out to rival Māori factions (some of which were close relatives) who benefited materially from the resulting land transactions.

8 At time of writing the whare at Kohewhata has not been completed. The naming of the whare is still being debated. Therefore, rather than applying the term ‘Whare Tupuna’ (Ancestral House) or ‘Whare Whakairo’ (Carved House) for example, which is usually assigned to a completed building of this kind, often paying homage to a noted ancestor, I will reserve such specific terminology until its construction is complete.

9 I have discussed meanings of art and their problematic attachments to non-Western creativity in the previous chapter

10 For example see discussion in chapter 2 regarding migration to Kaikohe in the 1920s that complicates tribal affiliations in the town of Kaikohe and elsewhere.

11 The Māori feminist scholar Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (1991:68) provides one explanation for such prohibitions that are more relevant to preserving the colour of woven items than any essentialist notion of women as contaminators.

12 A kete that Horace gifted to me during my doctoral candidature, features in Chapter 2’s discussion of raranga items.

13 Official statistics indicate an overall disadvantage amongst Māori women compared with Pakeha women. According to a recent Government report (Te Puni Kokiri and Ministry of Women’s Affairs, 1999), for example, Māori women are paid less if they work, are more vulnerable to unemployment and are more likely to receive Government social security allowances. They are also less likely to be a partner in two-parent families (Te Puni Kokiri and Ministry of Women’s Affairs, 1999: 8).

14 Sadly I must add here that Kataraina, a great friend and mentor, passed away after a short illness during my time at Kohewhata. I pay her a fond farewell in the Māori language that she continuously encouraged me to speak in a politically driven effort to revive that language from its diminution following British colonisation. With due respect I do not translate it into English: Haere, haere Te wahine atawhai. Haere toku whaea ataahua. Haere ki to moenga roa …takoto, takoto i roto i Te Rangimarie.

15 While kuta grows in quite shallow lakes it is best for reasons explained in the main text to cut kuta that is growing in approximately one and a half to two metres of water.

16 The exact completion date for the Kohewhata Marae project has not been set. Past deadlines for completion have been passed. I expect to continue my work at Kohewhata in terms of raranga and literary contribution at least, beyond the completion of this thesis but Kohewhata will not be completed by the time I submit this thesis for examination.
CHAPTER 4: STATUS, SANCTITY AND MEMORY

ONCE WERE WEAVERS AND WARRIORS

INTRODUCTION

What shocks me are the men who hide behind a front of respectability, of being elders, leaders, bastions of the whānau [family, close family links], but who commit incest, bash up women, and then they’ll tell you about whare tangata [womb, child-bearing ability]. Where do they get off? Such hypocrites! … I have dreams. I guess we want a better deal, a little light that is the end of the tunnel, not just the glow-worm’s bottom (Reid, 1996).

In terms of social context, the last two chapters have mostly concerned raranga, kairaranga and Māori women in Aotearoa New Zealand where I highlighted the agency of Māori women kairaranga in political issues. Whilst this focus shifts more markedly to Australia in part 2 of this thesis (beginning in the next chapter) it cannot proceed without an in-depth discussion of Māori philosophical tenets that are most relevant to raranga-based discourses. My inclusion at the beginning of this chapter of a poignant and powerful statement by Māori woman writer, Paparangi Reid, signals a shift in the directional ‘weave’ of this thesis towards an engagement with important Māori philosophies. Theories or outlooks on life from Māori culture now momentarily overlay situated knowledge, such as that gained ethnographically at Kohewhata.

This discursive shift concerns philosophical tenets in Māori culture that have been used variously by Māori people to both inspire Māori women’s politics and to subjugate women in restrictive interpretations of Māori culture. As Paparangi Reid (1996) implies in her statement, this subjugation and exploitation is often the work of a Māori patriarchy that hypocritically interprets Māori cultural tenets and harm others, including women and children. I concur with Reid’s view that Māori women have experienced harmful effects of this hypocrisy. However, my engagement with Māori cultural tenets builds upon her observations further to examine various other ways in which they have impacted on Māori women and raranga. I will show that current
interpretations of these tenets are linked to colonialist influences on Māori culture.

Therefore, this chapter along with chapter 5, features raranga in relation to five concepts from Māori culture, namely mana, tapu, noa, karanga and karakia, that manifest in various social contexts of status, sanctity and ceremony. These concepts are based on culturally bound familiarisations among Māori people with each other, and with particular places. Recollections of actions and events, undertaken in various locations, play an indispensable role in this familiarisation process, as do social hierarchies. Although the Māori cultural arena has changed dramatically under colonialism, these concepts continue to dominate Māori cultural production.

My interpretive exploration of the five concepts foregrounds an inherent complexity that is also evident in other Māori terms such as raranga with its multi-dimensional discourse that ranges over linguistic, technical, sociological and philosophical characteristics. The semantic depth of these concepts defies a simplistic approach and is only matched by a vast array of examples where they are, or could be, put into practice. However, a seemingly inevitable impression arises from this foray into Māori concepts that many of their interpretations (including those cited and discussed in detail later) contain a strong gendered bias, favouring men either blatantly, or by default. I balance this bias by leaning my choice of interpretive examples towards a feminist perspective.

This chapter provides an in-depth discussion of three of the five concepts: mana, tapu and noa. Section 1 concerns mana, highlighting its various interpretations, its relationship to Māori women and raranga, including its relevance to the Kohewhata panels. Section 2 addresses tapu and noa that are related to mana, but particularly apply to issues of sanctity in Māori culture. This section's general format mirrors that of section 1. Additionally, in preparation for chapter 5’s discussion, it draws on another episode in my family’s history. This episode demonstrates the powerful influences of Christianity on corporeal ownership that affects Māori
women’s self-esteem and cultural identity. The section then re-addresses the Kohewhata panels and their eventual site on the marae, taking note of the significance of tapu and noa to Māori women kairaranga. Thus, in this deep discussion of mana, tapu and noa, I endeavour to contribute to Paparangi Reid’s (1996) expository ‘light that is the end of the tunnel, not just the [superficial] glow-worm’s bottom’.

SECTION 1: MANA, THE FIRST OF THREE CULTURAL TENETS

Kei hea te tikanga, mehemea horekau he maharatanga? Kua whati katoa...

He pepeha2 na matou, ngā rito a ngā tūpuna whaea-kairaranga o Hokiang a whānui

[Where are our customs, without our memories? Without them, all things would be broken... A saying by us, the descendents of ancestral women weavers of the wide region of Hokiang a, Northern Aotearoa New Zealand]

This pepeha (saying) encapsulates the importance of memories that sustain and inspire Māori cultural continuities and alterations. In relation to Māori cultural tenets it also inspires my question: where would mana, tapu and noa be without memories, including those of Māori women?

This section addresses that question in relation to mana, raranga and kairaranga before its more specific focus on the Kohewhata panels. Firstly, I focus attention towards published literature on mana, Māori women and raranga. I view this literature as the product of ‘expert’ memory and value creation, afforded some mana (social status) with its publication. My general appraisal of current published literature is intended to provide both a multi-layered interpretation of mana, as well as a critique of literature on Māori culture produced under a colonialist hegemony. In doing so, it highlights a hiatus in published literature on Māori philosophy, of the views of Māori women.

Secondly, I consider cultural ideals and opinions regarding mana imparted to me during my doctoral candidature. They are part
of a process that involves memorising and memorialising of deities, people and places and transferring to other people. It is not only oral history, though oral transference is its primary characteristic. It is also written history, recorded and contained in private archives, lovingly kept by Māori people, but which has yet to reach a published page. Along with published literature, I refer to this oral and unpublished written history in critically addressing raranga and mana in Māori cultural discourses. This critical engagement then feeds my interpretations of the Kohewhata panels.

PUBLISHED INTERPRETATIONS OF MANA
As one of the most prominent concepts in current academic and popular discourse, mana is included in many studies of Māori culture. The subject focus of such studies varies from dictionary definitions to philosophical accounts of Māori concepts relating to environmental sustainability.

LITERATURE BEGINNING WITH SOME DICTIONARY DEFINITIONS
A current Māori dictionary definition of mana includes the following: ‘integrity, charisma, prestige, formal, jurisdiction’ (Ryan, 1997: 143). It then continues with definitions for a number of other related terms. Examples of the latter include mana-ā-iwi (tribal authority), mana heke iho (inherent dignity) and mana whakairo hinengaro4 (intellectual property rights).

An earlier attempt at defining mana (Williams, H. W., 1975: 172) incorporates eight different possibilities, with examples in Māori language of its placement within sentences and phrases. These include the following:

Authority, control. He rangatira whai mana a Hongi [Hongi, an authoritative chief].

Psychic force. Ehara i te tino mate rawa atu o Tawhaki, a nona ake ano te mana i ora ake ai ano ia [Without doubt Tawhaki is well and truly deceased, yet through his own special psychic power he lives again].

H. W. Williams (1975: 172) also defines a relationship between mana and manaaki:
v.t. Show respect or kindness to, entertain. E kore taura tangata e manaakitia e Ngapuhi. [That man, discussed earlier, is not to be treated kindly by Ngāpuhi]. One of the few words in the Māori dialect which preserves the Polynesian particle aki. || mana.

I re-examine the significance of manaaki in relation to mana later in this section.

The connection between mana and manaaki is not made in Ryan’s (1997) more recent dictionary. Thus, Williams’ examples give a fuller coverage of the possible meanings for mana and their related words such as manaaki. Williams’ definition is more helpful to extensive academic study than Ryan’s more concise version, though Ryan exceeds Williams for an explanation of more up-to-date Māori language, being a later publication. In both dictionaries, mana is interpreted as a complex, multi-faceted concept equal to combinations of many English words and phrases. However, neither dictionary provides clues as to inter-generational differences in understanding mana. Nor do they directly address gender-based differences in the social perceptions and practical applications of mana, over time.

BARLOW’S CONNECTIONS TO TIKANGA WHAKAARO

Published interpretations of mana do not stop with language dictionaries. The Hikutū (a hapū or sub-grouping of Ngāpuhi) scholar Cleve Barlow (1991: 60-62), for example, gives a bi-lingual (Māori and English) exposition of the word mana in the context of tikanga. His entire book is an examination of tikanga, a concept itself that has been concisely translated as ‘meaning, custom, obligations and conditions (legal), provisions (legal), criterion’ (Ryan, 1997: 297).

The addition of the word ‘whakaaro’ (thought) in Barlow’s book title followed by a subtitle in English ‘Key concepts in Māori culture’ points to his intention to encourage further enquiry as stated in a preface:

I do not wish to suggest in any way that I know everything there is to know about these matters; yet I feel that there are some valuable insights that I can offer to those who wish to know
more. I have pondered for a long time as to how best to disseminate this knowledge to others without revealing too much (as I was taught in my own training), but still being able to offer a useful basis from which others could achieve greater understanding. I have therefore not included all there is to know about each concept; in some cases I myself have a lot to learn about them (Barlow, 1991: xvi).

I agree with and emulate Barlow’s statement and its fostering of further intellectual exploration of tikanga. This kind of exploration may see changes to understandings of mana by future generations of scholars, if not the general populace.

In relation to the sources of his knowledge, Barlow adds:

Most of what I have written is stored in my mind from what I learned over several years in the wānanga [Māori learning institutions], at various hui [gatherings, meetings] and cultural events, and from discussions with kaumatua and kuia in many areas (1991, xvi).

Barlow relies on knowledge acquired and pondered over ‘a long time’ (1991: xvi), implying that memories are an important part of this acquisition, as are the modes of its eventual dissemination. However, I ponder whether Barlow’s acquired knowledge of tikanga is equally available to men and women supposing that my, and other women’s, perspectives and interpretations may help to advance his arguments further, or may in fact contradict them.

One example of his book’s (1991) discursive shortcomings exists in relation to women’s mana and raranga. It is possible that in gathering his knowledge on tikanga Barlow has denied, neglected, or forgotten, the possibility of Māori women and raranga having substantial mana beyond the ‘personal’, as I now explain.

Barlow (1991: 61) interprets the word mana as ‘power, authority, [and] prestige’, furthering describing it as ‘the enduring, indestructible power of the gods. It is the sacred fire that is without beginning and without end’ (1991: 61). He then uses male references to support his interpretation. He names the creation god Tāne and his legendary exploits as an example of the mana of gods (1991: 61) and
then notes modern changes of meaning that relate to various forms of power:

In modern times the term mana has taken on various meanings, including the power of the gods, the power of ancestors, the power of the land, and the power of the individual (Barlow, 1991: 61).

It is in discussing the mana of human beings, the ‘power of the individual’, that Barlow makes some marked gender-based distinctions:

Mana tangata: This is the power acquired by an individual according to his or her ability and effort to develop skills and to gain knowledge in particular areas. For example, a skilled warrior was able to acquire mana through the arts of combat and warfare under the code of law of Tūmatauenga, the god of war. Women have personal power in respect of their role in taking care of children and, on the marae, in welcoming and caring for visitors (Barlow, 1991: 62).

Women’s acquisition of mana is limited to personal pursuits in Barlow’s interpretation, as opposed to the warrior’s mana of men and the sacred mana of male gods.

Barlow’s separation of women and men’s mana suggests that mana is mainly a matter of war (or epic heroism) and peace, and that women’s limited mana resides solely in the peaceful domestic (or ‘personal’) sphere. Both men and women are essentially bound by these different roles, if they are to be associated with mana. The detail of women’s limited role is confined to taking care of children, along with welcoming and providing for guests, actions in which men have no place.

Barlow’s view of women’s personal mana equates with the colonialist idea that ‘the woman’s place is in the home’. He implies that Māori women never had a warrior role and that their domestic role (which requires little detailed explanation) is their only source of mana. He also implies that Māori men of mana never had a child-rearing role and that they never had a part in welcoming and providing for guests. More historical research on women’s mana may yet verify that women’s mana in pre-colonial Māori societies
extended beyond the contexts of their peacetime domestic roles. In our current society Māori women are not confined to these roles, leaving open the question of whether or not those who contribute to their communities beyond their homes, have mana.

The actualities of Māori society in pre-colonial times may never be sufficiently verified since oral records have passed away with our tāpuna and most surviving records are the interpretation and translation of Pākehā writers. Their reconstruction in more modern times, however, can contribute to conservative sexism and the adoption of ‘frozen’ cultural values relating to the mana and tapu of Māori men (including rangatira and tohunga experts) at the expense of Māori women.

Research into pre-colonial applications of mana to women is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, Barlow’s simplistic approach to women’s mana is open to criticism here, particularly because he treats women’s personal mana with inadequate detail. The heroic deeds of men and male gods receive far greater detail as if they are in some unspecified way, more important and elevated in a hierarchy of mana-related deeds. The deeds of women, whether domestic or not, are comparatively lacking in detail. The impression could consequently be gained that women’s deeds are by definition mundane, auxiliary and somewhat inferior to the mana of men and male gods. As has been described in relation to Pacific-based histories generally:

Such flagrant misunderstandings of indigenous patterns of gender thus are not just the preserve of early missionaries but also of more recent colonial and post-colonial authorities (Jolly and Mcintyre, 1989: 14).

A relevant lack of detail in Barlow’s book pertains to raranga. At no point in Tikanga Whakaaro (1991) does raranga, as an intrinsic part of Māori women’s lives, whether defined as domestic or not, appear in connection to mana or tikanga. However, indirect references to raranga do appear. For example, his interpretation of manaaki that, as mentioned earlier can been
connected to mana (Williams, H. W., 1975: 172), includes the
following in Māori language and then in English translation:

He penei tonu te kupu manaakitanga: Nau te rourou. Naku te
rourou. Ka makona te iwi … The following is a modern saying
often used to express hospitality: Your contribution And my
contribution Will provide sufficient for all. (Barlow, 1991: 63)

Barlow does not mention that the Māori word *rourou* is also
translatable into English as a ‘food basket’, a kete-like raranga form.
With his short explanation of a Māori whakataukī (proverb), an
opportunity to engage with the importance of raranga items and
kairaranga (usually women) more extensively, in contexts of mana,
manaaki and tikanga, goes begging.

Barlow’s schematic placement of mana (and manaaki) within
the context of ‘tikanga whakaaro’ becomes part of his ideal rules for
behaviour under Māori cultural parameters. The values associated
with his interpretations of tikanga, retain male bias that consistently
‘domesticates’ women into private or ‘personal’ spheres that
represent the only context in which they can be assigned mana. The
mana of Māori women kairaranga remains open to confirmation
beyond Barlow’s interpretations of tikanga, such as is offered in this
thesis.

A LEGAL STUDY
Governmental publications on Māori customs can also be a haven of
male bias in their engagement with mana. A recently published legal
perspective (Law Commission, 2001: 33) on types of mana, for
example, notes that Māori kaumatua Maori Marsden ‘identified three
aspects of mana: mana atua – God given power; mana tupuna –
power from the ancestors; and mana tangata – authority derived from
personal attributes’. Māori Marsden is a well-known male authority
on Māori culture. His view published in a study paper produced by
the Aotearoa New Zealand Law Commission particularises mana in
relation to men and leadership in explaining the term *mana tangata*
within a mythological framework featuring male characters:

Mana tangata or one’s political acumen and leadership qualities
were traditionally very important and are perhaps even more
important today. The cunning, exuberance and courage of Maui Tikitiki, the youngest of Tarangi’s five sons which saw him become the leader of this people is the most famous mythological example of mana tangata in operation.

The study paper extends its argument (2001: 33-34) to the issue of losing mana and is careful in its references to gender:

A person (whether male or female) with impeccable whakapapa [genealogy] to claim a role as a rangatira [Chief] may none the less be relegated to as ceremonial, minor, or token role, unless the appropriate skills of mana tangata are shown...

A point regarding gender distinctions within mana discourse that appear soon after, seemingly attempts to clarify this statement in the name of tradition:

In the modern context it is important to mention that mana tangata has never been confined to men. The word “tangata” properly includes both sexes, men being tane and women wahine. Respect for mana wahine is a traditional Māori value, not a modern development. Mana wahine has been distorted by the perceptions of officials and writers during the contact period to diminish the importance of women (Law Commission, 2001: 34).

Mana, according to this argument, does not have a separate context for women because the ‘traditional Māori value’ of mana wahine is included in mana tangata. What does and does not constitute a ‘modern development’ is unclear, as is the nature and detail of some unspecified official and literary distortions of mana wahine, in order to diminish the importance of women.

Reference is made to a number of texts, mostly recent letters and comments (Law Commission, 2001: 34 footnote), that are intended to authoritatively support the interpretation of mana tangata as generic term pertaining to men and women. The mana of the study paper’s interpretations is thus asserted by quoted references to both published and unpublished texts.

However, ‘why distinguish at all between mana tangata and mana wahine?’ is a question that still remains unanswered. Part of the answer pertains to language differences. Qualifying mana with a secondary mention of mana wahine, for example, highlights the
gender dichotomies of the English language that are not necessarily applicable to Māori terms. Tangata, for example, is a gender-neutral equivalent to the English word person. A confused understanding of mana tangata and mana wahine indicates a mismatch between Māori concepts, gender neutral terms such as tangata and atua, and English language interpretations that emphasis a gender dichotomy of men and women, gods and goddesses. Nevertheless, as I continue to demonstrate, more critical engagement with mana tangata as it manifests in today’s social contexts and literary accounts, contradicts assumptions that, in its current usage, it is gender neutral.

In terms of a raranga-based discourse, there is an interpretation in the Law Commission Study of the term rangatira:

Thus it is inherent in the triadic nature of mana itself that traditional and contemporary Māori leadership is both pragmatically consensual and spiritual at the same time. According to Williams, this is reflected in the etymology of the term rangatira. “Ranga” is a word which means to weave. “Tira” is a word which denotes a group of people travelling. Thus the rangatira is considered to be a weaver of the people (Law Commission, 2001: 35-36).

Raranga, of course, is not the subject of the Law Commission’s study, yet such references to weaving and rangatira deserve some further investigation beyond this brief reference. In this way, various social values attached to raranga discourses, such as the link between weaving and leadership (and mana), may be more clearly seen. This point also supports my earlier observations of how raranga based metaphors are used to inspire unity in political action.

Room exists for more substantial critical engagement of Māori social values beyond the parameters of this Law Commission study and its biased interpretation of Māori concepts that implicitly favours men and subsumes gender differences, including inequities. Its current limits could adversely influence future Law Court decisions regarding Māori women and feed a societal attitude that trivialises their role in Māori culture.
A more alarming probability is the wholesale trivialisation by the Courts (and the majority Pākehā society) of Māori culture including mana and raranga, on the basis that Māori culture fails to be relevant to currently existing social contexts especially those of Māori women. Hence, the ‘whole way of struggle’ thematically presented in relation to raranga and Māori women earlier in this thesis, needs to also incorporate a watchdog role over institutions and the literature that informs them. This may help, at least in part; to counteract the literary ‘amnesia’ that adversely affects Māori women.

ANOTHER LITERARY SLIP IN MĀORI POLITICS

The concept of mana dominates in a recent study of Māori politics entitled *Te mana, te kawanatanga: the politics of Māori self-determination* (M. Durie, 1998). Its author Mason Durie, a Māori scholar, uses the word and concept of mana to organise and discuss various aspects of Māori belief systems, social organisation, social problems and political action. Mana wahine, however, fails to gain special mention though women are singled out with the following comment under a chapter heading ‘Mana Tangata’:

Differences between Māori women and Māori men are reflected in income levels, educational achievement, the burden of caring (for children, elderly, and the disabled) and health risks. At [one particular Hui ‘Ara Ahu Whakamua’ held in 1994], a lack of role complementarity was discussed as well as the many disadvantages facing women, often because of the attitudes of Māori men. Māori women as leaders was [sic] a theme which recurred at the Hui Whakapumau. [Quoting Aroha Mead] ‘It is a tragic waste of much needed skill, energy and commitment to continue to deny Māori women their rightful place in Iwi/Māori decision-making’. A prediction was made that Māori women would play greater roles in the development of Māori society as politicians, bureaucrats, consultants, lawyers and bankers and that Māori men might be best advised to encourage rather than resist the movement. (M. Durie, 1998: 93-4)

This is the sole indexed reference in the book (of 280 pages) to Māori women.

Whilst Durie makes a valuable and rare contribution to Māori social and political discourse from the perspective of a Māori
man, his book has shortcomings. For example, he leaves off further discussion about Māori women, their actualities and potential, quickly moving on to other demographic matters. It could be taken for granted, judging from his book and the Law Commission study paper, that women appear alongside men by default, in all references to mana tangata. Points regarding differences between Māori men and women are confined to a single paragraph. Not unlike the Law Commission Study (2001), the paucity of Durie’s sole indexed reference to women can also be interpreted as tokenistic. The fact that he makes a quick distinction between Māori men and women but then abandons it in the remainder of the book, supports the possibility of tokenism and neglect of social issues specifically affecting Māori women.

ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPHY

Environmental philosopher of Pākehā descent, John Patterson (2000: chapter 6) devotes an entire chapter to mana. He provides the following interpretation of mana in terms of softness and hardness with some carefully stated conditions concerning cultural property, memory and an innovative theory:

Altering the Maori language is unlikely to be appreciated either by Maori who jealously guard te reo (the language) from just this sort of interference or by non-Maori who are not sufficiently familiar with the Maori terms involved to remember easily what is being said. I propose to use familiar English words and simply distinguish between ‘soft mana’ and ‘hard mana’, soft mana being the path of cooperation while hard mana is the path of competition. It must be clear, though, that this is not a contrast between two different sorts of mana but simply two ways of obtaining mana, and that the way of soft mana is not meant to suggest an easy way (Patterson, 2000: 104).

If Māori people do ‘jealously guard te reo ... from interference’ as Patterson states, it is also feasible that they are guarding memories of that language and other aspects of Māori cultural production, in order that they are not lost or misappropriated. Those ‘non-Maori’, and indeed those Māori, who are not so familiar with Māori terms can also forget the ‘true’ meanings of Māori language terms and in this process, mishandle it. It remains to be seen in published form,
whether Māori and ‘non-Māori support, or object to Patterson’s innovative division of mana into ‘soft’ and ‘hard’, and for which reasons. These comments aside, Patterson’s primary concern is with harmonious relations between human beings and their environment. His focus on ‘soft mana’ is comparable to Williams’ dictionary definition of manaaki discussed earlier.

It is Patterson’s environmental connection with the mana-related concept of manaaki that strongly resonates with the woman of Kohewhata, their raranga and politically driven concern for the environment. I therefore equate Patterson’s environmental concerns with raranga practices and with a spiritual environment, discussed more fully later. However, Māori women’s voices and memories (including those of kairaranga) are rarely made explicit in Patterson’s statements except briefly, in relation to the kairaranga Erenora Puketapu-Hetet (Patterson, 2000: 83). It appears as though they are denied, forgotten or subsumed under a generic understanding of Māori culture that does not allow for gendered, or any other kind of diversity, within it. Judging from Patterson’s omissions of raranga in a book published nine years after Barlow’s Tikanga Whakaaro, it appears that critical engagement with interpretations of mana and raranga remain under-developed in published form, encouraging further contributions currently (as with this thesis), and in future.

MANA ON MARAE

Other interpretations of mana pertain to marae protocols. In chapter 3, I mentioned published Māori observations (Tauroa and Tauroa, 1986: 58-59) of marae and their relationship to women and Pākehā influence. The same authors make a further distinction between Māori people (including men and women) and Pākehā on the following basis:

Māori people, both men and women, see their involvement on the marae not only as a role but as a personal contribution to the identity of their people. By contributing to the whole tikanga, their own mana, and the mana of their marae, is uplifted. (Tauroa and Tauroa, 1986: 59-60)
Much mana depends, according to this argument, on whaikōrero (speechmaking) and notably, women’s non-participation in it. This focus on the role of marae protocols in building and maintaining mana, reinforces the observation (Salmond, 1975: 14) that mana is built by oratory and other ceremonial performance on a marae.

These publications do not specifically connect mana with kairaranga on marae. This fact raises the question of whether or not mana applies to women generally, and kairaranga particularly, especially in instances where men do not direct them. Here, mana appears to be applicable to men alone by default, and to presume that Māori women have no autonomy or mana of their own on marae. My research findings deny the logic of this male-exclusivity argument. Māori feminist scholar Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (1991) supports this view with an entire published volume on Māori women’s mana in various contexts.

One pressing question regarding marae, nevertheless remains: if kairaranga are not to be included in discourses of marae-based mana, can it then be concluded that there is no place of status for women and raranga on the marae? This thesis denies that possibility just as the kairaranga, kaumatua and kuia who have contributed so much to it, would also deny it. In this last statement I assert the mana of raranga above any argument that raranga and kairaranga lack mana.

As I discussed earlier, it remains questionable that gender inequality or current marae protocols existed before British colonisation. Nevertheless, the ubiquity of colonialism and its influences on Māori patriarchal discourse needs to be taken into account when engaging with concepts such as mana on marae. One example concerns literature, a vehicle of knowledge dissemination brought by the European coloniser. As published literature now has a primary role in discussing and maintaining tikanga Māori, its lapses in recording the views of Māori women of all ages, inadequately and somewhat erroneously, interprets the concept of mana, and its full range of social applications.
However, an alternative Māori feminist observation (Szaszy quoted and paraphrased by Hoskins, 2000: 42) directs attention to ingrained gender inequalities on marae:

Our marae is a patriarchal institution, ‘pervaded by assumptions of male domination’. This position of women in our political whanau [family] mirrors the role of women in society. The custom which disallows women from speaking on that forum with the assertion that men and women have complementary roles is, in fact ‘a denial of equality, as such roles are certainly not equal’.

This view highlights the fact that notions of gender complementarity can be as fraught as the notions of gender neutrality I mentioned earlier. Efforts to change problems associated with marae patriarchy are afoot (Hoskins, 2000: 43), including a departure from the men-only exclusivity of whaiākōrero.

Mana-based social inequity, whether based on Māori traditions or not, has further implications for raranga and kairaranga on marae. If a Māori patriarchy, for example, harms opportunities for Māori women in marae contexts, it ought not to be surprised if those women refuse to participate in its activities, especially where viable alternatives exist. For kairaranga this can mean that their work gains more visibility outside marae. This ‘voting with feet’ can favour ‘Pākehā’ institutions such as schools, art galleries and museums.

Māori cultural reconstructions, including the revival of raranga, can therefore depend on the corporate will and policies of such institutions, rather than marae. The mana of marae and other staples of Māori culture are therefore, outclassed by such institutions that are intrinsically colonialist and based on European cultures. Here we have a potential clash of mana, a clash of cultural values. I return to this point when considering an Australian museum consultancy and issues of Ngāpuhi cultural property in the next chapter.
MANA WĀHINE AND RARANGA

Māori women’s involvement in political campaigns has placed the term *mana wahine* firmly within the realms of political buzzwords, if not fully understood dogma and ideology. Whilst mana of Māori women may not be a modern conceptual development, having roots firmly placed in tradition as stated by the Law Commission Study, it nevertheless has been raised in profile by more recent political developments.

Māori scholar, Thea Hoskins emphasises the importance of mana wahine as a byword in current Māori politics:

Given that Māori women have been responsible at least in part for the construction of Māori women’s identities which promote our status, our uniqueness and our mana (indeed the notion of ‘mana wahine’ as a positive and affirming phrase I believe can be sourced within contemporary Māori women’s discourse), it may be that Māori women ourselves have been articulating the past and deploying identities as a form of resistance in order that we will share more equally in a collective political vision ...The ongoing project of reconstructing our communities must reflect the continuous critical engagement of ‘traditional’ values and practices with our changing cultural and political needs and aspirations (Hoskins, 2000: 45-46).

Current gender inequalities amongst Māori people need critical engagement with, and acknowledgement of Māori women’s important role in ‘reconstructing our [Māori] communities’. The relationship between mana wahine, as political action and art (including raranga) had its literary debut in the work of Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (1991), yet little in the way of substantial published engagement with this subject has surfaced since.

As frequently emphasised in this thesis, Māori women’s political actions can involve raranga. Therefore, critical engagement with raranga should not be separated from Hoskins’ ‘traditional values and practices’ (2000: 46) and current distributions (including inequalities) of power between and amongst men and women. It can be safely assumed from Hoskins views that the discourse on mana wahine necessarily involves raranga, though she does not make this connection explicitly. It is therefore clear that published discourses
on mana wahine still have some distance to travel before raranga is given its due attention.

**INTERPRETATION FACE TO FACE: GAINING AND LOSING MANA**

The question of whether raranga meets mana-based requirements is not yet fully answered in published literature. Given the limitations of currently published work on mana, it is incumbent upon me to focus more attention on to my ethnographic research to justify my view that raranga is a practice of mana and that kairaranga have mana. My research findings convey complex negotiations of mana that relate to a person’s status and community-based action. Further, these negotiations rely on collective recognition of notable deeds, the details of which are both memorised and memorialised. However, much of this recognition depends not only on deeds but also on how information on people and their actions is broadcast.

During my recent fieldwork in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, for example, many Māori associates and family members discussed mana in relation to my doctorate. Some found my academic involvement a source, potentially at least, of great mana. Others suspected that I might ‘get ahead of myself’ because of the perceived gravity or mana of my work. Sometimes these opinions depended on various people’s impression of me as being too young, and to the contrary, too old, too ‘know-all’ and too female or having been away from Aotearoa New Zealand too long to warrant any association with mana at all.

My kaumatua and kuia along with other family members consider it most inappropriate to say that we have mana. Such behaviour is considered negatively, as boastful ‘showing off’. Completing a task is more important for many of us than touting praise or social status for it. For me the task at hand includes learning about the rich concept that is mana over and above acquiring it for myself. Re-addressing raranga as an activity of extensive mana is more a matter of my own value-creating scholarly contribution than any quest for my own mana.
However, some people are quite openly determined to acquire mana. There is no official prohibition on such action though many well-meant efforts meet frustration because of prevailing scepticism or lack of support amongst those where mana is sought. The imperative to gain mana as part of Māori identity in a social and public arena can be discouraging for many well-meaning Māori. Some may eventually find the whole concept and prospect of engaging in it beyond their capability and interest, preferring instead to consider themselves and their actions as being outside Māori realms. Thus, cultural abstention can also amount to voluntary amnesia.

**Mana and Success**

Some of my close relatives in Australia, for example, prefer this latter option whether through ignorance, shame, reticence, preferred abstinence or a combination of these factors. One telling comment made in Australia by a close relative who wishes to remain anonymous was ‘Māori was rammed down my throat back home, why should I be interested in any of it here’. I took this comment to include issues of mana as well as other aspects of Māori culture including Māori language because of my own knowledge of the hardships attached to being part of this culture as much as the joys.

Much of my lifetime, for example, has taken place concurrently with passionate and vocal political action that seeks a revival of Māori culture in Aotearoa New Zealand. At various stages of this political history Māori solidarity was encouraged at the expense of differences and diversity amongst us. Australia offered freedom, away from some of the fundamentalist strictures that prevailed in some Māori political movements at particular times in Aotearoa New Zealand. This interpretation of my close relative’s comments was supported by subsequent conversations with that relative and others, despite the fact that those same people could be seen in certain social contexts as having great mana. I return to the
issue of identity amongst Australian Māori of Ngāpuhi descendency later.

One sentiment (Diamond, J. G., 1998-2003) was expressed with chagrin at the consequences of Pākehā education and the resulting differences of opinion with Māori elders:

They [our parents] sent us off to school, telling us to be good and to learn hard. Now they say we have no mana because of our Pākehā education. How can we win? Even in saying that, I probably will be criticised as being too ‘pākehā-fied’.

Success in Pākehā education systems does not necessarily prevent difficulties in adapting to marae situations or similar contexts that emphasise Māori culture. This situation can be far worse for those who do not excel in Pākehā education systems or any currently available Māori alternative. Lack of mana can therefore be linked to social disadvantage in both Pākehā and Māori social circles. In both instances, mana can be equated with ideal social values, including current notions of ‘success’.

The mana within Māori contexts is not always commensurate with success acquired outside them. Mana acquisition can, therefore, be compared with an Australian migrant whose educational qualifications are not considered equal to those afforded by the Australian education system. Whereas the Australian context is dictated by legislation (based on social attitudes and political lobbying in Parliament) the Māori context is more directly reliant on social consensus and unwritten modes of communication. It is therefore, heavily dependent on unwritten collective and/or expert memory. Such modes of verbal communication can frustrate attempts to authenticate cultural production with a written device, such as a label or a certificate.

The concept of ahi kā, mentioned briefly earlier in relation to my fieldwork methodology, has a pragmatic effect of both determining how much mana a person has, as well as ensuring it is used for the benefit of the community. When members of that community leave it behind and do not maintain contact, their mana
does not necessarily follow them. In this sense mana is not static and rigidly assigned to people with the proviso that they stay in one place. If they move away, however, their mana may dissolve as their memories, and those of their Māori supporters, fade.

Mana does not apply exclusively to the deeds and status of Māori people (Rankin, G., 2000-1 and Hotere Whānau, 2000-2003), though it remains dependent on Māori people’s opinion. A popular politician of Pākehā extraction, for example, can qualify as having mana exceeding that of many Māori people, having gained their trust. All people, regardless of identity or persuasion, are capable of winning and losing mana. Mana is applied depending on viewpoint and prevailing societal attitude. Obviously, those deceased persons who have retained their reputation throughout consequent times keep their mana, in perpetuity. Once it is applied, and provided the assignee does not move away, it can take great consideration and critical assessment, then consensus within the group before its application ceases.

Apart from keeping a presence and involvement within a community, maintenance of mana therefore depends on assigned authority (democratic or otherwise), calibre of decision-making, political acumen, public promotion, personal standards of integrity and powers of memory. There is no rigid recipe for mana gain or loss. Significantly for this thesis, there is no extant rule of exclusivity in mana that disqualifies any group or community-based activity such as raranga and kairaranga.

A PRAGMATIC APPLICATION
Application and denial of mana are therefore very much part of social debate and unanimous or majority decision-making. However, this process has the potential to, at least temporarily, obfuscate criminal acts, as a holder of mana might err through wrongdoing and not be immediately sanctioned. In such circumstances the Pākehā law court6 may prove more effective, and the process of losing mana might be as a result, expedited. In this kind of situation the roles of
Māori law systems are set at odds with the more powerful (in terms of finance and enforcement mechanisms) Pākehā system, feeding a social attitude that one (the Pākehā) is superior to the other.

However, such sweeping overviews neglect the pragmatism of using one culturally based system of enforcement in relation to a certain circumstance, and then preferring an alternative on another separate occasion. Moralistic and pragmatic choices are often interwoven in social action and must be taken into account in any analysis that addresses issues of cultural integrity (including authentication) and superiority. I directly address raranga-based authentication issues that equate with mana, and their relationship to the Kohewhata panels later.

KAIRARANGA AND MANA
Notably, the subject of mana was rarely broached by kairaranga at Kohewhata. It was as if the mana of our work was taken-for-granted as was the burgeoning self-confidence that accompanied it. When pressed, some kairaranga would not admit that their work had mana as such an admission amounted in their collective view, to whakahūhū (boastfulness). Others, particularly Toi Maihi (2000-2003) hold the view that if their raranga does not manifest the mana of makers and wearers, not to mention the mana of female and male ancestors and deities, then nothing does. Additionally, the marae-based mana of kairaranga at Kohewhata can be viewed as having increased due to the whakawātea that allowed them to enter the wharenui amongst unfinished whakairo (woodcarving). Their mana may also change as their raranga is seen by a widening group of spectators, and as their work attracts more critical engagement.

Another important issue concerning mana and kairaranga is their negotiation of capitalist market-driven notions of Māori cultural authenticity that assign a dollar value to their work within and outside the marae. This mode of value creation could directly affect the levels of mana assigned to raranga items and their makers in Māori, Pākehā or ‘mixed-identity’ communities. Mana-based
social equations may also change as diverse students of raranga develop new ways to effectively disseminate their knowledge. Though often silent now on the subject of mana, kairaranga may assert the mana of their raranga differently in future. It is unlikely, at least in the foreseeable future, that mana will become irrelevant to kairaranga and their work, despite the published inadequacies on this subject that currently prevail. This unlikelihood relates to the strong current political lobby in Aotearoa New Zealand, to protect Māori customs, including mana and raranga, against further losses under colonialism.

KĀKAHU AND WHĀRIKI OF MANA

More can be said of the mana of raranga items. As discussed earlier, connections between kākahu and mana appear in literature and popular Māori and Pākehā imagination as pertaining to men more than women, particularly those men of high social rank. However, it is neither the case that Māori women did not wear kākahu, nor the fact that kākahu are never be associated with and named for tūpuna whaea (female ancestors) of great mana. This point brings raranga-based discourses into direct line with my earlier observations of gendered social applications of mana.

The mana associated with raranga items also provides an example of Māori cultural flux and contingencies. For example, and as discussed earlier, mana can be attached to kākahu depending on the person who originally wore it and its technical and aesthetic features. Kākahu can be named after historical events and the deeds and identities of wearers, such as rangatira (people of high mana), and those people who inherit kākahu from their elders, can retain these names. Kākahu may be named after rangatira and retain that name in perpetuity. The making of mana attached to kākahu therefore entails, at least in part, a naming process and a memorisation of people, events and places.

Mana assigned to raranga items can change depending on their function. The mana of a whāriki, for example, can change
depending on its purpose. Whāriki can be made for the physical comfort of people of high mana when they sleep, as noted earlier. Such whāriki may then be used symbolically to acknowledge and assert mana. Whāriki may be laid beneath coffins, for example, to signify love and wishes for peaceful ‘sleep’ from bereaved relatives. This action can affirm the mana of the deceased and their family. For those still living, whāriki can be used in particular social contexts to symbolise belonging and mana within a community. These associations between whāriki and kākahu, and mana, relate to social values outside a money-based economy. In fact they direct attention towards an alternative set of values to those of a capitalist system.

**Panels of Mana**

Without entertaining any illusions about the scale of the world’s cross-cultural problems, perhaps names and faces can contribute to a different authentication agenda, a political one that accounts for and dignifies the broadest possible spectrum of ways of being human (Pastor-Roces, 1991:148).

A most compelling example of raranga that clearly contributes to mana discourses is the collection of wall panels at Kohewhata Marae. Inspired by the above statement from a specialist in Philippines textiles, Marion Pastor-Roces, I incorporate the references to the Kohewhata wall panels into the beginnings of an ‘authentication agenda’ that involves Māori ‘ways of being human’ (Pastor-Roces, 1991: 148). This agenda is based on various Māori cultural tenets though I limit my discussion here to the panels in relation to cultural belonging. This relationship is an issue of mana; the mana of Māori people’s identity-making in relation to genealogy and place. Manifestations of ‘expert’ and collective memory and mana are also brought to the fore in this discussion.

**The Kuta Ara and Other Northern References**

References to places and cultural belonging can be conveyed subtly. For example, at Kohewhata, the use of plant fibres in raranga can refer to the surrounding rohe, its landscapes, climate, and history.
Figure 4.2: Example of raranga piece for Kohewhata tukutuku panels approximately 84cm x 36cm x 75cm. Kiekie and kōrari fibres diagonally interwoven. Kohewhata Marae, 2000.

Keeping with my description of all raranga as comprising 'items', each space therefore contains a single item of raranga that relates to others. Their shapes are mostly triangular though there are also a variety of oblongs featured on each panel. The majority of these shapes feature raranga fibre from the Ngāpuhi rohe of Northern Aotearoa New Zealand, in particular the lake reed, kuta that I discussed at length, earlier. The use of this fibre along with others including kōrari, pingao and tī, implicitly situates the panels within this rohe. Its 'unprocessed' colours and textures are intended to link the landscape features of this rohe with the marae.

Every panel therefore has a geometric pattern that interconnects with other panels in a continuous series via a kuta ara (pathway), which runs through their middle sections (figure 4.3). The ara has a dual purpose of providing visual direction, which the eye can easily follow. It metaphorically refers to life's pathways and the stability of mountains and waterways of the Ngāpuhi rohe. This metaphor and aesthetic effect is intended to complement other directional effects in the whare, once the panels are installed. Another example of directional force within the design of the whare concerns a waka, a carved 'canoe' that has been hoisted toward the ceiling with its prow pointing towards the back wall. The directional effect (including the wall panels and waka) of all components of the whare leads to an ultimate reference point on the back wall. As I discuss later in more detail, this point refers to eternity after death, the ultimate outcome of life.
As mentioned earlier, the panels are a representation of tāniko that is most often seen on the borders of kākahu (particularly kaitaka) that have highly ornate tāniko borders. Nevertheless their designer Allen Wihongi and all the kairaranga refer to these panels, despite their tāniko reference, as tukutuku panels. It is therefore important to briefly engage with various interpretations of tāniko and tukutuku techniques, beyond those mentioned in chapter 2, in order to understand the flexibility of terms within raranga-based discourses.

Figure 4.3: Detail: Central zigzag kuta Ara on Kohewhata wall panel. Kohewhata Marae 2001.

It should be noted in an analysis of these panels that tāniko refers to both technique and result:

There was a time when confusion between the two was not possible because tāniko patterns could be produced only by the tāniko technique. Today, however, tāniko patterns can be produced by a variety of techniques – tapestry, painting, linocutting, silk-screening, appliqué, and commercial printing. It is therefore necessary to make a clear distinction between the
form of the patterns and the technique used to achieve such forms (Mead 1999: 8-16).

This point urges me to conclude that the Kohewhata panels still at least partly qualify as tāniko, because of their patterning and because of their association with kaitaka forms of kākahu.

Similar reasoning applies to describing the panels as tukutuku. Distinctions between turapa, arapaki and tuitui wall panelling have been subsumed under the generic term of tukutuku (Maihi, 2003a). Strictly speaking, tukutuku refers to the technique of inserting strands of fibre between slats to make patterns. The name for the technique is now commonly applied to all forms of wall panelling. No reservation was ever expressed amongst Ngāpuhi people that the less conventional kaitaka-based panels failed to qualify as tukutuku. Their acceptance as tukutuku related more to function than form or technique. All parties involved with constructing the panels accepted that the new ‘tukutuku’ panels equalled the more conventional type that ‘traditionally’ embellishes the walls of a whare. In other words, they are of equal mana. The actual technique that as stated earlier comprises raranga and wooden framing did not detract from the panels’ socially accepted value and assignment of name as tukutuku panels.

There is another kind of political effort afoot at Kohewhata involving the environment and the mana of Māori cultural production, including kairaranga and the wall panels. The Kohewhata panels consist of different natural (not dyed or bleached) fibres. The use of fibre in the panels requires great knowledge of plants and trees – their natural habitats and processing requirements as the description of kuta procurement and processing shows. At least part of the value (and mana) infused into the panels, relates not only to the expertise of the designers but also to the burgeoning skill of raranga novices. Any assessment of the panels should also take this feature into consideration given the valiant effort undertaken to rejuvenate raranga. This rejuvenation is necessary given the near
demise of many Māori art forms including raranga, as discussed earlier.

The more conventional tukutuku panels at Kohewhata, designed by Toi Maihi, comprise complex representations of surrounding landscape features, particularly mountains (figure 4.4). Such mountains are an important part of tribal and hapu identification amongst Ngāpuhi as well as other iwi.

![Figure 4.4: Conventionally constructed tukutuku panels uninstalled. Kohewhata Marae 2001. Approximately one square metre each. Various fibres, kakaho slats and supports. Constructed in 1999.]

Both types of Kohewhata panels (those designed by Allen Wihongi and those designed by Toi Maihi) have received positive responses from visitors to Kohewhata. Some of these visitors have included well-known and experienced kairaranga. The majority appreciates the innovation of the newer type of panel. This public appreciation can be interpreted as an assigning of mana. Some have expressed reservations about the use of undyed fibre and irregularly shaped kakaho (see figure 4.4) slats used in the more conventional panels, but acknowledge their connection to landscape features, including mountains and waterways of the Ngāpuhi rohe. Arguably then, the mana of the marae, the designers and the kairaranga is elevated through innovative design, collective enterprise as well as adherence to established conventions. In future, the mana of the marae may change as interpretations of the wall panels develop.
further. Much may depend on the broadcast interpretation of raranga techniques beginning with a critical engagement with tāniko and tukutuku techniques that rarely enters dominant Māori cultural discourses.

The choice of colour and the execution of their design that was at times more spontaneous than pre-planned, means that credit for their design can be attributed to Allen Wihongi who designed the overall concept, but also to Toi Maihi and the other kairaranga who worked collectively on the panels. The completion of these panels, ready to be installed in the whare, manifests the collective expertise of Kohewhata kairaranga, rather than any individual’s skill. The authentication of the panels as prestigious forms of cultural production, though reliant at the outset on the skills of Toi Maihi and Allen Wihongi, must also be credited to the kairaranga who contributed each raranga section. I emphasise this point, in an effort to ensure that any mana attributed to Kohewhata for its wall panel design reaches all the kairaranga involved. In this sense, I join a feminist campaign; a political call for recognition of the contributions women make to all marae. In other ways, including a reliance of collective memory, of historical events and raranga techniques that contribute to its various modes of production, raranga reinforces the assigning of mana to a group of people and their institutions. Responsible analysis of Kohewhata raranga therefore needs to acknowledge all contributors to the panels, not only the ‘experts’, responsible for their overall design. In this way mana can be interpreted as applicable to everyone involved, not only a select group of individuals.

Both types of wall panel exemplify different perspectives on the values and technical features associated with various Māori art forms. The Kohewhata panels illustrate various modes of social value and status. In Māori terms, they are raranga-based examples of the creation and maintenance of mana. They also exemplify change in mana (value and status) achieved through innovative designs that rely on expert and collective memory. In line with Pastor-Roces’
(1991: 148) words cited earlier, the Kohewhata panels are very much a part of the 'authentication agenda ... that accounts and dignifies [Māori] ways of being human'. This authentication agenda is as important to kairaranga as it is to other participants on that marae.

**INTERIM SUMMARY**

This discursive mixture of raranga with mana spells out its inherent complexity and entangled association with Pākehā colonialist systems, including law and literature. Whilst the view that such a situation of flux and complexity denotes the negative consequences of British colonisation on Māori culture has some substance, it is also true that Māori culture is fluid and open to a variety of influences, including those termed Pākehā. It is dependent on ritualised and everyday memorising and is sometimes subject to memory lapses. Mana remains open to various interpretations. Prevailing notions of mana, particularly where they privilege men, may be disputed on feminist grounds. Mana wahine has therefore taken on current political application that distinguishes Māori women’s power from men’s in political struggles.

Mana and raranga-based discourses reverberate with issues of power distribution amongst various groups of people. Mana wahine discourses cannot, therefore, be disassociated from raranga items. Mana applies to raranga in various ways, though much of the dominant discourse on Māori culture continues to neglect (or possibly forget) this connection. This literary hiatus prompts my continued engagement with raranga items and their social status.

On this basis, it is my considered opinion that many Māori women kairaranga deserve public recognition, and that their mana wahine should accordingly, be given due respect.

**SECTION 2: TAPU, NOA AND RARANGA**

Before progressing to the subjects of tapu and noa that are linked in Māori culture to mana, I feel compelled at this stage, to state that it is not my intention to deny or dispute the wisdom of deities, ancestors
and elders. It is my intention to encourage debate on the interpretations of Māori concepts because I consider them as important contributors to worldwide discourses on cultural change and representation. This action directly addresses the creation and maintenance of values through critical engagement. Within such engagement, it is clear that raranga-based discourses are indispensably linked with mana, tapu, noa and similar Māori cultural tenets. Having made this preparatory statement, I now step cautiously and sensitively into the sacred and contentious subject of tapu and noa. These are closely related terms so I combine them in over-lapping tandem, as a balance to the previous extensive mana-based discussion.

**Tapu**

Ryan's dictionary (1997: 277) briefly defines tapu as 'sacred, forbidden, confidential, taboo'. However, close associations may also be made between mana and tapu relating to a conceptual holism and inter-dependency in Māori culture that frustrates many attempts at strict separation of its components. A clear relationship between raranga, mauri, mana and tapu, for example, is available in published text:

> From the simple rourou food basket to the prestigious kahu kiwi, weaving is endowed with the very essence of the spiritual values of Māori people. The ancient Polynesian belief is that the artist is a vehicle through whom the gods create. Art is sacred and interrelated with the concepts of mauri, mana and tapu (Puketapu-Hetet, 1989: 2).

This statement confirms the presence of Māori cultural tenets in various forms of Māori cultural production, including raranga.

I am aware that the academy considers the acknowledgment of sources as a primary tenet of its traditions, a seemingly tapu (sacred) aspect of its enterprise. Aside from anti-plagiarism ideals and moral obligations to acknowledge information sources, this practice benefits subsequent academic endeavour including comparative analyses. The above quotation does not therefore strictly qualify as academic text. It offers no authoritative source for
the ‘ancient Polynesian belief’, nor does it specify meanings or names for ‘gods’ and ‘art’. There is also very little explanation of the terms *mauri*, *mana* and *tapu* though the author is firm on their relationship with weaving. This statement offers insights from a very experienced and knowledgeable kairaranga who has done much to promote raranga, both within and outside academic institutions. I supplement it with further explorations of tapu and noa from a variety of different academic sources and fieldwork observations that are not necessarily superior in quality.

Barlow (1991: 128), acting with Māori and academic authorisation offers the following interpretation (along with rather gendered language) of tapu and its religiosity:

There are many meanings and conditions associated with tapu. First and foremost, tapu is the power and influence of the gods. Everything has inherent tapu because everything was created by Io (Supreme God), each after its kind or species. The land has tapu as well as the oceans, rivers and forests, and all living things that are upon the earth. Likewise, mankind has tapu. In the first instance, man is tapu because he is created by the gods. Secondly, he becomes tapu in accordance with his desire to remain under the influence and protective powers of the gods.

Barlow (1991: 128) also makes a connection between tapu and kaumatua implying that an in-depth understanding and subsequent application of tapu eludes most of today’s Māori people:

The elders have intimated that it is very difficult for most people of this generation to become tapu, because they lack the commitment to maintain the conditions by which a person becomes tapu. In other words we lack the faith and dedication that is necessary; our thoughts are always distracted.

As part of his tikanga whakaaro exposition, Barlow (1991: 128) does not resist a moralistic tone and, I suspect, a Christian influence:

Everything has two sides or aspects, namely, good and bad …The devil has tapu, and so does the benevolent god. If we as human beings want to follow the dictates of evil forces, we become tapu to them and we receive the appropriate fruits of our devotion. However, it is important to remember this distinction: we will never become tapu under a particular power
or influence if we lack the commitment and dedication to follow
what we believe in relation to the power of that tapu.

Women are only singled out in one statement, following
general examples of ritual associated with tapu:

Tapu has also been extended to include all kinds of restrictions
and prohibitions, such as people with some contagious disease
or people handling the dead, and women during menstruation
(Barlow, 1991: 129).

Such a singular health-related (or more accurately, disease-
related) observation belies the notion that tapu pertains to women in
other ways as I soon discuss. This limitation in Barlow’s
explanations of tapu leads me to the conclusion that they need to be
supplemented not only by critical analysis but also by the
perspective of Māori women. Indeed Māori feminist perspectives as
discussed later, act as counter-arguments to Barlow, offering fuller
interpretations that particularly pertain to Māori women.

Another description of the organisation of labour in Māori
society prior to 1800 (before British colonisation), summarily
mentions raranga, tapu and Māori women and men:

Men did the work that required strength and was arduous,
exciting and/or tapu ...Women engaged in the less tapu and/or
safer, monotonous tasks: routine work in the gardens, collecting
ground products and berries, carrying home fernroot, firewood
and water, gathering shell-fish, preparing and preserving food,
plaiting mats and kits, and weaving cloaks ... The old men
made tools and ornaments, the old women plaited and wove,
and both made twine and cordage (Metge, 1976: 11).

The author Joan Metge, an eminent anthropologist, does not
provide sources used for this information. The accuracy of her
statement remains a matter of conjecture, as does its relevance in
more modern contexts. It is however a statement immediately
following that gives an extra impression of mana and tapu in terms
of status and sanctity as it applies to ‘craft’:

Persons of rank and exceptional aptitude received special
training and devoted most (though not all) their time to a
particular craft, usually a non-seasonal one. Such specialists
were called tohunga (expert), the different types being
distinguished by qualifying terms; e.g tohunga whakairo
(carver), tohunga whaihanganga (master builder), tohunga ahurewa (specialist in religious knowledge, i.e. priest). They frequently executed commissions for the less skilled, who recompensed them with gifts of food, garments and ornaments (Metge, 1976: 11).

Seemingly, raranga items such as 'garments' are mere rewards for the esteemed labour of experts, given by those 'less skilled'. This record of gendered labour divisions implicitly affords men (such as tohunga whakairo) more expertise and importance, in that it applies the term tohunga to tapu activities in which, customarily, women do not participate.

Whilst such divisions are not so tenable in the social contexts discussed earlier, they nevertheless feed into and out of particular modes of Māori representation. They fuel trivialisations of Māori women, their social roles and activities including raranga. Such theories exclude Māori women (including kairaranga) who provide rewards for those who undertake expert and exclusively male tasks. Their memories and the recollections of those people who remember them are therefore silenced.

‘NO GO’ ZONES
Tapu applies particularly to people and places, often relying on memories. A great proportion of my conversations with family members and other Māori people, for example, concentrated on ‘no-go zones’ that directly depend on remembering the presence or absence of tapu. Certain places are considered tapu, for example, and therefore cannot be traversed. Certain actions were also described as tapu and therefore could not be undertaken.

The primary impetus behind these kinds of prohibitions relates to people and past events. A particular tree, for example, is considered tapu because a tūpāpaku (corpse) was temporarily hung in its branches while in transit to its final resting-place. A certain rock needed its tapu ceremoniously 'lifted' to free it from its earlier role in the bloody slaughter of a particular war party. The rock had had a continuing harmful effect on people who later inadvertently
and in ignorance sat on or near it, until its tapu-lifting ceremony took place.

Tapu also pertains to kōrero12 (casual or formal discussions and talks). Some situations occurred in my presence where discussion was curtailed because of the tapu associated with certain topics. These topics might relate to secret information or a strict adherence to some principle such as medical or funereal procedures that can only be discussed by a few select people. The privileged nature of these topics relies on people remembering that they are secrets, and their continued transference to other people who will guard their secrecy.

The instigation of a tapu can also be used manipulatively. In one particular incident recounted to me (Cash, 2000), an elder person of a predominantly Māori community, continuously extended the tapu of a certain hillside, to ‘get back at’ a younger relative over a land title dispute. Whilst this incident illustrates the negative effects of a land title system imposed since British colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand, it also indicates some Māori people’s willingness to manipulate belief systems for vested interests. Such manipulations of Māori concepts can rely on a community’s levels of collective memory and amnesia.

TAONGA TAPU
Narratives concerning the tapu of taonga have been related to me in confidence, during family discussions. In these contexts, confidentiality is important due to Māori people’s memories of, and respect for the sacredness of tapu. Often they are unwilling to tamper with, or invite trouble from its power.13 Inherited taonga such as mere, patu and kotiate (various forms of hand-held axes and clubs), are imbued with meaning that could psychologically support or harm a person, given their bellicose histories. Carved pieces of stone and wood, of various sizes and function, are in this way laden with social values. Whilst such items may be associated with mana, similarly to raranga items such as kākahu, they can also be considered as tapu.
Protective rituals are therefore undertaken in relation to their tapu state. Narratives associated with these items, ritual and events are retold later, reinforcing the perceived intangible power that Māori people can assign to them in metaphysical or spiritual terms.

The display and concealment of taonga can affect people, including a possessor, in various ways. Much depends on timing. The ‘possessor’ may be an individual or a group and if the taonga is displayed in public it may affect the whole collective through admiration, fear or combination of both. Various forms of ceremonious protection from the wrath of both deities and enemies are present in the socialised application of tapu. Tapu is also notably associated with tangihanga (funeral rituals), a continuing cause for Māori cultural participation. These include ritualised washing of the deceased and mourners, and the sprinkling of water over people and taonga as protection from the ill effects of tapu. I discuss the important role of women in such rituals, later.

**TAPU WAHINE?**
When considering the pre-occupation of some political efforts with mana wahine, it is tempting to presume that a similar enquiry may be launched regarding Māori women and tapu. Comparatively recent revisionist politics has steered the artistic actions of Māori women towards reconstructing and asserting the cosmological importance of female deities to Māori culture and identity. This effort necessarily focuses on the tapu of Māori women and female deities. Māori woman artist, Robyn Kahukiwa (refer to Diamond. J. G., 1998, 1999, 2001 and 2002a), for example, addresses this subject in her paintings. The feminist reinterpretation of Māori myths ensures that the presence of female deities in a Māori pantheon is not forgotten.

In terms of a politically named ideology, however, tapu wahine has received less discussion, and distinction, than mana wahine. The political disparity between these two terms points to the religiosity of tapu. This religiosity is perceived by many Māori people and similarly adopted by Christian churches in Aotearoa New
Zealand. Spiritual aspects of tapu can preclude displays of feminist protest, where younger women particularly disengage themselves from church ceremonies.

WOMEN AND TAPU
There are, however, crossovers and entanglements between Christianity and Māori spirituality. This is an important issue for raranga-based discourse as I demonstrate more fully in later discussion. One clear example concerns the female body. Particular areas of the female body, such as breasts, armpits and genitalia are tapu. Speaking about this kind of tapu, however, can be considered a dangerous disrespect for tapu. Today, however, the ‘silence’ of discourses surrounding women’s bodies can lead to low self-esteem. In the following discussion I concentrate on religious aspects of tapu as they affect women. This focus clarifies interpretations of tapu without denying political, intellectual and values-based implications. It necessarily incorporates noa, a state of non-tapu.

NOA
An interpretive exploration of tapu necessarily develops into the realm of noa. The sacredness of tapu can be lifted and the consequent state of being is termed noa. The Law Commission study paper (2001: 36) states the following in relation to tapu and noa: ‘Tapu and noa are complementary opposites, which together constitute a whole. Noa has its own importance, as a counter and antidote to tapu; the value of everyday, ordinary, relaxed human activity’. Noa has also been defined as ‘spontaneous, freestyle (diving, etc.) free from tapu, inexact’ (Ryan, 1997: 173). It is also interpreted into English language as ‘common’ and this interpretation in ecological discourse based on Māori concepts:

We can no more treat the tree or the fish with disrespect that we could their illustrious ancestors. The tree and the fish must not be treated as noa or common. They are not ours. They are sacred; they are naturally tapu (Patterson, 2000: 49).

I discuss some implication of this environment-based interpretation in a later chapter.
Food and women are often prevented from contact with tapu items or situations especially on marae. Customarily speaking, the presence of either can be harmful to them and/or to particular tapu zones. For this reason, a combination of food and women is often a vital element in a whakanoa (tapu-lifting) ceremony. Tapu can therefore be deliberately and ceremoniously lifted. It can also be unwittingly broken.

However, today’s everyday reality is more complex than this brief discussion of tapu lifting and breaking illustrates. I have observed, for example, my kuia, seemingly immune to tapu, consciously ignoring it and these were occasions, quite apart from whakanoa (tapu-lifting) rituals. On other occasions, people were only said to have broken a tapu when some harm eventually came to them. Harm does not always befall those who break a tapu though incidents where harm did eventuate, acted as powerful deterrents against tapu-breaking for other members of the community.

The effectiveness of tapu and noa is not only pervasive in Māori social contexts but can also inundate whole philosophical viewpoints. Since British colonisation the tapu of Churches, marae and other institutional settings has not discounted the importance of tapu and the usefulness of noa in negating it. Some Māori people appear more affected by Christian Church edicts and their tapu, than the tapu more exclusively associated with Māori culture. Also, some tapu lifting ceremonies combine Christian and non-Christian Māori procedures. To illustrate this combination of Māori custom and Christian influences on tapu, noa and Māori women more graphically, I provide the following personal narratives, family-based recollections mixed with analysis.

**Body Parts**

As a young Māori girl growing up I was personally affected not only by the various sanctions of the Catholic Church to which my family belonged but also by Māori sanctions that at least partially survived the advent of British colonisation. The sum of these sanctions saw
me ‘owning up’ to a Catholic priest in a confessional of any temptations (usually very naïve on my part) towards boys or similar ‘sins’, and to the ‘mortal sin’ of failing to attend church every Sunday. Māori sanctions came to me in the form of realising a certain contaminatory power I had by virtue of having an anatomy that is labelled female, particularly a vagina. I was correspondingly warned against entering a garden while menstruating and stepping over boys or men (including male siblings) who may be lying on the ground before me, as these actions would, apparently, inevitably harm their fecundity and productivity. I return to the subject of tapu and menstruation later in connection to raranga.

My ability as a female, to whakanoa (negate) the tapu of my male relatives heightened my feelings of inferiority. Similarly to other Māori girls of my age, I bought into the impression that boys were to be treated specially, and that girls were somehow, dangerous. I suspect, now, that mixtures of Catholic Church teaching, such as the biblical story (Genesis 3) of Eve and forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden, joined Māori conceptualisations of tapu and noa in my adolescent experience. These supported teenage insecurities and low self-esteem.

Associations with the ‘dangers’ of tapu and noa, particularly in relation to women, can be directly connected to Māori mythologies featuring male characters. For example the narratives of the demi-god Maui include his failed attempt to wrest immortality from the ‘gods’ (in this specific instance, a female deity), on behalf of the human race. According to this narrative, had the goddess Hinenuitepō, who presides over the after-life, remained asleep as Maui crept into her vagina to crawl entirely up through her body out through her mouth, we humans may have attained immortality. Lamentably, for him at least, his attempts ended when the goddess was woken by an attendant pīwaiwaka (fantail bird). She closed her legs on Maui and consequently, any chance of our immortality also closed. In spite of Maui’s failure, remnants of this narrative survive,
such as the notion of vaginal power and its potentially harmful
effects on males, both human and deified.

Another more current and tangible episode in my life can
also be linked not only to the deification and reified power of certain
female anatomical features as with the narrative of Maui and
Hinenuitepō, but also to the licensed ownership of such anatomy by
patriarchal systems. One of my realisations of this kind of power
came in the form of a woman’s compliance (momentary as that may
have been) with the dictates of a male-dominated Christian Church.
These along with Māori edicts such as protecting the sacred
(therefore, tapu) vulnerability of men combined to do harm to her
whole self-estimation.

In recounting this incident I do not wish to target this woman
or any particular denomination of Christianity for special criticism,
as I am aware that comparable situations occur all over the world
that relate similarly to patriarchal power and its efforts to own
women physically, intellectually and spiritually. Violent attempts in
Afghanistan by Taliban forces to subjugate women are a recent (and
recently defeated) example. Attempts to collectively own the female
body also manifest in Western societies with the ‘pro-choice versus
anti-abortion’ conflict currently taking place on moral, religious and
political (if I may make such distinctions) grounds.

My own special ‘spin’ on this discourse of female corporeal
ownership occurred the day that a Catholic priest in special vestment
entered the living room of our home where my mother and I awaited
him. The male priest asked a male Christian god to forgive my
mother for having a tubal ligation. According to Catholic ‘tikanga’,
my mother whom after producing nine children, suffering a uterine
prolapse and enduring a major operation to rectify that problem and
electing to undergo a desperately needed tubal ligation to prevent her
from having any more children, was punishable by this god. My
mother has not been alone in participating in such a ceremony
designed to ask for a god’s forgiveness and the edicts of the Catholic
Church have in some cases mellowed since. It should be also noted
here that most methods of contraception remain prohibited in the Catholic Church. Contraception is also discouraged today amongst some Māori. This Church is not the only institution that imposes such anatomically related strictures on women and my mother is by no means the only woman to be ever swayed by its power.

I suspect that my mother would have benefited from current arguments relating to Māori women’s ownership of their own bodies. A certain feeling of uselessness and vilification, attached to notions of idealised bodily health and a failure to live up to staunch religious adherence collided in my mother’s psyche. This collision has consequently though not completely diminished her positive outlook on her own innate procreative power, not to mention a sense of corporeal ownership and self-love. In various ways, these demeaning circumstances held negative repercussions for at least one of her five daughters.

A CHANCE FOR EQUALITY
This narrative belongs to my mother and me, though I may relay it differently to the way she would, because my life has continued on a different path from hers. Nevertheless, this aspect of our shared family history relates to the concepts of tapu and noa (and no less to my mother’s mana) and to the effects of remembered events. It is also relevant to the surrounding political context that confuses male tapu and female noa to the detriment of any possibility of equal standing between the two genders.

Critical and educative engagement needs to take place in order for relationships of equality to develop between girls and boys, men and women, heterosexuals and homosexuals and any other examples of such dichotomies as well as the various ‘shades of grey’ existing between them. Such efforts are counter-measure to hegemony and domination in keeping with the following opinion:

Until we are all able to accept the interlocking, interdependent nature of systems of domination and recognize specific ways each system is maintained, we will continue to act in ways that undermine our individual quest for freedom and collective struggle (hooks, 1994: 244).
Recognising such systems of domination is a goal of critical engagement where personal narratives can be politicised towards a goal of equity and equality amongst all people. An effort to critically approach the potential use, the contradictions and drawbacks associated philosophically and politically with many Māori concepts, including mana, tapu and noa, is part of this engagement. As I discuss more deeply in later chapters of this thesis, this kind of engagement can be applied, not only in Aotearoa New Zealand, but also further abroad.

**ANOTHER LOOK AT THE KOHEWHATA PANELS**

The Kohewhata panels do not escape tapu and noa discourses. Their construction on a marae in a particular building prompts another examination of the socialised application of tapu and noa. As described in chapter 3, these panels were constructed in a building that will eventually be refurbished as a large whare kai (dining room), with an adjoining kitchen. This building facilitates the everyday presence of women, including kairaranga, on the marae. In its final form, the building will not be regarded or valued in the same way as the carved whare tupuna that is currently under construction because of its association with food preparation and eating. In due course, the panels will be transferred to the whare tupuna. Separation between the two buildings, and transferral of the panels, is in keeping with tapu and noa ideals and reflects a hierarchy of social values concerning tapu and noa sites.

However, and as I also described in chapter 3, the panels and raranga are also imbued with their own ‘unofficial’ tapu for various reasons. This is tapu that can be broken in the proximity of food, a rule made clear to me on our first day at Kohewhata, when my son was asked to take his food away from the raranga, either outside or into the kitchen area. This temporary form of tapu is a dual expedient in that it, on the one hand, protects the panels and raranga materials against ‘mess’. On the other hand, it prepares the panels for their inclusion amongst other taonga, with appropriate rituals, in
the whare tupuna. Strictly speaking, the panels do not qualify as noa because they are protected from food. If they were considered as noa, then food would not adversely affect them. Also, they do not fully qualify at this stage as tapu because they have not been officially consecrated. Culturally speaking, the panels are presently in limbo.

Their situation reflects a Pākehā and Māori cultural convergence, especially in terms of the buildings within which they have been constructed. Māori people have adopted Western architecture and building codes for modern marae. Kohewhata’s buildings are no exception. However, the functionality of marae buildings invariably relates to Māori cultural tenets, particularly tapu and noa. In raranga terms, physical sites of tapu and noa mark a convergence and at times, contradiction of culturally held values. Sites of raranga-in-progress may be designated as tapu but at the same time Māori women kairaranga responsible for this activity can be considered as noa.

Such values also impact on the roles of female kairaranga and current interpretations of whether or not women are considered sacred or profane. Here, the significance of tapu, noa and corporeal ownership re-emerges. The tapu-based prohibitions mentioned earlier that prevented me from stepping into gardens and over male bodies can be linked with tikanga raranga (raranga procedural rules including the gathering of materials). Some kairaranga at Kohewhata chose not to weave when they were menstruating, for example. This action reinforces a time-honoured constraint on raranga production (Te Awekotuku, 1991: 67-68), the origins of which have lapsed into obscurity. The somewhat contradictory and contested current discourse surrounding raranga and menstruation is summarised in the following observation:

Certain prohibitions continue to be respected in varying degrees, although some women have begun to question them. During menstruation one should neither cut [raranga] plants nor work with them. Many have since defied the former tapu, but many more will not weave certain articles ... Other prohibitions have
nevertheless become much more mystified, and their origins, apart from the roots of obvious male fear, sadly obscured (Te Awekotuku, 1991: 68).

It is feasible that such restrictions relied on knowledge of who was menstruating at a particular moment. In today’s contexts this information can be kept secret on gender-based lines or from the surrounding community as a whole. In this sense, the terms of corporeal ownership over Māori women’s bodies has changed. It allows for individualised corporeal ownership, supported by Westernised notions of privacy.

Given the voluntary nature of work at Kohewhata and an understanding of menstruation-based prohibitions, kairaranga generally respected this reason for not undertaking raranga and the subject was not discussed with the men. The matter of menstruation was therefore approached by women only and could be discussed candidly in terms of how advanced age lessened the need for discussion on the subject. Tapu-based rules concerning menstruation were not a strict heavily imposed fact-of-life for kairaranga. However, abstentions from weaving did relate to notion of female strength and contaminatory power.

The full implications of menstruation-based restrictions did not attract critical engagement by anyone at Kohewhata. Nevertheless, the following view can be linked with the preoccupation kairaranga at Kohewhata have with environmental well-being, and their own increasing self-respect:

In previous times, the discharge of a woman’s womb reinforced her connection to the earth, origin of all things … But as a new belief system, based firmly in male-orientated values and patriarchal [colonialist] concepts, imposed itself upon the Māori people, this essential wisdom was denied. Underlying her relationship with the land was the traditional Māori woman’s perception of the environment as a source of emotional, spiritual and physical sustenance, identification and strength (Te Awekotuku, 1991: 68).
This statement clarifies the Māori cultural connections that can be made between kairaranga and their physical and spiritual environment, and their cultural identity.

Whilst it is clear that kairaranga wove raranga pieces the Kohewhata panels for various reasons, including skill-based accomplishment, community spirit, interpretations of tapu and noa also entered this equation. Connections between panels, kairaranga and these two concepts may be reassessed with more substantial engagement amongst the Kohewhata kairaranga in future. The Kohewhata panels remain culturally significant, not only in terms of the mana of people affiliated with the marae, but also with the tapu and noa associated with kairaranga that is subject to continuous critical engagement, revaluation and re-interpretation.

Sacred and secular: Kohewhata divisions of labour
In marae settings, a distinction between commercial enterprise and marae customs is made because of a stance amongst some kaumatua and kuia that seeks to stem the tide of capitalist influence on marae. This stance also seeks to preserve the sanctity of marae that is considered as threatened by commercialism. Kohewhata is no exception, though the elders and others most responsible for the marae’s construction, acknowledged the practicality of fund-raising for construction work. Part of the day-to-day business of the marae was taken up with fund-raising for building materials, while at the same time attempting not to turn the marae into a commercial operation. The division between sacred and secular concerns, commercial and non-commercial interests pre-occupied many of the major decision-makers at Kohewhata. Such concerns were publicly voiced at Marae Trust committee meetings that were held regularly, denoting the need for open debate over marae tikanga (customs) in general. It also indicated, as discussed earlier, that such tikanga are pliable and open to various interpretations.

However, current government, commercial and private sponsorship is limited and even where it is regular and ongoing, it
has not always met the marae’s construction costs. This fact impacted on values assigned to whakairo and raranga. Whakairo was recognised on the marae as both sacred and expensive ‘work’, and highly valued. Raranga was viewed differently in terms of sacred and monetary value.

The values associated with whakairo related to the high cost and durability of hardwoods, tools and other whakairo materials. Although raranga was not regarded as ‘cheap’ at Kohewhata, it was acknowledged as less expensive, easy to produce, less durable and requiring fewer tools. It was also generally acknowledged that raranga items are easier to replace than whakairo, and this capacity was factored into the whare design plans. The panels can be dismounted from the walls of the whare, for example, so that if the individual raranga components have deteriorated through ‘wear and tear’, they can be relatively easily replaced.

Yet, there were also other factors relating to religious beliefs that can be associated with the division of labour between kaiwhakairo and kairaranga. As discussed earlier, it was taken for granted amongst the kairaranga that raranga is just as valuable as whakairo. Thus, value assigned to raranga translated into the kairaranga asserting their importance to Kohewhata as equal to that of the kaiwhakairo (carvers). Nevertheless, the question of whether kairaranga have equal mana, tapu or noa to kaiwhakairo is one that is yet to be answered on this and other marae.

It is clear, for example, that divisions between ‘sacred’ and ‘secular’ activities cannot be removed from the strong influences of Christianity in northern Aotearoa New Zealand and their affects on women. Thus, the present divisions of labour at Kohewhata reverberate with an observation of the effects of Christianity on another Indigenous context in South Pentecost, Vanuatu:

The separate spheres of the Christian religion not only radically divided the lives of women and men like those of the ancestral religion, but also introduced a division between public and domestic and sacred and secular aspects of existence. The old forms of gender segregation were attacked, often on the grounds
that they were demeaning to women. But the Christian churches often presented new models of segregation and ones which did not necessarily confer on women the powers they enjoyed in the ancestral religion (Jolly, 1989: 223).

The question of whether or not current gendered divisions of raranga and whakairo production are justified on 'ancestral religion' grounds at Kohewhata is difficult to determine. Engagement with this question is complicated by an understandable hesitation amongst participants at Kohewhata, and indeed other marae-based contexts, to critically analyse their religious beliefs and the fact that distinctions between 'secular' and 'sacred' activities on marae are often blurred. The debates over necessary fund-raising activities and the impact of commercialism on Kohewhata provide a clear example of current tensions over a division between 'sacred' and 'secular' on marae, and the elders wish to transcend it for practical reasons. Equally, the future may see a breaking of more prohibitions at Kohewhata that radically alter the 'traditional' gender roles that currently prevail.

The customary basis for relegating raranga production and other activities performed mostly by women on marae and elsewhere, in comparison to whakairo and whaikōrero, remains undetermined and without solid Māori cultural foundation. It is also subject to change.

CHAPTER DISCUSSION
Throughout this examination of mana, tapu and noa, I have fostered a re-appraisal of the importance of these concepts to raranga and Māori women. In terms of value assigned to raranga and kairaranga via mana, tapu and noa, this chapter has shown that there is a diversity of relevant situational contexts that rely on transferral of knowledge, including cultural memories of people and places. The contexts were seen as continuing to exist in relation to, and to be made more complex by, Christian beliefs along with other value systems (such as capitalism) brought by British colonialism. For example, mixtures of tapu and noa, and Christian edicts have been
shown to reinforce patriarchal ownership of Māori women’s bodies, resulting in low self-appreciation and self-esteem. This point supports masculinity theorist W. B. Connell’s view (2000: 29-30) that the State supports ‘gender regimes’, which amongst other practices continue to ‘embody masculinized hierarchies’.

However the question of whether or not patriarchal attitudes come from colonialism or pre-colonial Māori customs remains debateable. Regardless of cultural lineage, mana discourse, in its current published form, has been shown through extensive discussion, to be intertwined with patriarchal interpretations of Māori cultural norms that privilege men either blatantly or by default. Mana, in particular, has been linked with a patriarchal form of Māori cultural authentication. Much of this privilege relies on naming processes that may be intended to be gender neutral, yet they are in fact loaded with references to men, not women. While collective and expert memories have been shown in this chapter to sustain mana, tapu and noa, published discourses on these Māori cultural tenets have been exposed as lacking in extensive critical analysis. Their tendency to omit or grant a somewhat token reference to Māori women, has accordingly invited a lengthy critique. As Chandra Mohanty (1991: 13) suggests, there are ‘multiple fluid structures of domination which intersect’ (see also hooks, 1994: 244) and there is ‘the urgent need for us to appreciate and understand the complex relationality that shapes our social and political lives’.

My critical examination of mana, tapu and noa in relation to Māori women does not justify abandoning these important philosophical concepts. On the contrary it encourages reassessment of the importance of Māori women’s individual and collective recollections and interpretations. This chapter has demonstrated that kairaranga, and Māori women generally, negotiate a mixture of cultural tenets such as mana, tapu, noa and Christianity in various ways. Some of this negotiation amounts to resisting patriarchal and phallocentric notions that render raranga, and other forms of cultural
production primarily undertaken by Māori women, silent and invisible.16

The Kohewhata panels have provided a timely example for this chapter, of the raranga of Māori women in terms of mana, tapu and noa. They were seen to manifest Māori women’s important roles in memorialising significant places for Ngāpuhi people. They were analysed as having the potential to raise the mana (including public awareness and acclaim) of Ngāpuhi cultural referents. They were also seen to encapsulate tapu- and noa-based ideologies that refer to physical, intellectual and spiritual characteristics of Māori women.

More in-depth and critical engagement with the memories and perspectives of kairaranga can contradict interpretations of mana, tapu and noa that privilege men and undermine the importance of raranga and Māori women. Substantial engagement with these three cultural tenets, beyond the limits of this thesis, could also afford kairaranga their due regard (and respect) in published discourses on Māori culture.

1 Paparangi Reid and I share genealogical links to the iwi of Te Rarawa and Te Aupouri of Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu.
2 My family, whose consensus supports my view of the relationships between memory and value creation, maintenance and change, have composed this pepeha (saying, adage, motto). It has an additional, implicit function of demonstrating the importance of pepeha and whakataukī (proverbs, sayings, mottoes) in Māori culture.
3 I refer here to a number of contemporary texts that are discussed in the main body of this thesis and older seminal sociological works (including Te Rangi Hiroa 1949, Meige 1976 and Salmond 1975).
4 Hinengaro can be interpreted as ‘mind’ and ‘intellectual pursuit’ though a literal translation into English is ‘woman missing’. The significance of hinengaro to this thesis becomes most apparent in chapter 7.
5 These are all my impressions though on some occasions people openly expressed them. On other occasions they were offered as interpretations (or rumours) of someone else’s attitude.
6 I do not intend to champion one mode of law keeping (Māori or Pākehā based) over another, as each is prone to certain failing such as unjust rulings and punishment of innocent parties.
7 The named cloaks can be distinguished from un-named cloaks made for the commercial market. Also some cloaks held be museums, for examples, have not retained their names. Their aesthetic and technical features have been promoted in the absence of other details such as their own names and the names of their makers.
8 Tōi Maihi who was instrumental in organising the colour and fibres for the panels explained (1999-2000) her preference for utilising the natural colours of fibres. Referring to a ‘Creator of the universe’ and adhering to her personal
spiritual beliefs her concise observation was ‘How could I tell the creator he’d got his colours wrong – what a cheek!’

9 I refer here generally to a wide variety of viewpoints that are available in literary and non-literary forms including those cited in this thesis.

10 Recently, I offered interpretations (Diamond, J. G., 2001: 8) of the Māori concept mauri, noting ‘a concept of vitality, joy and inspiration... the building blocks, the very foundation of life itself’ that dominates the work of Māori woman artist Robyn Kahukiwa.

11 It should be noted that Barlow’s (1991: 125) interpretation of tapu also appears in Māori language where the word tangata (translatable as man, man and woman together and if the first vowel is macronised, men, women or people) is used. Also the word ia (translatable as he, she or both he and she) is used. Although the Māori words tangata and ia are not necessarily gender-specific Barlow uses the words man, mankind and he in his English interpretation of tapu and other terms.

12 Kōrero is used as a utility term here to cover many types of communication ranging from public speaking to impromptu conversations.

13 I am aware that the power of tapu may be interpreted as socially constructed, having no ‘real’ tangible foundation. This realisation, however, should not detract from the psychological effects of tapu that many people claim to have experienced.

14 H. W. Williams (1975: 222) gives similar interpretations for the term noa. Therefore I do not discuss their differences with Ryan 1994. Williams however does offer sentences in Māori that contain the word noa that would aid further academic research into the concept than is attempted within this thesis.

15 It is difficult to tease out the entanglements between Christian and Māori edicts on procreation as well as other matters and each has historically influenced the other. If Christian and Māori parameters are to be viewed as monolithic, rather than dependent on situational context, then the idealisation of abundant human procreation can be viewed as equally strongly held by both.

16 Elsewhere (Diamond, J. G., 2002c), I have described this mixture of silence and invisibility as a ‘vio/silence’ considering many contexts in which silence and invisibility is imposed on Māori women as violations.
CHAPTER 5: A CALL FOR TRANS-TASMAN RARANGA ENGAGEMENT

KA KARANGA TE KAIRARANGA KI POIHÄKENA (WEAVERS CALL TO AUSTRALIA)

Whakapapa o te kete kahurangi – detail of my kete kahurangi.
INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the first of part 2 of this thesis. In similar fashion to many Māori ceremonial protocols that acknowledge a new ‘arrival’, I re-introduce my karanga of chapter 1, with some important alterations:

Karanga mai, karanga mai

Karanga mai ra ki te iwi Ngāpuhi

Ngāpuhi kōwhao rau, Ngā uri o Rāhiri, Te taua o Hongi Hika

Ki ngā rito a Poihākena!

Karanga mai, karanga mai, karanga mai.

(Call us, call us, call us: the iwi of Ngāpuhi.

Ngāpuhi of one hundred chiefs, the progeny of Rāhiri, the army of Hongi Hika

To the Indigenous people’s of Australia! Call us…)

I have changed the form of my earlier karanga version, taking advantage of the utility of karanga generally, as vocal (or written) devices for positioning people as hosts and visitors in Māori ceremonies. This change in karanga format does not occur because the trans-Tasman raranga-based emphasis of this thesis has altered. Rather, this new karanga signals a shift in perspective. It is the perspective of a visitor to Australia from Aotearoa New Zealand, not an Indigenous host. With it, and similarly to Māori ceremonial protocols, I acknowledge all Indigenous Australians as first human inhabitants of their lands.

From now on, the focus of this thesis progressively shifts to trans-national contexts, involving Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. Discussion in part 2 of this thesis therefore relates to that of part 1, somewhat similarly to a migrant who experiences a new ‘home’, while retaining memories and associations of the previous one. This chapter, for example, is closely connected with chapter 4, but broadens perspective by considering the role of Māori
ceremonial protocols and raranga items within Australian contexts. The concepts of mana, tapu and noa retain their relevance, and join engagement with two other concepts, karanga and karakia.

Some interpretation of karanga and karakia (in this case necessarily referring to Aotearoa New Zealand, rather than Australia) is needed at the outset, as background for later discussion. Karanga, a ceremonial ‘call’ as introduced early in chapter 1, is a vital component of most Māori public ceremony. It is also undeniably within the ceremonial domain of Māori women, but has undergone changes over time. Karakia can be loosely translated into English as ‘prayer’ or ‘incantation’. It provides a useful context for discussing Māori cosmological thought that, as discussed earlier in relation to tapu, is entangled with Christianity. It relies heavily on recitation, sometimes lyrically chanted. To an extent, karakia also depend on rote learning amongst a wider community beyond specialist karakia practitioners. Men and women practice karakia, though men usually officiate in its public performance, seemingly through a convergence of Māori and Christian values that privileges males as representatives for Māori people, rather than females.

This chapter discusses raranga in relation to karanga and karakia. It manifests both a call to the reader, for attention to Trans-Tasman Māori discourses and responsible, culturally aware Māori representations in Australian institutions, along with my commitment (or ‘calling’) to critical engagement. In section 1, I discuss karanga and karakia generally as philosophical concepts and modes of social action, while maintaining my focus on raranga and Māori women. I revisit the pari, as a nexus of raranga and social action (including karanga and karakia) amongst my family members. I engage more closely with the discursive ‘silences’ of pari in dominant discourses on Māori culture, and call for a change in these circumstances. As I discussed earlier these ‘silences’ exist despite pari being used as emblems of Māori cultural identity. This section features examples of pari belonging to my family, including a
unique pari that has travelled with me from Aotearoa New Zealand to Australia.

In section 2, perspective shifts to the life of a Ngāpuhi tupuna (ancestor) and national icon, Hone Heke Pokai. I discuss his representation in an exhibition planned to open in late-2003 at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra, Australia’s national Capital City. I focus on negotiations with iwi (tribal) authorities and Trans-Tasman cultural institutions over representations of Hone Heke Pokai, including proposed ceremonies and displays for the exhibition. These ceremonies and displays include raranga items and the public performance of karanga and karakia, interconnected facets of Māori women’s cultural production.

In this discussion, social issues of Māori cultural property and representation are revealed as complex, contradictory and contested. They include profound spiritual associations made by iwi representatives to raranga items and ritualised social actions. Such associations can influence iwi representatives in their negotiations with non-Māori institutions. The NMA’s inclusion of Hone Heke Pokai in its exhibition plans also provides an opportunity to engage with active and strident Māori agency in cultural representations, within and beyond Aotearoa New Zealand.

SECTION 1: KARANGA AND KARAKIA: TWO CONCEPTS IN PUBLIC DISPLAY

In order to identify a corpus of objects that could be identified as fine art – that is, sculpture (monumental, if possible) and graphic depiction (painted, if possible) – scholars have often privileged objects of lesser status within their producing communities, arbitrarily promoting some regions of the continent over others and ignoring the indigenous systems of value and meaning attached to objects (Phillips and Steiner, 1999: 7).

In this section I extend Phillips and Steiner’s view of the ways objects are categorised as ‘fine art’, by considering it in terms of Māori ceremonial performances and raranga items. That these items and performances should be labelled as fine art is not the most important issue here. More importantly, I argue that some raranga
items and aspects of Māori ceremony, such as women's roles, qualify as Phillips and Steiner's 'indigenous systems of value and meaning' and that they have been ignored not only in fine art discourses, but also in dominant discourses on Māori culture, generally.

CEREMONIES
The omission of photographs in this section relates to the fact that many karanga and karakia involve tangihanga, or references to deceased relatives, where Māori participants consider the taking of photographs or films, to be intrusive and inappropriate. Out of respect for them, I rely on words rather than pictures, to convey my thoughts. Most of the examples I use in this discussion are from Aotearoa New Zealand contexts. However, as I indicate later, they remain relevant to Māori participation in Australian contexts of cultural display, including ritual ceremonies.

Māori ceremonies and performances vary, depending on the intentions of key participants and the scale and character of economic transactions at stake. For example, some of these ceremonies and performances are staged for paying audiences. Others are customary performances undertaken by Māori people, where notions of reciprocity and exchange are maintained primarily for non-monetary reasons, such as cultural promotion, or religious belief. Karanga and karakia are often incorporated into these occasions, along with raranga items.

KARANGA
As demonstrated early in this thesis and again at the beginning of this chapter, karanga are a primary feature of Māori ceremonial protocols. However, karanga require more exposition in this thesis so that their relationship to raranga in public displays is more fully understood as an 'indigenous system of value and meaning' (Phillips and Steiner, 1999: 7).
A GENDERED EXCHANGE

In our Ngāpuhi rohe of northern Aotearoa New Zealand, a kuia (elder woman) usually carries out the karanga on behalf of the tangata whenua (‘home’ people). She is the kaikaranga (person responsible for performing the karanga) for her people. Her karanga is most likely to be answered by a male counterpart of the manuhiri (visitors), especially if they are also from the Ngāpuhi rohe. Therefore, the initial karanga of the tangata whenua of a marae is exclusively the preserve of women.

Ngāpuhi manuhiri, people from other hapū (extended kin groups) beyond that of the hosting marae, usually answer the karanga through a male’s voice. On other occasions the manuhiri may not be of this kawa (preferred ritual practice and tribal custom), and a female voice will answer. The Ngāpuhi kaikaranga will call regardless of the gender of the person who answers her. A gender dependency applies to the Ngāpuhi kaikaranga — mandatory femaleness. A gender complementarity exists amongst northern tribes between a female kaikaranga and the man who most often answers her. A gendered flexibility exists with the allowance for accepting any reply from the manuhiri — a person of any gender may answer the karanga. This is Ngāpuhi kawa, belying the notion of women having no important speaking role on marae. Women continue to exclusively undertake the initial karanga and I am not aware of any instance where men have attempted to take up this role. However, there is much more than vocalised exchange involved in this procedure.

KAWA AND THE GUESTS’ RESPONSE

On arrival the manuhiri wait, usually at a gate or similar border point. They will not proceed on to the marae without a karanga. The kaikaranga of the tangata whenua calls the manuhiri at an appropriate time depending on the events currently taking place within the marae. For example, the timing of the karanga is often determined by how many people are inside the whare, the main meetinghouse, at any given moment.
There also may be delays for other reasons such as the need for a sole kaikaranga to recover from her last call. It is therefore, more expedient for various manuhiri groups who may have arrived around the same time, to wait to be called on to the marae together. Manuhiri collectively know the kawa of the host marae, often through the instructive guidance of the senior-most visitors present. Knowledge is transferred at the marae gateway in this fashion. However, in some instances, especially in situations where the marae kawa is unclear, or prone to unexpected changes, a messenger from the tangata whenua may be sent out to advise the manuhiri of revised tikanga (protocols). Such an occurrence may signal a change amongst marae decision-makers, including temporary absence, or a death. Although a general pattern of marae protocols persists, allowances for change and innovation are left to the discretion of the tangata whenua, and are rarely queried (at least, openly) by manuhiri. The power of decision-making is invariably left with tangata whenua on marae, and this is a model of courtesy that can also be applied to various contexts of social interaction beyond the marae, as I demonstrate later in this thesis.

SOUND, KNOWLEDGE AND MATURITY
The sound of the karanga is an important factor, as it affects the solemnity of the occasion on which it is performed. The karanga is made in partly lyrical fashion relying mostly on flat notes, more as a chant than a song. Often a mournful eerie quality of sound is achieved that many Māori people equate with the presence of strong wairua (spiritual connection). It is the sound of female maturity, rather than youth.

During the karanga, references are usually made to ancestors and past events that pertain to the tangata whenua, the manuhiri or a combination of both. According to Ngāpuhi kaumatu a and kuia (G. Rankin, 2000-1; Hotere Whānau, 2000-3; Kawharu, 1999-2000), it is not merely a superficial performance gained through rote learning and parrot-like repetition. It is an important tool for transferring
memories of people (including ancestors and absent relatives) and significant places. Ideally the kaikaranga should know the history of her people, and have some associating knowledge of the manuhiri, such as earlier co-operative alliances or marriages between tangata whenua and manuhiri (Kawharu, 1999-2000). A deep and extended knowledge of past events and current concerns is necessary for this undertaking. This is a kind of wisdom that often comes with advanced age and maturity, justifying the prevalence of an elder, rather than a younger woman as kaikaranga (Salmond, 1975: 138).

Hinengaro (mind work, intelligence, and knowledge) is therefore very much a part of karanga (Mason, 2000). These details of karanga have not been emphasised in Pākehā education systems or in published texts. The significance to karanga of gender differences, maturity and vocal pitch is consequently not given its due respect in dominant discourses on Māori culture.

THE PRESENCE OF RARANGA

Other details of the karanga are also missed, including numerous connections with raranga. For example, the kaikaranga may elect to wear a taua (wreath, rope, twining)1 made of interwoven pūriri, kawakawa, koromiko or similar leaves, reminding the audience of past and current bereavements. This taua has also been referred to as roimata (teardrops) by Ngāpuhi kaumatua (Rankin, G., 2001; Hotere Whānau, 2000-3; Diamond, T. E., 2001-3). It is most often, though not exclusively, present at tangihanga (funeral wakes).

Manuhiri also wear roimata headdresses as they enter the whare tupuna and drop them at the foot of the coffin, as one would drop tears of sadness. This woven ‘roimata’ has been likened (G. Rankin, 2001) to the aka vine that the legendary figure Tawhaki (see Alpers, 1964: 115-7 who describes it as a ‘creeper’ and Te Rangi Hiroa 1949: 442 who describes it as a ‘aka matua’) used to ascend the heavens. This fibre-based narrative adds to numerous raranga referents in Māori epics, including the attainment of three kete of knowledge by the Creation deity Tāne Mahuta, mentioned earlier.
Particularly when their visit is occasioned by a death, the kaikaranga calls the manuhiri further into the whare than is the case for other kinds of gathering. They are summoned all the way into the whare tupuna to the back wall (usually referred to by Ngāpuhi as the ‘front’, facing the after world of the female deity, Hinenuitepō), beneath which lies the confined tūpāpaku (corpse). On the Kohewhata Marae, this wall will feature a carved image of Hinenuitepō as well as tukutuku panels representing eternity, the afterlife and other spiritual realms such as the Christian ‘heaven’. Raranga (via tukutuku panels) is therefore an important part of this ceremonial setting. It is used symbolically to augment the karanga, confirming the importance of kaikaranga and kairaranga on marae.

Thus, knowledge of Māori mythological references, genealogical connections, geographic locations, and raranga-based metaphors are all an intrinsic part of karanga settings and content. Karanga and raranga are interconnected aspects of Māori women’s cultural production in ceremonial settings.

TAPU AND NOA IN KARANGA
As the kaikaranga calls, she metaphorically lays down a path upon which the manuhiri may approach. This action symbolises the collective will and receptive attitude of the tangata whenua on the marae. It is used to smooth a path over tapu, rather than to break it. The ability to ‘smooth a path’ can be equated with women’s ability, according to customary protocols, to break down tapu. It is this ability that essentialises women’s role in Māori ceremony. Such essentialising is supported by current published literature:

Women are the wellspring of tears. They bear the burden of sorrow for the pain and suffering experienced in life. The women’s karanga on the marae is likened to the cry of a woman when she gives birth to her child, when the child leaves the womb and enters the world of light. This is implied in the words of the expression: a woman instigates the sacred; a woman dissipates the sacred. The woman’s karanga arouses the spirits of those who have passed on to the spirit world. Similarly, when she gives birth her cry in labour indicates that a sacred new life is about to come forth. The high-pitched cry penetrates beyond
the confines of the physical world and into the spiritual realm (Barlow, 1991: 39).

This is a male Māori scholar’s view of karanga and its womanly role. It is a view that freezes women’s social function to childbearing and mourning alone. Judging from this view, manifestations of women’s spiritual powers via karanga are possible, so long as they confine themselves to a limited number of social functions. No allowance is made for women’s advancement into other areas of ceremonial participation. By the same token, it implicitly limits the direct involvement of men in any aspect of the karanga, which also neglects the actual performance of a Ngāpuhi male’s response to karanga, described earlier. No room is provided for changes in cultural values and meanings of karanga. However, changes to karanga practices have, in fact, occurred.

**CHANGING VALUES AND A FEMINIST CHALLENGE**

Urbanisation of Māori people has altered the nature of social values assigned to karanga performance and their related references to raranga. Relationships between individuals and marae have changed due to new mixtures of iwi-based affiliations. Workplace-related class structures and loyalties, and a variety of other factors including age group differences (such as ‘generation gaps’) can act against Māori cultural protocols. Older forms of ceremony are sometimes replaced by new versions. The ideal knowledge of tribal history amongst kaikaranga, posited earlier, may not figure so prominently in the new form of karanga because of ignorance, or abandonment of the necessary details. It is also altered in contexts of staged cultural performance, signalling new conceptualisations of marae space, based on older ideas. These changes can be interpreted equally as a Māori cultural breakdown, and as an alternative cultural regeneration based on Māori culture.

As vehicles of Māori cultural diminution, however, colonialist institutions have not encouraged critical engagement or in-depth knowledge of karanga practice or theory. There is, for example, a place for karanga and other forms of Māori women’s
cultural production in current educational curricula. Karanga are subsumed by general reo Māori courses or confined to cultural performance groups who proceed with little in-depth critical analysis. In some of these contexts the whole purpose of the karanga is trivialised, ignored or denied. Its primacy as a cultural concept and mode of action is diminished in Māori and Pākehā perceptions due to lack of awareness, prior knowledge, confidence, and willingness and opportunity to learn. Outside schools, amongst parents, higher priorities, such as feeding, clothing and housing one’s family may take precedence over this critical awareness, as might substance abuse, including alcoholism, and ill health. In Māori terms, this change can be considered as a decline in mana.

Nevertheless, the exclusivity of karanga as a Māori women-only role persists today. The initial karanga is an example of female-only exclusivity and feminist lobbies do not challenge this exclusivity. I have never witnessed initial karanga being performed by a man or by any person who identifies solely as Pākehā. This fact contrasts sharply with Māori women’s efforts to alter gender-based restrictions on activities, such as whaikōrero (formal public speaking) and whakairo (carving), that currently exclude them.

Some Māori women have consequently supported the idea that male-exclusive cultural production needs to change to include women’s participation, yet they defend their own exclusivity in activities such as karanga. Raranga, somewhat in contrast, retains its gender inclusivity, welcoming participants of all cultures and persuasions. Nevertheless, it and karanga continue to be sidelined as less important in the ongoing debate of women’s participation in Māori ceremony that currently privileges men.

European colonisation has changed many aspects of Māori ceremony, along with the amount of available knowledge of its social, political, philosophical and cosmological foundations. There are conflicting opinions on whether or not gender inequality in ceremonies, existed before and/or after colonisation. One relevant perspective comes from a Māori woman scholar, Hinemoa Awatere
(1995: 36) who summarises a precolonial/postcolonial-based political dilemma regarding Māori women’s customary social status:

There are two strands of thought on the role of Māori women before colonisation. One strand says that traditional roles provide a model for today, in that they were complementary and that women held their own unique female power which in fact complemented that of the men… However there is another line of thought that this type of female equality did not exist in their iwi. Dame Mira Szaszy of Tai Tokerau [northern Aotearoa New Zealand] is one advocate of these views. This line states that Māori women have always been oppressed, even in pre-colonisation times. Dame Mira, for instance, challenges the lack of women speakers in formal tribal gatherings held on the marae.

Awatere (1995: 36) further suggests renewed Māori customary practices that hold fast to positive aspects, and discard the negative ones.

A positive model to combat this traditional oppression is postulated by Māori academic Kathie Irwin whereby Māori women seek a new synthesis in which the positive aspects of tikanga and kaupapa Māori, or tribal custom, can be retained, and the negative aspects challenged.

Although interpretations of what constitute positive and negative aspects of Māori culture can be debated further, Māori women have had to, and continue having to, investigate the possibility that their oppression reaches back before British colonisation as well as the possibility that it only occurred, subsequently. A critical engagement with such a conjectural arena is necessary not only to examine alternative views, but also to decide on current political strategies. A ‘new synthesis’ (as described above by Awatere) may combat oppressive circumstances in which karanga (and raranga or any other activity principally undertaken by Māori women for that matter) may be placed. My call continues for more substantial engagement with the ceremonial role Māori women hold (both actually and potentially) in all social contexts, whether it is on a marae, on a performance stage, or in corporate, educational and government offices.
KARAKIA
In spite of its mixed fortunes, karanga retains its particular association with Māori ceremony. The same cannot be said for karakia, due to its incorporation into Church rituals that originate beyond Aotearoa New Zealand’s shores, particularly Europe. Owing to the publication of Bibles, prayer books and hymnbooks, the ‘word’ of the various denominations of Christianity in Aotearoa New Zealand, is widely available to the general populace. Pre-colonisation karakia though memorised by some Māori today, have been subsumed or diminished in public profile by this current Pākehā Christianity-based cultural hegemony. The word karakia itself, for example, is often conflated in everyday speech with prayer and incantation where both English words may imply at least some connection with Christian rituals.

CONNECTIONS TO RARANGA
While teasing out of distinctions between Christianised and non-Christianised karakia might be a frustrating and fruitless exercise, given their various entanglements since European colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand, karakia-based discourse is useful when considering raranga in a number of social contexts. For example, the centring of a person’s inner strength through ritualised incantation is known to have taken place before and during raranga (Andersen, 1907: 325; Hotere Whānau, 2000-3; Maihi, 1999-2000; Puketapu-Hetet, 1989: 4; Rankin Family, 2000-2). Prayer in this kind of context may be considered as a focussing device, preparatory to the work at hand.

Connections between karakia and raranga are now made within the current climate of Māori cultural revival, relying on oral histories, including accounts of pre-colonial Māori customs. In some cases these revivals constitute cultural syntheses of ritual practice, including mixtures of Māori and English language in karakia.

Critical analyses of ways in which karakia are applied to cultural production can also bring to light culturally based incongruities. To clarify this point, it is necessary to recall the
relationship between tapu and noa in Māori philosophy that would not necessarily have defined raranga as a non-tapu activity. The fact that raranga required karakia does not mean that it was strictly sacred, yet its association with woman may have had both tapu and noa elements. It can be safely assumed that a bifurcation of social activities into sacred and secular, common in contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand and other Westernised societies, changed the daily frequency of karakia because some activities became more sacred than others, in a new hierarchy of social values. Christianisation of Māori cultural activities now means that only some, rather than all, creative activities attract karakia, indicating changes from a time where, regardless of its tapu and noa elements, almost every creative action required karakia (Hotere Whānau, 2000-3).

URUURUWHENUA: FROM KARAKIA AND KARANGA TO THESIS
Amongst this complex, multi-layered discourse concerning raranga items and ceremony, there is another important concept worth considering. This concept comes from a renowned karakia widely attributed to a founding ancestor of Ngāpuhi people, Nukutawhiti (Hotere Whānau, 2000-3; Rankin Family, 2000-2). This karakia is often recited to recall the migration of Nukutawhiti, his arrival in our Ngāpuhi rohe (territory) from a more northern Pacific Ocean homeland and our common genealogical links with him. The karakia uses the word uruuruwhenua in expressing the arrival of Nukutawhiti in this new home and consequent linkage between this arrival, ancestors from the Pacific Ocean region (and in the after world) and descendants throughout time.

Whilst dictionary definitions (Williams, H. W., 1975: 470; Ryan, 1997: 328) primarily link uruuruwhenua to the ritualised placement of objects, such as pito (afterbirth), in secret locations to preserve land title, a broader conceptualisation of this term is also possible. The concept of uruuruwhenua relates to grounding in a particular place at a particular moment without reifying those places
and timeframes. This is a fluid conceptualisation making it relevant to any cultural position at any given moment. In this sense, it relates more to the soul of existence, rather than any particularised position on a geographic map or time clock. Inspired by this concept and its significance in the narratives of my ancestor Nukutawhiti, I consider the raranga-based focus of this thesis as itsuruuruwhenua, its ‘heart and soul’. From this point onwards, I periodically apply the worduruuruwhenua to my primary arguments concerning the indispensable presence of raranga in Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses. In this sense, raranga remains a discursive anchor from which all other discussion in this thesis evolves. This evolution has not occurred without my own karakia for my raranga-based arguments to be heard; yet the relevance of karakia to my doctoral research does not stop here.

A BRIEF RETURN TO KOHEWHATA
Examples of complex relationships between Christianity, karakia and raranga were very obvious during my fieldwork at Kohewhata Marae. On this marae, karakia were recited at a special Mass (one that was Christian-based without any specific denomination) on Sundays that made numerous references to Jesus Christ. Such karakia were recited in English and Māori. During working days at the marae our shared repast at lunchtime was always blessed with a karakia, mostly in English. Raranga, however, received no special karakia.

While these examples relate to public ceremony, whether in a formalised Sunday service or briefly and immediately prior to a meal, individuals were also free to undertake their own rituals. I was, for instance, advised by a kaumatua to undertake cleansing rituals, including karakia, at Kohewhata so that any kind of harm would not befall me. The kaumatua, though mindful of the importance of my work there, is not a tangata whenua of Kohewhata and deemed these precautions necessary at the time, in case I met with physical or spiritual harm. The power of tapu influences such precautionary
undertakings. At the time it was clear to me that such ritual preparation did no harm to my learning raranga at Kohewhata.

I may be forgiven in displaying some ambivalence of belief in the power of both tapu and karakia in this instance. On the one hand I am not in the business of denying or belittling the beliefs of others, especially those of my elders. On the other hand, and allowing for the statements regarding objectivity in my research discussed earlier, I must admit that my undertaking of precautionary karakia and ritual was a matter of 'just in case' rather than devout belief. The ritual of karakia in relation to raranga did, however, assist in preparing for an activity that requires focussed, even and rhythmic engagement.

Although raranga-based karakia was not a formalised feature of Kohewhata, my kaiako Toi Maihi was in the process of encouraging its practice. Such a process requires both archival research and consultation especially with kaumatua and kuia, as much of their knowledge is rarely preserved in writing. While it is not completely certain that karakia was part of pre-colonial raranga teaching, given the dearth of written records on the subject, oral accounts (Hotere Whānau, 2000-3) support the notion that such karakia were learned subliminally, while undertaking raranga much like oriori (educative lullabies that were chanted to children). In more recent times, given colonialist counter-influences, karakia have been de-prioritised by a larger effort to learn and revive tangible (rather than prayer-based) raranga techniques in secularised fashion.

The linkages between raranga and karakia in marae contexts remained clear to the kairaranga at Kohewhata, despite the fact that they were rarely performed on a daily basis and that a standardised form and time of recitation had not yet been imposed. This situation demonstrates a process of gradual disintegration of links between karakia and raranga that potentially leads to the total secularisation of raranga. The loss of karakia for raranga equates in Māori terms to a loss of tapu and mana. In short, this loss is devaluation and
explains the efforts of kairaranga to revive and maintain karakia in all facets of raranga production.

NEW KARAKIA FORMS
It is also the case, however, that spontaneity and innovation is present in karakia recitation not unlike the mihi and whaikōrero (forms of speechmaking) that do follow a set format of presentation, but allow the speaker some leeway for innovation, elaboration and embellishments. Accordingly, more recent songs (for example Pipi, 2000) and poems (such as the poem Kuta discussed earlier), featuring raranga, may yet constitute a similar role in focusing the attention of kairaranga to their work. It remains to be seen whether or not these songs and poems are adopted as karakia, and if they play a role in raising and maintaining the values attached to raranga in Māori cultural discourses.

TAONGA
Karakia, regardless of their origins, are very important in the context of taonga. Taonga sometimes undergo extensive rituals that include karakia. Such karakia occurs in an effort to protect taonga from any kind of misadventure as well as to affirm their spiritual connections with ancestors. These rituals often occur when taonga are temporarily lent out and returned to marae and/or iwi representatives. Like the holy relics of Christian churches, marae taonga are considered by many Māori to be tapu and inviolate, yet churches and marae are not immune to thieves. Some marae have taonga under lock and key. Other marae place their taonga into adjoining church buildings or on other premises, for security reasons. These buildings are physically more secure than the marae buildings though the application of Christian and tapu protection may act as a dual deterrent against theft. The tapu of taonga is reinforced and asserted by public ceremony and formal karakia.

Raranga items on marae receive this treatment depending on their current use. Some kete that are used for everyday purposes, to carry food items for example, may not be considered by the tangata
whenua as taonga, even though some individuals may treasure their existence. Other kete, especially those of intricate design and construction or those associated fondly with a tupuna (ancestor) may attract similar ritual (including karakia) to other taonga. Similarly some whāriki (sleeping mats) may be reserved for important guests, protected by karakia and a secret location, while others are left without karakia, for more general use. In many cases, the whare receives karakia and other forms of acknowledgment such as whaikōrero and mihi. Its taonga such as tukutuku panels and pou (carved posts) may be stipulated in these karakia, whilst general utility items, such as whāriki and kete, are not.

In terms of material preservation, karakia may be the only care afforded to taonga (unlike the climate and pest control of museums, for example), apart from its removal against theft or for the safety of people who may be adversely affected by its tapu. Some marae elders and organising committees find it safer and wiser to entrust taonga to ‘Pākehā’ museums where they are assumed to be more secure and well cared for. Increasingly, however, Māori have sought renewed and more equitable relationships with numerous Pākehā institutions including museums, and have negotiated conditions for the care of these items.

A KARANGA (CALL) AND A KARAKIA (PRAYER) FOR THE PARI
To enhance my discussion of karanga, karakia, mana, tapu and noa, I now make another discursive step. This ‘step’ concerns pari, their public display in Māori cultural performances, and their potential contribution to museum and art gallery displays. As discussed earlier in chapter 2, Māori women’s performances in concerts, festivals and shows for the tourist market have been transferred to promotion brochures and also occur in monographs and serials discussing Māori culture. I pointed out that these images invariably include the pari.

Aside from its public display as part of dance performance the pari has not been the central focus of any cultural institution’s
(art gallery or museum for example) exhibition to date. When asked of its importance some kairaranga are reticent, preferring more traditional raranga forms. Pari were not considered as having any relevance to the raranga at Kohewhata discussed in chapter 3, for example. They have not inspired artistic attention apart from that of designers (male and female) who endeavour to meet the requirements of cultural concerts and competitions.

To elaborate on these points, I now focus on three pari examples that directly relate to my family’s history, but have not been included in published literature or public institution’s exhibitions.

PARI IN A CONTEXT OF STATUS AND SANCTITY

![Figure 5:1: My mother, Te Mihinga Eileen Karaka Diamond wearing a kuta pari in the 1940s. Cropped photograph courtesy of Tarati Waetford.](image)

My mother once told me that she had worn a pari made from kuta during her youth. She had worn it at school performances of haka and action songs. My mother’s father reputedly had a hand in its design and construction technique. We were talking about the 1940s,
when Māori children’s cultural competitions took place in and near Kaikohe, her birthplace. Many years later, when I became acquainted with kuta in the process of learning raranga at Kohewhata that, I remembered my mother’s kuta pari. Its significance to my research became more established when I obtained a photograph of my mother wearing it in the 1940s (figure 5.1). The photograph shows that the diagonal technique has been used for an item of clothing, contradicting notions discussed early in this thesis that this technique had only a limited variety of applications such as whāriki and kete.

I might have been forgiven for thinking that my mother’s pari design was a ‘one-off’, something that was made only once in connection to my mother’s school in the 1940s. Such thoughts are understandable given Kaikohe’s relative isolation from other regions of Aotearoa New Zealand, at that time. However, the existence of a photograph in the Alexander Turnbull Library’s (National Library of Aotearoa New Zealand) pictorial collection (figure 5.2) altered my viewpoint. The photograph’s main focal point is a young Māori woman who is wearing a pari. The pari is woven with the diagonal raranga technique, incorporating a darker coloured design. The photograph features a Māori performance group that won a local competition in 1947, in Marae. Marae is a small settlement close to Utakura, my maternal grandfather’s birthplace.

More recently, my mother recalled a similar pari design that featured in a dance performance competition between her father and his close cousin Nika Anihana (Diamond, T. E., 2001-3). She is more inclined to associate the Marae pari and competition group with the latter man, though we are all part of the same extended family. At this juncture I am unable to corroborate my mother’s recollections with written records beyond those provided by the Alexander Turnbull Library’s catalogue. Current research efforts are frustrated by the likelihood that records of the pari have disappeared along with the people like my grandfather who passed away some fifty years ago. Nevertheless, given that the style of pari generated
from the region of Maraeroa appears to be unlike any other, I am tempted to designate this particularly style as indigenous to the Maraeroa area.

Maori girls and boys of a winning haka team, Maraeroa


Consequently I attribute its introduction into Kaikohe Native School where my mother received her education the 1940s to my grandfather’s community-orientated effort in furthering the Maraeroa pari style. I await and hope to contribute to further discourse involving Maraeroa, its history of raranga and its pari.

I am struck by the presence of this pari in relation to my grandfather and mother. As stated earlier my Ngāpuhi identity is mixed with Pākehā ancestry. My maternal grandfather had both Pākehā ancestry and Ngāpuhi ancestry from the Utakura region. His possible involvement with the Maraeroa pari speaks not only of its role as an emblem of Māori kinship ties but also connections to place and cultural symbolism. The Maraeroa pari also represents a sub-marginalisation within pari-based discourses that concentrate
more on tāniko examples alone or other versions that have kept tāniko designs through the use of tapestry techniques. Nevertheless, pari made of tapestry are also marginalised as the following personal narrative demonstrates.

**MY PARI IN TERMS OF KARAKIA AND EMBLEMATIC TAONGA**

The pari has been a ubiquitous feature of my life. In my late teens, while taking part in a university haka performance group, we female performers were instructed to produce a pari that specifically signified our family and tribal affiliations. This pari was used at various times during concerts as an alternative to the gold and black pari that was part of the group’s standard ‘uniform’. My mother and her eldest sister designed my pari and I helped with its predominant tapestry construction. It has a very intricate design bearing references to plants indigenous to the northern climes of Aotearoa New Zealand. It also has a central design that denotes nga hau e wha (the four winds, symbolically referring to a union of people from ‘all Four Corners’ of the world). This pari has travelled with me to Australia.

My mother was at that time it was made, very protective of this pari, concerned that its design might be stolen and used for someone else’s material gain and fame. Her concern was not unfounded and resonates with many cultural property issues that are continuing today.

Apart from this concern, my mother subsequently expressed reservations about discussing pari in general. She associates pari with the tapu of Māori women’s bodies and certain items of their clothing. This association relates to the tendency amongst some Māori women, including my mother, not to speak of ‘intimate’ apparel. This subject is considered as ‘tapu’ and remains a secret. This point reminds me that culturally sensitive research needs to be incorporated into any public ‘airing’ of the pari, where the views of some Māori women may differ from those of others.
Figure 5.3: Detail of my pari. Designed and constructed by Te Mihinga Eileen Diamond, Tarati Waetford and Jo Diamond.

Although I do not share these inhibitions, I hesitate to provide an image of my pari, given the wisdom of my mother’s earlier concerns over cultural property. Nevertheless, this thesis proposes to convey, rather than deny, access to knowledge and is therefore open to misappropriation. I have included an image of my pari in figure 5.3 of this chapter in the spirit of generosity that is not naïve to negative consequences. In this way I assert the mana of my family and trust that its creative value is respected for more than monetary gain.

With encouragement from my parents, a Catholic priest blessed my pari, ensuring its safety on my many expected travels. It has since lost its original backing that included a ‘darter’ piece of red polyester fabric and has in the interim been converted into a shoulder bag. I now keep it as an unembellished tapestry panel that I am currently considering framing, as one would a picture. It has retained its original shape and colour and I still call it my pari because of its initial purpose, yet as with much of my life, this taonga has changed in shape, rather than cultural significance, over time.

My pari has not been alone in its travel to Australia. Numerous other examples have either been brought across from Aotearoa New Zealand or have been designed by groups of the Australian Māori migrant population. Women and girls of a Māori performance group in Canberra wear one such pari. Its green and gold colours evoke those used by Australia’s representative sporting
teams. Though this pari is emblematic of the group (including its references to Māori culture and Australian residence) its significance is unsung in a wider community that venerates kākahu and weapons above women’s apparel. The group’s members assign their own value to this pari that is juxtaposed with their regard for kākahu and other woven items as well as weapons. I return to this group and its pari when discussing Australian raranga and Māori identity in chapter 6.

**INTERIM SUMMARY**

In this chapter so far, I have asserted that my family’s pari are taonga, achieved through the creative efforts of female members of my family. However, this assertion does not correspond with a lineal process where personal items become:

Alienable property ... [that is] turned from commodity for consumption to artefact for display in order to fulfil collective ideals and weave ties of communal commensality to a particular place. (Lovell, 1998: 17)

Our pari remain personal items. Though ‘commoditised’ for our own ‘consumption’ in Māori performances, they have not been displayed as taonga or ‘artefacts for display’ in their own right. Like many other pari, they have not been given credit in dominant discourses on Māori culture for their role as emblems of ‘collective ideals [and] ties of communal commensality’ to our rohe. It remains to be seen whether their display in art galleries or museums brings changes to this situation.

I have also shown that in raranga-based discourses, it is possible to address a multi-layered interpretation of cultural authenticity and to apply the theoretical value of the Māori concept uruuruwhenua as a ‘soul of existence’. Uruuruwhenua has been discussed in relation to various forms of Māori philosophy. It also relates to my pari, regardless of its technical attributes that may be considered as inauthentic by some purist interpreters of Māori culture. My pari represents uruuruwhenua in relation to, and as a continuation of, Ngāpuhi narratives and genealogies. Thus the
concept of ururuwhenua gives this raranga-based item and my cultural existence and identity ‘soul’.

Colonialist mechanisms such as capitalist commodity markets and Christianity contribute to a hegemonic sense of cultural authenticity that does not take into account ururuwhenua and other Māori concepts. These mechanisms have been reinforced by cultural institutions, such as art galleries and museums, in their choices of items for public displays and the significance of formal Māori ceremonies. Māori people have not been totally excluded from these practices, taking part in cultural performances for the tourism market and especially in more recent times, staffing cultural institutions. However their inclusion has not signalled the institutions’ complete acceptance of the Māori concepts discussed so far, and has, in fact, denied a place for taonga such as pari and other raranga items as part of ‘authentic’ Māori cultural production. This denial in turn constitutes a denial of the value of Māori women’s cultural production. Nevertheless, this is a situation that could change. In the next section I continue this discussion by focussing on a specific institutional context where raranga items, Māori women and Māori concepts need no longer remain absent or trivialised.

SECTION 2: KARANGA, KARAKIA AND RARANGA AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA

Diary entry 18 June 2003: Meeting with Toi Maihi and a staff member of the National Museum of Australia re Hone Heke. The NMA will commission Toi to weave a whāriki – a replica of that used by Heke in the 1840s. According to oral history among Toi’s kairaranga associates, Heke used his whāriki to establish his rights to whaikōrero (formal speeches) outside his Matarahurahu hapu rohe, sometimes amongst people who opposed him. I have yet to find written records of this whāriki, but its existence is in keeping with my knowledge of the symbolism attached to this raranga item in various social contexts. Heke’s whāriki may be a small detail in the large NMA exhibition, but very significant for raranga profiles in museums.
Figure 5.4: William Duke. *The Celebrated chief Hone or John Heke*. Oil paint on canvas. 45.5 x 33 cm. With permission of the National Library of Australia

The issues raised earlier on pari-based exhibitions in art galleries and museums have palpable links with a research consultancy I have undertaken at the National Museum of Australia (NMA). This consultancy provides a useful context for considering the impact of funding constraints on Māori cultural presence and issues of cultural sensitivity and property within an Australian national institution. The consultancy took place for an exhibition, which is expected to open in late November 2003 and will include visual representations of the Ngāpuhi chief Hone Heke Pokai (henceforth referred to as Heke, see figures 2.11 and 5.4). Issues of cultural property, tribal mandate and Ngāpuhi representation in cultural institutions include the potential for raranga items to be incorporated in Heke’s representation within this exhibition. For example, the inclusion of cloaked images and
raranga items such as whāriki depends as much on tribal mandate, as funding provisions. This context also provides an opportunity to discuss the potential ofraranga, including Heke’swhāriki, karanga and karakia in the exhibition’s opening ceremony and displays that will involve Māori women.

HEKE’S STORY
Most people in Aotearoa New Zealand, whether Māori or not, recognise the nameHone Heke. Their immediate reaction would most probably be along the lines of ‘he’s the guy who chopped the flagpole down’. The event they would be referring to involve an early settlement in northern Aotearoa New Zealand called Kororareka (now known as Russell) in the Bay of Islands (Figure 5.5). Kororareka was an important early 19th-century shipping port and a town that had been established to cater for the commercial interests of the new European settlers. Heke was born around 1810 some distance inland from the town of Kororareka and the Bay was very much part of his rohe. During his life he attracted notoriety amongst the settlers and various reactions, some for and some against him, amongst the local Māori. Although he was the first chief to sign the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 (a seminal agreement between Māori and the British) though, as time passed, he grew increasingly dissatisfied by its role in disadvantaging Māori people (Moon, 2000: 18 and 21).
Tensions increased between Heke and representatives of the British Crown. He attracted the support of many younger Māori men who shared similar grudges with the settlers’ presence and unequal power relations that benefited Europeans, more than Māori. This tension resulted in a series of events including the repeated chopping down of the British signal flag that had been hoisted near the town of Kororareka. In figure 5.6 the various sites and routes of Heke’s campaigns are represented in map form. The settlers eventually (and temporarily) evacuated Kororareka and the British representative in Aotearoa New Zealand, Governor Robert Fitzroy, placed a price on Heke’s head (Moon, 2001: 68).

Heke lived for around forty years, died from war wounds and was buried in a cave in Pakaraka not far up the road from Pakinga Pa where he was born. The town of Kaikohe now sits between Pakaraka and the Pakinga Pa site.
Heke's developing iconic status in Aotearoa New Zealand, ever since the 1840s, has prompted numerous artistic representations (figure 5.7). As explained earlier in this thesis, such representations often feature raranga items.

Figure 5.7: a representation of Heke chopping down the British flagstaff. A. D. McCormick, 1908 Heke fells the flagstaff at Kororareka. Coloured photolithograph 155 x 115 cm. Image courtesy of Timeframes collection Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa National Library of New Zealand.

A TRANS-TASMAN MUSEUM CONSULTANCY

The NMA relies on Government funding, private donation, commercial sponsorship, and legislation (National Museum of Australia Act, 1980 for example). It is one of many Australian government-run corporations that make occasional and temporary contact with Māori cultural representations. An advertisement from Senior Curator Dr. Ann McGrath at the NMA appeared by email in the Centre for Cross-Cultural Centre at the Australian National
University in April 2000. It caught my eye particularly because it asked for ‘New Zealand’ assistance with a planned exhibition that proposed an international perspective of historical characters such as the famous (or infamous depending on viewpoint) Australian outlaw Ned Kelly.

**CONSULTANCY CHALLENGES**

The main theme of the exhibition developed over two years. In its early stages the curators planned to examine in detail the outlaw, bandits or bushranger image that had evolved thanks to Kelly and other notable characters in Australia’s history. It also sought to represent similar figures from overseas throughout recorded history, responsible for the emergence of comparable myths and popular cultural images that eventually became ‘larger than life’. Examples of such ‘mythology’ are the English legendary figure Robin Hood and the Native American Chief Sitting Bull.

Some challenges that I foresaw when considering whether or not to become involved in the exhibition included the following:

- The fact that ‘bandit and bushrangers’ are not part of the academic or popular perception of national history or culture in Aotearoa New Zealand.

- That Māori people may take particularly umbrage if they suspect a hint or more of disrespect for ancestors. Much of this objection is politically driven as it seeks protection and respect for our cultural heritage.

- That some Māori and Pākehā people in Aotearoa New Zealand and elsewhere may deny similarities between Māori ancestors and outlaw figures such as Ned Kelly.

- This reaction could bring about political correctness relating to Māori culture more than critical engagement and informed political action.

- That the National Museum of Australia would need to be particularly aware of cultural sensitivities such as the Māori attitude toward and protection of the good name of their ancestors.
I was also aware that I as a researcher could not cross certain tribal boundaries without causing strife for the museum and myself. As a Ngāpuhi woman I needed to be careful about who I chose to represent Aotearoa New Zealand and the best person and/or people to ask for permission and support. For these reasons there was only one Ngāpuhi tupuna who I would have any chance of proposing as a character for the exhibition’s theme: Heke.

FAMILY BUSINESS

Heke’s representation in the NMA exhibition depended on iwi representatives and a formal mandate from Ngāpuhi kaumatua and kuia. It also involves appropriate ceremonies (including karanga and karakia) if relationships are to remain on good terms between the NMA and Ngāpuhi kaumatua and kuia.

As part of full consultation with the descendants of Heke it was necessary to become aware not only of the ceremony that should ideally accompany any public representation of him but also other pertinent cultural information. Most vital to culturally sensitive representations of any Māori ancestors are a substantial knowledge of current socio-political issues and relevant cultural contexts. This means a necessary understanding of Māori culture that is as connected with Heke’s time as it is with Ngāpuhi people of today. Knowledge of current views on Heke and related cultural politics needed to be gained, and I also needed to be mindful of and cautious with viewpoints that distort the past through a lens of the present.

An important aspect of this culturally sensitive knowledge relates to Heke’s hakaheke (genealogy). For example, in relation to Heke, some indispensable guidance has only recently been made available in published form (Moon, 2001: 6). It demonstrates how Heke most likely acquired his initial social standing or mana, in terms of his ancestry and siblings. It also shows that Heke was of a rangatira (chiefly) line descending from Ahuaiti and Whakaruru, wives of the renowned Ngāpuhi progenitor Rāhiri (see chapter 1). He was the youngest of three brothers; his older brothers were
Tuhirangi and Peia. Although Heke died without issue, his elder siblings’ progeny treat him as a direct tupuna (ancestor) as if he was their direct ‘ancestral’ father too (Rankin Family, 2000-2). Of the three brothers Tuhirangi, being the elder and his direct line of descendancy hold precedence above the others. These details have an important bearing in determining who of these descendents has most authority in negotiating with museums over Heke’s representation, though as it will soon be shown, this authority has been and continues to be disputed by various parties.

PERMISSION: THE LONGEVITY OF A MANDATE
My first and foremost request for permission to proceed with the exhibition consultancy was placed entirely in the hands of the late Mr. Graham Rankin. Graham Rankin lived in or near Kaikohe almost all his life. He was respected for his outspoken views and successful campaigns in the interests of cultural and environmental sustainability and is a direct descendant of Heke’s eldest brother Tuhirangi. He continues a line of well-known political activists including Hone Heke Ngapua, a Ngāpuhi parliamentarian at the turn of the 20th century, and Graham’s father Hone Heke Rankin, another political activist of note.

This kaumatua, Graham Rankin, unconditionally supported my research consultancy at the NMA as well as my doctoral research and thesis. Without this permission and support I would not have chosen to proceed with the exhibition consultancy. Unfortunately Graham succumbed to illness and passed away only a few months after I received his permission (Haere, haere e pa! – I pay my deepest respects here to him and his family). Graham’s first mandate has since required reinforcement, because of power shifts that followed his death.

Forty kaumatua and kuia related to Graham’s family have since signed an official letter of mandate, supporting the inclusion of Heke in Outlawed. My professional relationship with the Rankin family was absolutely essential to the NMA’s exhibition plans as
they now stand. Beyond the tribal mandate it helped to determine object ownership and lending, tribal representation and any authenticity issues. I have had to negotiate with this family at a time when they were suffering from their loss without being there with them. This became quite a challenge especially since the NMA needed my reassurance of tribal permission and support and were at times weighing the expediency of including representation from Aotearoa New Zealand, against exhibition budget constraints and negative reactions from some other museums.

From these points it can be seen that the business of understanding Heke’s kin relations and sources of mana is complex, as is determining the best authority and source for his representation. ‘Inside’ knowledge, oral and written histories and ethnographic study is part of culturally sensitive research, along with an engagement with political issues of identity and representation.

Institutional Roles
Four museums, located on both sides of the Tasman Sea, played various roles in the process of my consultancy. It is therefore important to comment upon each of these institutions in relation to my research consultancy and the exhibition theme.

The National Museum of Australia
Global issues surrounding cultural and intellectual property along with consultation policies can be seen as a major concern in museums and art galleries quite apart from more commercially driven activities of the marketplace. The NMA, for example, needs to compete for funding and justify its share of budgets set by Federal Government, commercial and private sponsorship. To this end it is accountable to its funding sources. Acting as a meter (one of many that include other institutions such as the National Library and the National Art Gallery) of public reaction and opinion, it can be variously used as a source of Australia’s national kudos. It contributes to election outcomes as well as policy formation, amendment, maintenance and extension by the Federal Government,
a major funding source. It is also under pressure to seek other kinds of sponsorship, both commercial and philanthropic, to achieve its goals. Much depends on the vision of its Director and Board of Governors who must be aware of current trends in relevant policies of Government and fellow institutions, public awareness and opinion. The current Director of the NMA Dawn Casey (2001: 17) has expressed her vision for the NMA’s exhibition outlines thus:

The outcome is not just job creation and tourist income – though they do provide a significant and measurable economic return on investment – but also a profound contribution to the evolving discussion of national history and identity, the place of Indigenous peoples in a pluralistic settler society and the aspirations of present day Australians for the future.

The NMA has endeavoured to approach cultural sensitivity issues in a receptive and positive manner, following the Director’s vision. Current relationships between Māori representatives and the NMA signal a new accessibility to the museum for the local and international Māori community, but this burgeoning relationship does not escape conflict of interests at various levels, as I soon discuss more deeply.

The objection of a major museum in Auckland
Not all institutions have been supportive of the exhibition theme, though this theme did change over time following its inception in early 2001. One institution in Aotearoa New Zealand, the Auckland War Memorial Museum, named in very recent media coverage (Watkin, 2003), stated that its Taumata-a-īwi’s (Māori advisory council) including a Ngāpuhi representative needed to be satisfied of the NMA’s good intent before loans of objects would be permitted. This reaction partly prompted the subsequent scale of the Ngāpuhi mandate that supported Graham Rankin’s initial permission for Heke to be included in what came to be known as the Outlawed exhibition.

The Auckland museum has since refused to loan a small collection of taonga relevant to Heke for the exhibition. Subsequently, they have not kept up communication on the exhibition format that has altered over time, or acknowledged the
mana of all Ngāpuhi mandate signatories. It was pointed out in confidential correspondence that AWMM building is located in the Auckland-based rohe of the iwi of Ngati Whātua, which therefore has primary responsibility for all taonga the AWMM collection.

This issue highlights the fact that both the legislation that affords the museum dominion over its collection and the mana whenua, the protection of the Māori iwi that has dominion over the Museum site and surrounding land can frustrate the aspiration of other iwi. Taonga belonging to other iwi beside Ngati Whātua, for example, may effectively be removed from iwi-based control by two jurisdictions, one with Pākehā origins (enforced legislation governing the AWMM) and one with Māori tikanga (support the mana whenua of Ngati Whātua). For this reason alone, it is clear that Ngāpuhi taonga currently held by the AWMM will resurface as a cultural property issue and that its lending rights and loans procedures will be contested.

A Kaikohe museum
In contrast to the AWMM, a representative of a small museum in Kaikohe, in the centre of the Ngāpuhi rohe, expressed enthusiasm to loan a large amount of taonga from its collections, including weaponry from Heke's era, for the exhibition. This museum is named The Pioneer Village and as I mentioned earlier, is situated in the township of Kaikohe, northern Aotearoa New Zealand. Although primarily run by Pākehā residents of Kaikohe, where representations of Pākehā history of the region dominate over those of Māori, the Pioneer Village museum, according to two representatives of its organising committee, foresaw promotional possibilities in working with an Australian institution and informally agreed to loan its objects to the NMA (Diamond, J. G., 1998-2003). However, subsequent personal communication (Ayrton, 2003) confirmed that not all of this voluntary committee has been fully advised of the NMA exhibition's theme and are not fully supportive of the object loans that have taken place so far. Like the other institutions, the
Pioneer Village Museum’s position on Outlawed is complex, open to various interpretations and vested interests. Similarly to the case between the AWMM and the NMA, this small museum has also experienced communication breakdowns that have engendered some animosity amongst its organising committee members.

The Te Papa Tongarewa exhibition, 2003
Early in February 2003, the National Museum of Aotearoa New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa opened an exhibition featuring Heke entitled Conflict and reconciliation. This exhibition came about as an indirect consequence of my research consultancy at the NMA and features taonga from the Pioneer Village Museum and the Rankin family’s private collection. The exhibition at Te Papa Tongarewa was organised under the guidance of the Kaihautū (Māori Director), Mr. Te Taru White.

Negotiations between all three institutions then took place for the transfer of taonga to Australia for the Outlawed exhibition, once Conflict and reconciliation closed on the 31 July 2003. The Te Papa exhibition gave added institutional credibility to my recommendations to include representations of Heke in the Outlawed exhibition. While the Te Papa exhibition differs in scale and theme, being smaller and purpose-built for Heke alone, it confirms the multi-layered life story of this Ngāpuhi tupuna.

Implications
The various experiences and reactions of the four museums (NMA, AWMM, Te Papa Tongarewa and the Pioneer Village) raise some important issues of cultural property and authority over Māori representation, including taonga. The various, and at times, disparate reactions demonstrate the contentious nature of cultural negotiations within museum exhibition plans. It is never a simple matter of gathering an iwi mandate, as institutions are not necessarily obliged to honour or recognise such a mandate. It is also not necessarily the case that a smaller institution will follow the lead of a larger, urban-based one. In amongst this scheme of institutional relationships,
Māori people attempt to make a contribution towards self-representation, yet their resources rarely match those of the institutions involved. However, it has been made clear during the process leading to the opening of the Outlawed exhibition, that support from the community is valued by these institutions, but at times such relationships are complicated by institutional funding constraints, ill-informed managerial decisions and communication breakdowns, a point I now discuss further.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT
The potential and spirit of many communities, to make a reference to the international museum consultant Elaine Heumann Gurian (2001: 25-6), including Māori residents of Canberra is at stake. The growth and nurturing of an institution’s reputation as being a current, clever and accessible community and national forum may derive from such relationships. Significantly, none of the Māori communities in Australia has yet said Aotearoa New Zealand should not be included in the exhibition. Whilst some would have preferred another tupuna (ancestor) from another iwi to be included, they understood and respected my inability to venture into the history of other iwi before my own, in accordance with current tikanga (Diamond, J. G, 1998-2003).

There is much potential in the local Māori community of Canberra that extends past, but importantly includes their ‘entertainment value’ in stage shows including the Multi-cultural Festival held annually in Canberra. There is a great willingness amongst local Māori, despite its small population not only to maintain links with Aotearoa New Zealand but also to convey, in display form, their presence in the wider community of Canberra.

However, the negotiations between institutions and iwi representatives in the Trans-Tasman context of Heke’s representation in Outlawed clearly demonstrate uneven distributions of power between colonialist decision-making systems within institutions, and those outside them. The various, and in some cases,
discordant views of Trans-Tasman Māori institutions and private citizens in relation to representations of Heke can be addressed in terms of meanings that are inscribed into objects and the complex negotiations undertaken for museum exhibitions:

Perhaps it is best to view objects, alongside nature and memory, as the epitome of in-betweeness, as the ultimate repositories of meanings which are never clearly there but are nevertheless always present, and therefore always on the move. (Lovell, 1998: 17)

As the replica of Heke’s whāriki, referred to at the beginning of this section, joins the other taonga on display in Outlawed, at least one viewer, myself, will associate it and the others with the ‘epitome of in-betweeness’ amongst various agents.

**A PŌWHIRI (WELCOMING CEREMONY) FOR HEKE**

I substantiate this view further by now referring to Heke’s pōwhiri (welcoming ceremony) in Canberra in September 2003 (see figure 5.8). When the taonga relating to Heke arrived in Canberra for Outlawed at this time, it was automatically accepted amongst local Māori residents that Heke himself had arrived.

![Figure 5.8: Pōwhiri for Hone Heke Pokai 24 September 2003. Ngunnawal (Indigenous to the Canberra region) elder Agnes Shea reads aloud a formal speech welcoming Heke to Canberra – Ngunnawal customary land. She is flanked by Māori woman kaikaranga Liddy Dixon (left), Jo Diamond, both of the Ngāpuhi iwi, and other members of local Māori performance group TROTT.](image-url)
National Museum of Australia Storage Facility, Acton. Photograph courtesy of National Museum of Australia

I voluntarily organised a pōwhiri at the NMA’s storage facility, motivated by my knowledge of appropriate Māori ceremonial protocols. Under these protocols, as discussed earlier, it is imperative that manuhiri (guests) are welcomed appropriately by tangata whenua (local residents). Agnes Shea, an elder of the local Indigenous Ngunnawal people, initiated the ceremony by officially welcoming Heke to Ngunnawal ‘country’. I discuss Ngunnawal customary land again in chapter 6.

Prior to pōwhiri for Heke, I arranged an informal meeting that took place between Australian Māori participants, Ngunnawal people and a NMA representative, knowing that most local Māori consider it highly inappropriate to engage in any ceremony without the presence of tangata whenua (Indigenous representatives). We met at the home of Māori cultural performance leader, Abe Kapea and his wife Debbie, in south Canberra upon their invitation. This meeting was as important as other meetings held at the NMA with staff managers in establishing relationships leading to the welcoming ceremony as well as subsequent events such as the exhibition’s official opening. Local Māori participation in the subsequent pōwhiri would not have taken place without this prior negotiation.

Members of the local Māori community of Canberra including its local performance group Te Rere o Te Tarakakao (henceforth referred to as TROTT) and some Māori visitors from Sydney, followed Agnes’ lead by also ceremoniously greeting the taonga that were accompanied by a small entourage including Graham Rankin’s son, David. Museum staff members were encouraged, via meetings held prior to the event, and my direction on the day, to participate interactively, rather than as spectators. My involvement as well as Agnes Shea’s gave our welcome a decided women-based profile that is acceptable, though not always present in current day Māori welcoming ceremonies. A gender balance was
therefore a notable factor of this ceremony as was an emphasis on respect for Trans-Tasman Indigenous cultures.

The ceremony gave initial primacy to Agnes and her speech welcoming Heke and his entourage was immediately followed by a karanga. Women therefore had the same initiating role in this ceremony as they would in Aotearoa New Zealand’s Māori ceremonies. The ceremonial role then passed to the men whose whaikōrero included karakia. Their whaikōrero were embellished by waiata performed by TROTT members present, including children. Significantly, Māori women elders who attended the ceremony expressed gratitude to me for its even balance between female and male participation, adults and children included.

The welcoming ceremony was in Māori cultural terms a resounding success and NMA staff members expressed their gratitude, informally. The NMA’s willingness to be involved, opening its high-security facilities for the event and encouraging staff members to participate, was a positive step toward establishing ideal working relationships with Māori representatives.

The ceremony also confirmed the local Māori community’s willingness to be involved in formal, solemn ceremony. In terms of the Outlawed exhibition, Ngāpuhi people with close genealogical ties to Heke as well as other Māori people expressed great enthusiasm to pay Heke due respect with formal ceremony upon his ‘arrival’ that included karanga and karakia. However, owing to circumstances beyond my control, there was no media coverage of this event that would have given Canberra Māori a more public voice. Consequently the NMA lost a promotional opportunity for itself and a Māori section of its local community. The superficial understanding of local Māori as merely a ‘performance group’ for concerts, without the potential for other contributions was thus maintained.
MEETING THE PRESS

This point provides the opportunity to explore some aspects of the media coverage that emerged following a media session organised by the NMA on the 25th of September 200, the day after the pōwhiri.

In an article written for the Canberra Times newspaper, reporter Robert Messenger (2003) mentions men alone in his coverage of Heke’s arrival. The article reflects the NMA staff’s efforts to highlight the warrior-like persona of Heke and is reinforced by the articles picture of David Rankin posed in a warrior stance holding a firearm. A similar emphasis in Australia’s media (figure 5.9) on contemporary Māori ‘warriors’ (in this case, political activists and social workers) can be traced back to the mid-1990s when the film *Once were Warriors* (Tamahori, Scholes, Brown and Duff, 1994) was released in Australia.

Australia’s popular media has not moved away from the warrior stereotype (for example, Raffaele, 2003). In spite of my earlier work and constant contact with elders in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, David Rankin currently monopolises the NMA’s sense of Māori cultural sensitivity, acting as the museum’s only officially contracted Māori cultural advisor. A Māori consensus (Diamond, J. G., 1998-2003) in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, sees the Canberra Times coverage as a ‘circus’ and that David Rankin does not speak for all of Heke’s descendents, a point I revisit later in this thesis. It is indeed a circus of self-interest and superficiality that neglects to acknowledge or successfully negotiate diverse and contrary Māori views in Aotearoa New Zealand or Australia. Consequently, other failures have occurred.
The Canberra Times (Messenger, 2003), for example, has neglected fine details including the correct naming of a Ngapuhi canoe, a point many Canberra Māori people brought to my attention early on the day the article was published (Diamond, J. G, 1998-2003). This misnomer is an insult to many Māori sensibilities. The links that have been established between Agnes Shea and the local Māori community for the pōwhiri would not have occurred if left to the NMA’s current staff alone or the advice of David Rankin who is less familiar with Indigenous Australian culture.

The Canberra Times (and the NMA) could broaden its appreciation of Māori culture beyond displayed as a ‘warrior-bound’ spectacle for its own promotional agenda for Outlawed. Māori male representation prevails and inappropriately speaks for Māori who do not identify with Māori culture in this way. Within this media circus, it appears that NMA’s attention to cultural sensitivity encourages male dominance over my academic research. Perhaps, I have been
shunted out by some idea that as a woman, my opinions, based on sound academic research do not match the significance of Mr Rankin’s genealogical connections. I would add the point that Mr Rankin’s current occupation does not involve academic research, allowing for the questioning relevance of academic research in the organisation processes of museum-based exhibitions.

A New Zealand Herald article (Ansley, 2003), possibly more familiar with various representations of Māori people, provides a more balanced view, attempting to give all parties equal say. However, the question remains: how can the NMA successfully negotiate with all interested parties if it makes to decision to support only one, based on a partial notion of what is culturally appropriate? Their actions in favouring David Rankin’s opinion contribute to an Australia-based predilection for the warrior ‘Māori’ that is a distortion, open to critique through rigorous academic engagement. The question for scholars of Māori culture remains: shall we remain silent on this issue in order to achieve our ultimate goal of adequate Māori representation in the NMA, or not? Events relating to Heke’s ‘arrival’ in Canberra are currently ongoing and will continue to unfold beyond the submission date of this thesis. In its final chapter I refer to the Outlawed exhibition once more, highlighting Heke’s story within series of events that involve raranga, Māori women and Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses.

CHAPTER DISCUSSION

This chapter’s call for engagement with karanga, karakia and raranga focussed on two contextual examples. These were the pari’s significance in my family history and Heke’s representation in the National Museum of Australia.

It was shown that the public display of pari involves associations with belonging to places, family and Māori culture. These associations continue amongst Māori migrants to Australia. Pari, including the unusual Maraeroa example, were discussed in terms of being worthy contributors to Trans-Tasman Māori cultural
discourses, though they have not yet been displayed in museum and art gallery exhibitions.

They were also a pivotal reference in a metaphorical ‘call and prayer’ for increased raranga profiles in institutional displays of Māori culture. As James Clifford (1990: 164) rightly argues: ‘current developments question the very status of museums as historical-cultural theatres of memory’ and the absence of the pari and other raranga items in museum displays provides further impetus for such questioning.

The theme of museum displays was continued in discussing the Outlawed exhibition, currently under negotiation for the NMA. The agency of Māori people joined institutional responses to the exhibition plans. I would argue that although Clifford (1990: 164) may suggest that travelling exhibitions and museum displays may be ‘controlled by the traditional Māori authorities’; the expressions ‘traditional’ and ‘authority’ indicate levels of control over representation that can undergo critique. Even though the movement towards the increasing influence of Indigenous communities in dialogue with museums is a valuable evolution, one cannot forget continuing power plays within those communities. The outcomes of extensive negotiations that contribute to Outlawed will represent multiple and contested interpretations of Heke’s character and objects associated with his life history, including the iconic status he currently holds some 153 years after his death. Raranga, karanga and karakia are part of his continuing story that has now reached Australia. I return to discussing other Māori migrants in Australia in the next chapter.

1 Common Ngāpuhi language uses the word tauta interchangeably with the word taura that appears in dictionary entries meaning a rope or cord (Ryan, 1997: 289).
2 I stipulate Europe here in relation to Christian denominations acknowledging that these have undergone changes during a long history of global travel.
3 Incantation is a word that can also be associated with non-Christian religious activity.
4 I am reminded with this statement of some of my kaumatua and kuia who are inclined to continual and frequent recitations of karakia for a variety of reasons in a vast number of situational contexts. These karakia have
various characteristics such as the inclusion of Christian references on some occasions as well as their complete omission on other occasions.
5 I remain grateful to Dr. McGrath for providing me with this opportunity, amongst others, to be involved with her work.
6 Contention exists amongst various family members over who has ultimate say and might have given permission for Heke to be represented in the exhibition. These opinions were not voiced while Graham Rankin was alive. This may have been a sign of fear of the kaumatua (an issue of mana), ignorance of or inertia about the exhibition plans on the part of detractors that are impossible to accurately and definitively ascertain posthumously.
7 I have been asked by the NMA staff not to reproduce the details of this correspondence within this thesis in the interests of future, and possibly more positive negotiations between it and the AWMM. In the spirit of hope for a brighter future for Māori representation in the NMA and other institutions, I agree to comply with this request.
8 Reporter Tim Watkin (2003) has noted in a recent newspaper article in the New Zealand Herald that David Rankin has given notice that two taonga items will be shortly removed from the Auckland War Memorial Museum. I continue discussion of this matter and the Outlawed exhibition in the final chapter of this thesis.
9 The issue of Heke’s whāriki is also discussed further in the last chapter of this thesis.
CHAPTER 6: ONCE WERE, AND NOW ARE
WEavers IN AUSTRALIA

A QUESTION OF IDENTITY AND DIALOGUE

Inside my kete kahurangi
INTRODUCTION

He kairaranga ahau, no Te Hokianga, Poihäkena hoki. He mihi mahana kia koutou katoa [I am a kairaranga from the Hokianga region and Australia. I warmly greet all of you].

I begin this chapter with a mihi (informal greeting) that I have composed for this chapter. Mihi are usually given in vocalised form as speeches, some formal, some informal, after a karanga in marae-based ceremonies. With my mihi (similarly to many mihi on marae), I demonstrate my own sense of identity and belonging to a transnational context that includes my ancestral homeland of the Hokianga, Northern Aotearoa New Zealand and my migrant home, Australia. My mihi serves as a ceremonious prelude. It indirectly refers to this chapter’s primary concern with Trans-Tasman Indigenous perspectives in relation to raranga.

Having discussed Māori concepts earlier, in relation to raranga and public display of Māori culture, it is now possible in this chapter to focus more intensely on Māori (particularly Ngāpuhi) identity and cultural production within Australia. For reasons that become clearer as this chapter progresses, I also include cross-cultural comparisons with Indigenous Australian weaving and weavers. This chapter therefore comprises Māori experiences involving raranga and identity in Australia and converses with Indigenous Australian cultural discourses.

Section 1 describes a particular Australian social context, and analyses it in terms a Trans-Tasman Indigenous dialogue. Acknowledging the tangata whenua (Indigenous) status of Ngunnawal people in Canberra, Australia’s federal capital city, where I write this thesis, I discuss a ceremony that took place in Canberra in 2001. This ceremony officially opened a monument designed in the shape of a kete, and included Indigenous representatives from Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. Along with its participant role in the opening ceremony, Indigenous Trans-
Tasman co-operation also contributed to the monument’s construction. I build upon these points by demonstrating ways in which ceremony and Trans-Tasman weaving collaborations contribute to Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses.

Section 2 comprises a more extended view of Australian Māori migration from an arena that draws on more personal perspectives about migrant Ngāpuhi identity, than formalised public displays of Māori culture. It begins with an historical reference to Ngāpuhi presence in Sydney, Australia dating back almost some 200 years. A cross-cultural dialogue between Māori and Indigenous Australian viewpoints also takes place in order to highlight the erasure of Trans-Tasman Indigenous perspectives in Australia’s ‘official’ history. Historical links are then traced between my immediate family and a broader Ngāpuhi presence in Australia. Subsequent cultural arrivals, departures and continuities are also discussed, by referring to my own family history and hakaheke (genealogy links) with ancestors of various identity groups, including Indigenous Australians. Fullest attention is therefore paid in this section to the significance of raranga in social constructions of ‘mixed identity’ and the notion of self-imposed exile that can be applied to Māori migrants in Australia.

SECTION 1: AN ANZAC MONUMENT AND A RARANGA-BASED DIALOGUE WITH INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN WEAVERS

A ‘New Zealand’ memorial monument was recently erected in Canberra, a gift from Aotearoa New Zealand to Australia (N.Z High Commission, 2001). It officially commemorates the ‘Anzac’ soldiers (from Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand) who fought in the two World Wars of the 20th century. It is also a symbol of, and a tribute to a bi-nation relationship between Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia that dates back as far as the late 18th century. I was most fortunate that both the memorial’s construction over some months and its unveiling coincided with my scholarship in Canberra. I was able to witness parts of its construction and be present at its ‘launch’.
As I soon discuss in detail, this memorial monument is a prime example not only of where raranga references can be found in Australia, but also how raranga has been incorporated into Trans-Tasman relations and Māori cultural discourses.

**ANZAC PARADE, CANBERRA**

On the day before Anzac Day (24 April) 2001, a large crowd gathered around the crossroad of Anzac Parade and Commonwealth Avenue in Canberra. They tolerated intermittent rain, seeking the best vantage points in expectation of official ceremony. There was ample space for the crowd and the crossroad had been cordoned off specially. The setting was the most appropriate that Canberra could offer. Looking north at the Australian War Memorial museum, then south across Lake Burley Griffin to Old Parliament House and further on to the tall ‘spire’ of the Australian Parliament House on Capital Hill, one can take in a number of national icons. It reflects the work of the architects, Walter Burley-Griffin and Marion Mahoney Griffin, a husband and wife team who designed the city plan, in response to a competition in 1911.
Figure 6.1: Map of Australian War Memorial including museum and Anzac Parade. Canberra, Australia.

A temporary stage had been set up at the end of the large ‘island’ that divides the 1.1-kilometre stretch of Anzac Parade length-wise. The Parade stretches from the War Memorial Museum south towards Lake Burley-Griffin, Canberra’s main artificial lake. There has been strong government support for tributes to Australia’s war-dead, leading to the creation of the Australian War Memorial. The memorial includes a museum and Anzac Parade that is lined with numerous large monuments, commemorating those who served in 20th century wars. These monuments have been gifted for the memorial by organisations (mostly government-based) in Australia and overseas (figure 6.1).
Figure 6.2: New Zealand War Memorial Monument (Aotearoa New Zealand ‘twin), Anzac Parade, Canberra Australia, 2002. Note the arched ‘handle’ and bronze ‘nihonihō’ directly in front of it. Both handle and nihonihō refer to section of a kete. Photograph by Celia Bridgwater and Ursula Frederick, Centre for Cross-cultural Research, ANU.

On the 24th April 2001, the main focus of the crowd gathered on the parade, was on the new large twin (structure comprising two almost identical parts) memorial monument. Guests included the Prime Ministers of Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, John Howard and Helen Clark. The twin monument was erected over the previous months, on opposite sides of Anzac Parade, where it intersects with Commonwealth Avenue (figures 6.2 and 6.3). Two tall (11 metres in height) bronze convex loops rise out of meticulously placed paving slabs. They remain there today as a permanent reminder of the Trans-Tasman wartime link that began with the Anzac troops of World War I.
Figure 6.3: New Zealand War Memorial Monument (Australian ‘twin’), Anzac Drive in Canberra Australia, 2002. Photograph by Celia Bridgewater and Ursula Frederick, Centre for Cross-cultural Research, ANU.

Before shifting to the symbolic significance of raranga in the monument’s shape, I first discuss its opening ceremony that relates to cultural identity and its public display. Such a discussion best proceeds from the fact that the twin monument refers to both Māori and Indigenous Australian cultures and art forms, and that the crowd gathered together for its opening comprised Māori, Indigenous Australians, Pākehā (of Aotearoa New Zealand and ‘White’ Australians). Here I make an assumption based on visible characteristics of the crowd, while acknowledging that people of other identities may have been present without my knowledge.

As described in the previous chapter, many Māori people are keen to act as agents in the various processes attached to Māori cultural representation. As I described earlier, marae protocols give primacy to tangata whenua (hosts) in welcoming ceremonies for guests. Owing to their awareness of the marae-based tikanga, that give primacy to tangata whenua (Indigenous people), Māori migrants to Canberra are usually cognisant of the special claim Indigenous Ngunnawal people have to this region. This very awareness contributes to Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses,
though it is not necessarily given opportunities to be demonstrated publicly.

Although Māori culture was clearly on display during the opening ceremony, it is also true that Māori cultural tenets were over-ridden by other agendas and indeed, other cultural perspectives. Power differentials, especially those existing between the organisers and ‘performers’ of public ceremony, held sway. To explain these points in more detail I now briefly describe my perspectives on the monument’s official opening ceremony.

‘LEST WE FORGET’
Three of my female relatives (two women and one child), and I stood beneath the ‘kete’ handle on the ‘Aboriginal’ Australian side of the Twin Memorial monument on Anzac Parade in Canberra. One of us had asked the Ngunnawal woman elder Matilda House if we Ngāpuhi women could stand on this side rather than the other ‘Māori’ or ‘New Zealand’ side. This request was made on the basis of our children’s blood ties to Indigenous Australians that I discuss more fully later in this chapter. Matilda presided over a small group of Indigenous Australians who had gathered to represent all Indigenous Australians on this day. Although no other ethnic group beside our Māori one asked to join this group, we were warmly welcomed. We became accepted as part of the group once Matilda introduced us to the other members who were many different ‘countries’ (Indigenous territories that may be understood similarly to Māori rohe) around Australia. Our group was greatly outnumbered by others, including the official parties of the attending Prime Ministers. The crowd of official guests in the middle of the avenue exceeded our number, as did a large Māori contingent of the armed forces gathered opposite us, across the parade under the Aotearoa New Zealand ‘twin’.

A group of the local Canberra Māori cultural group was noticeable in the crowd because of their bright yellow and black uniform. Our group did not include any members of Australia’s
armed forces or Government officials. However, it had been asked especially to participate in the ceremony by the organisers. This small group was distinguished by its ceremonial role, clearly defined by its position on the paving of the Australian ‘twin’.

Official proceedings began with the arrival of the two Prime Ministers, and their cavalcade. They were seated on a temporary, raised and sheltered stage at the end of the traffic island, between the twin structures. When the parade of ‘diggers’3, including a small number of Māori and Indigenous Australian servicemen, began their organised march, it was from the side closest to the Aotearoa New Zealand ‘twin’. The march progressed south, down the left side of Anzac Parade towards Commonwealth Avenue. A female member of the Aotearoa New Zealand Armed Forces performed a karanga as they progressed, firstly toward and then past the Aotearoa New Zealand twin. As they approached, Māori soldiers broke into a resounding haka that clearly announced a Māori presence within the Aotearoa New Zealand armed forces, now on Australian ‘soil’. In an impromptu gesture, male members of the local Māori culture club, from amongst the crowd, joined in the haka.

Anzac soldiers and their families were therefore acknowledged with karanga, haka and general applause during the march past. The Prime Ministers, along with other dignitaries also warmly acknowledged the war veterans as, turning onto Commonwealth Avenue, they marched passed the raised stage. Turning right again to march back up the parade toward the War Memorial Museum the veterans were met by the sound of a didjeridu. One of the young men on our side, under Matilda’s direction, was responsible for this aural announcement of an Indigenous Australian presence, and received expressions of thanks from the marchers. This announcement of Indigenous presence via a musical instrument was not, strictly speaking, Ngunnawal, as the didjeridu is ‘from the Top End of the Northern Territory and north-eastern Western Australia …[having] become a pan-Aboriginal icon’ (Garde, 2000: 344).
My relatives and I discussed later how emotionally significant this experience was in our lives and how proud we felt, standing with this small group of people intent on making their cultural presence known. However as I explain later, the presence of the didjeridu, aside from its effective role in announcing Indigenous presence, provides a further example of ways in which cultural production changes over time and according to the prevailing social context. The ceremony had a three-fold character comprising Indigenous Australian, Māori and Pākehā (including ‘White’ Australian) presence. The centre stage area, however, symbolically represented the cultural position of most power. Not only did it have the best shelter on the day, it also staged its own rehearsed and written programme of speeches and songs (New Zealand High Commission, 2001). Whilst efforts were made by the organisers to include representatives of both Indigenous groups, Australian Aboriginal and Māori, Australian and Aotearoa New Zealand parliamentary officials primarily set and sanctioned the ceremony. The haka and didjeridu were vocalised responses to this organisational hegemony.

There were other instances of cultural hegemony also afoot. In terms of Māori tikanga, for example, the order of cultural vocalisation was a departure from the usual marae procedure. As explained earlier, formal proceedings on marae in Aotearoa New Zealand always begin with the actions of the tangata whenua including the initial karanga. If that essential element of ceremony initiation had been followed strictly in the proceedings of the monument’s opening, the didjeridu should have been the initial demonstration of Indigenous culture during the march past rather than the last.

At one stage in the proceedings, I felt compelled to comment to Matilda House that the ‘Anzacs’ were seemingly still ‘across the ditch’, in Aotearoa New Zealand, having not yet reached Ngunnawal land. She wryly responding by promising to give them a rousing welcome once they had arrived. We were both quite aware that the
whole ceremony was taking place on what is symbolically at least acknowledged as Ngunnawal land. The primacy of Māori karanga and haka at the beginning of the ceremony could therefore be considered a Māori cultural imposition on Ngunnawal land and people.

Uneven power relations are manifest in the prevailing colonialist hegemony of the New Zealand High Commission and other Government sectors that organised the event. They can also be found in the inability of Māori residents in Canberra who are aware of marae protocols, to reverse the ceremony proceedings, giving Ngunnawal people primacy. Such dominant and subordinate positions also interplayed with the visiting Māori groups, not necessarily acquainted with Indigenous Australian cultures, yet accepting a leading role above Ngunnawal. That the official podium was passed before the arriving at the Indigenous Australian side indicates an insensitivity of organisers and Māori participants. Much of this sleight-of-hand is due to ignorance and lack of prior communication, more than blatant disrespect. It indicated the need for more informed consideration of ceremonies involving Trans-Tasman Indigenous peoples, in future.

In this description of events, I do not wish to imply that any negative treatment of the Indigenous representatives was deliberate. However, more informed decisions could have been made in organising this ceremony. A simple reversal of the order of proceedings, based on Māori protocols, so that they began with the tangata whenua (Indigenous Australian) people may have made a valuable and more respectful contribution. This kind of informed decision-making would have paid more respect to the Ngunnawal people.

It could have also been supplemented by additional material beyond that provided in the official handout. For example, a more substantial introduction to the Indigenous Australian and Māori contributions may have more effectively enlightened spectators, participants and institutional representatives, of all cultures involved.
in the ceremony. On many occasions the Ngunnawal people have been called upon to open official ceremonies. Matilda House has clearly stated her willingness to initiate the proceedings of such occasions on behalf of 'people of this land' yet the primacy of Ngunnawal culture has not prevailed in these official proceedings, making their pre-arranged Indigenous cultural presence appear contrived and tokenistic.

I do not wish to suggest that Māori tikanga must necessarily impose itself on other cultures. It is more an option that could be referred to, at least as a guiding framework, in the process of paying Indigenous people all due respect. Of course, the failure of some Māori people present to adhere to this tikanga also indicates a departure from this cultural ideal. Like most participants they may have had very little say in the matter. This fact places the hegemony of the organisers (largely Pākehā) at issue and open to criticism.

Equally, it should not be presumed that Indigenous people involved in this ceremony were without active agency. It is clear, for example, that the use of the didjeridu as emblematic of Indigenous Australian presence was used to reinforce a specifically Ngunnawal profile during the proceedings. Nevertheless the issue of ownership of Ngunnawal territory and Top End didjeridu resonates with a postcolonial cultural flux that includes conflicts over cultural authority, land and other cultural property (such as the didjeridu) and changing social values.

During the monument opening ceremony, Māori people also adapted to an official programme of pre-planned events that could be viewed as inappropriate by other Māori people including their counterparts in Aotearoa New Zealand. However, the Australian context of this ceremony also allowed for innovations that encouraged new kinds of interaction between diverse groups. It is therefore necessary to not only be aware of traditional values that can change with time, but also that their adoption and manifestation can depend on the place in which such ceremony occurs. Powerful organising committees working amongst people with diverse
culture-based opinions can influence and alter the character of ceremonial displays. Their performance in official ceremonies may include a selectivity in which a variety of cultural representations are denied, subsumed or forgotten, prompting misinterpretations of such cultures by an uninformed audience.

The history of raranga can be likened to these observations of the New Zealand monument’s opening ceremony. Raranga has also undergone similar changes to this kind of ceremony over time and in various places. It has been influenced by new technology and opposing forces that at times threatened to render it obsolete. It has undergone change in revivalist politically driven campaigns and innovative redesign in public institutions as well as in private homes. Its important place in Māori cultural production has been misinterpreted, forgotten or denied in various art-based discourses. Nevertheless, it survives, albeit in altered postcolonial forms, much like the opening ceremony of the monument clearly demonstrated the presence and survival of Māori and Indigenous Australian cultures, despite the passage of time and the ravages of colonialist hegemony.

**A RARANGA MONUMENT**

From observations of the monument’s opening ceremony I now shift perspective to the monument’s design and its references to raranga and Indigenous Australian weaving. Wellington-based Kingsley Baird and Studio of Pacific Architecture of Aotearoa New Zealand designed the monument as winners of a Trans-Tasman competition held in 1996 (N.Z High Commission, 2001: 2). The loops that rise up so commandingly and which, since construction, have attracted the errant eye of drivers-by represent the handles of kete. Their giant formations are scored with crisscross lines that represent a braided whiri (figure 6.4). Whiri (multi-strand braids of fibre) often serve as handles for those more ‘life-size’ and fibrous kete renditions that people carry. I return to whiri, as a discursive metaphor in the next chapter.
Another reference to the kete can be seen in a series of pointed bronze structure immediately in front of the ‘handles’ (figure 6.2). These structures refer to the top-section of kete that kairaranga refer to as nihoniho (teeth). An example of kete nihoniho may be seen in figure 6.5.

The monument’s twin-sectioned paving is also based on raranga. Its designs on the New Zealand side of the twin monument are based on the whakatū (two strands over and two strands under) form of diagonally woven raranga (figures 6.6 and 6.7). The logic behind the whakatū weave serves as a metaphor for the interweaving of two Indigenous cultures (Maihi, 2000-3).
Figure 6.6: Detail of my kete mahi showing whakatū (over and under 2 strands) form of diagonal raranga.

The colours chosen for each side of the twin monument differ depending on which country (Australia or Aotearoa New Zealand) is symbolically represented.

Figure 6.7: Aotearoa New Zealand paving design for the Anzac Monument, Canberra (design plan courtesy of Toi Te Rito Maihi) inspired by whakatū diagonal raranga.

Hence, the paving colours for Aotearoa New Zealand to the right of a viewer who stands facing the Australian War Memorial museum are muted greys and greens (figure 6.2). These colours evoke those grey-greens of kōrari and other native flora of Aotearoa New Zealand. The grey river stones often used to anchor raranga work-in-
progress are also brought to mind. Its designer is Toi Te Rito Maihi, my kaikako from Kohewhata Marae (figure 6.7).

The colours to the same viewer’s right are best described as earthy reds, beiges and darker greys. They evoke of the desert textures, a feature of Australian landscapes (figures 6.3 and 6.8). The representation of Australian desert landscapes contrast sharply with the coolness of the other Aotearoa New Zealand ‘twin’, yet the presence of a proverb in Māori language (figure 6.8) establishes their link. No Indigenous Australian language equivalent appears on any part of the monument. In this way the dominance of Māori references over Indigenous Australian is firmly established, confirming its Aotearoa New Zealand origins as a gift to Australia.

Figure 6.8: Paving on ‘Australian’ side of New Zealand twin memorial monument, including whakataukī (proverb). Photograph taken by Ursula Frederick and Celia Bridgewater, Centre for Cross-cultural Research, ANU.

However, direct references to Indigenous Australian weaving are also present in the paving of the monument. As the images in figures 6.8 and 6.9 visually demonstrate, the colours of the Australian twin’s paving share the colours of Daisy Nandjungdanga’s bahti (baskets).
Owing to time constraints and resource limitations, my doctoral fieldwork was not enhanced by visits to the Northern Territory of Australia. However, the fact that Māori people visited Maningrida in the early 1990s (Mundine, 2003) encourages me to stress the importance of future research into Trans-Tasman Indigenous weaving collaborations in all areas of Australia.

AN INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN CONNECTION
In contemplating Indigenous Australian weaver Daisy Nadjundanga's s4 paving design, I gain an opportunity to engage with the cultural production of Indigenous Australians, specifically their weaving. In doing so I am encouraged by the increased exposure Indigenous Australian weaving receives in recent art publications. A very good example can be found in The Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture (Kleinert and Neale (Eds), 2000) that provides a substantial introductory discussion of weaving and weavers from across Australia. Examining both the remaining vestiges of more traditional weaving forms, as well as more recent innovations, it makes observations that may also be applied to raranga. For example the relationship between woven object and maker is described:
...It is particularly instructive to observe the quality of life and the particular environment so eloquently encapsulated in the objects. This is not to deny that there is a process of transformation at work, but to imply that the carefully chosen elements reflect the life and context of the maker. Without exception in Aboriginal fibre work, textured surfaces invite the viewer to touch. Often a shift in texture signals a change in technique or a structural variation in the work. Apart from the markers of sight and touch, the sense of smell is an integral part of the appreciation of the piece, especially with some fibres and especially when the work is fresh. (Hamby and Mellor, 2000: 370)

This observation complements a seminal doctoral thesis (Hamby, 2001) that provides an in-depth study of Indigenous Arnhem Land weaving including that of Daisy Nadjungdanga5 and Indigenous women from Maningrida in Australia’s Northern Territory. This thesis is without precedent in its focus on Indigenous Australian weaving and woven forms. Apart from its importance to Australian art discourses it also points to potential opportunities for trans-Tasman Indigenous weaving comparisons.

Part of the experience of raranga, as discussed earlier, in its making and consequent usage as utility or artwork is to do with senses including sight, hearing and touch. The smell of the fibre, for example, provides an ambience that many kairaranga prefer to work in. This preference sometimes prevails regardless of the spatial dimensions and architecture of the room in which they work. These sensate features of raranga praxis can be therefore compared to Australian scholars of Indigenous Australian weaving Louise Hamby and Doreen Mellor’s observations (2000: 370), not to mention the actual weaving of Daisy Nadjungdanga and other Indigenous Australian weavers.

The New Zealand monument on Anzac Parade in Canberra is nevertheless part of an already existing Trans-Tasman Indigenous dialogue about weaving. The innovations apparent in the monument’s sculptural references to raranga forms exemplify cross-cultural interactions. These references no doubt reflect the designers’ creativity but also relate to active innovation in weaving practice
amongst Indigenous women in both Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. The spread of basket making in Australia, for example is in some instances quite a recent phenomenon. As Ngaanyatjarra woman weaver Winnie Woods (2000: 383-384) points out, whereas baskets were added to an active use of fibre by Indigenous Australian weavers for other objects, including shoes and skirts, only as recently as the mid-1990s did their popularity rapidly spread in the Central Desert region of Australia.

Raranga did not have such vast deserts to cross in its dissemination. Its re-emergence in recent years is in some ways more comparable with Australian textile designer Margaret Maynard’s (2000: 390) observations of the changes in Indigenous Australian textile and dress design that has occurred in more urbanised contexts. Maynard makes it clear that Indigenous weaver’s earlier preference for introduced kinds of textile work such as knitting and crochet has gradually made space for a revival of more traditional forms. Though Maynard’s observations can find connections with my focus on pari and cloaks (as raranga textile forms), they also pertain to innovative departures from earlier kete and basketry forms. These forms have now transferred into the innovative design by an Indigenous woman weaver, Daisy Nadjungdanga, of the paving of a monument within the urban setting of Australia’s capital city.

Opinions may vary on the cultural authenticity of both sections of the monument’s paving design. For example, the paving could be considered as a slight on tradition prompted by a colonialist agenda to assert nationalist pride where those very nations, Australia and New Zealand are a European-based construction. It may equally be seen as a profoundly cultural and political statement that asserts the importance of both customary and innovative Indigenous creative design. This possibility would be similar to the cultural significance of the pari in Māori women’s senses of belonging that preoccupies me elsewhere in this thesis. The current burgeoning academic and curatorial focus on weaving in Aotearoa New Zealand
and Australia has yet to explore these possibilities critically and substantially.

This kind of exploration is important and necessary given the current dearth of specialised and published engagement with raranga and Indigenous Australian weaving compared with 'men's art'. Southeastern Indigenous Australian art, for example, provides ample opportunity for comparative study with raranga discourse given its experiences of European colonisation:

Although Aboriginal people in the southern States have experienced the longest and most intense history of colonisation, they have never ceased to remain in historical continuity with the past and to engage actively with a contemporary colonial reality. In the south-east, no less than elsewhere, Aboriginal art is highly significant as an expression of identity and difference and as a means of engaging in dialogue with settler society (Kleinert, 2000: 240).

Such experiences closely concur with Māori culture, identity and art since colonisation. Much of this common struggle by Māori and Indigenous Australians relates to cultural property and representation issues especially those that depend on government cultural policy and commercial enterprises such as tourism and the erection of national monuments.

Indigenous Australian women (including weavers) and their work has been described in relation to their palpable yet invisible presence in Australian art/craft discourse when compared to Indigenous Australian men's cultural production (Broun, 1995: 113-4). They have also been described as carrying 'the double burden of colonisation: racism and sexism (De Ishtar, 1994: 152). A link with craft work and social disadvantage amongst Indigenous Australian women has also been observed that runs along similar lines I have conveyed as part of many Māori women's experiences:

Just as the work of writers, poets and song-writers is affected by historical processes and the social environment, so, too, is the craft work of Aboriginal women, who have endured sexual abuse, exploitation, slave and cheap labour and forced separation from families. Today they suffer from high unemployment, low health status, emotional trauma, high imprisonment rates and high death rates (Broun, 1995: 116).
Nevertheless, as with raranga in Aotearoa New Zealand, Indigenous weaving has survived in Australia. This weaving is often imbued with ‘a sacred quality...a religious significance’ (Broun, 1995: 113). I continue with this focus on weaving, spirituality and the environment later, but here it is relevant to note that conversations between kairaranga and Indigenous women weavers can definitely take place on the basis of social disadvantage under European colonialism. Such conversations are by nature postcolonial in acknowledging this history as well as the presence and importance of weavers within current Trans-Tasman Indigenous realities.

**TRANS-TASMAN CROSS-CULTURAL WEAVING**

Though rare, some publicly accessible reports have been made recently on the subject of weaving co-operatives between Indigenous Australian and Māori women. The recent Adelaide Festival of Art held in 2002, for example, promoted weaving and fostered Trans-Tasman weaving collaborations between a group of Indigenous weavers and visiting Māori women. Both groups comprised well-known weavers in their respective home countries (Meehan, 2002). Their meeting was preceded by a workshop at Camp Coorong, South Australia which ‘brought Māori and Ngarrindjeri weavers together to teach their traditional skills and talk about the meaning of weaving in their cultures to a group of mostly non-Aboriginal students, artists and curators’ (Lawrence, 1999:1).

These reports indicate paths for future enquiry into Trans-Tasman Indigenous co-operation that can begin with explorations, such as those conveyed in this thesis, of raranga and other forms of weaving. Trans-Tasman comparisons of weaving need to incorporate social disadvantages suffered by Indigenous women in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia since colonisation but such comparisons can also be extended globally to other Indigenous women weavers.

**INTERIM SUMMARY**

In beginning at the site of a War Memorial monument in Canberra, this section has consolidated my approach to raranga in Australian
contexts. My focus on ceremony attached to the monument’s official opening highlighted the fact of cultural dialogue between kairaranga and Indigenous Australian weavers. It also discussed uneven power relations within contexts of official ceremonies that indicate tokenistic and ill-informed planning and management. These shortcomings were discussed in similar light to cultural hegemony that marginalises raranga in Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses.

Features of the monument’s kete-based design, such as references to kete and bahti also provided an opportunity to discuss Trans-Tasman Indigenous collaborations and their potential implications for future research. From this position, I now broaden perspective to include a larger historical framework of Māori cultural production in Australia and its relationship to ongoing political struggles.

SECTION 2: MY ISLAND HOME, AUSTRALIA

Trans-Tasman Indigenous connections found in Canberra in the form of a raranga-based war memorial monument as well as its opening ceremony, serve as reminders of other issues regarding Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses. Of particular interest in this section are issues surrounding the presence of Māori migrants in Australia since 19th century British colonisation. Similarly to Indigenous Australian narratives, those of Māori migrants in Australia over the intervening years have not yet been fully incorporated into Australia’s official history. Closely linked to this unacknowledged history is the undeniable though unpublished, existence of shared identities and identifications amongst Māori and Indigenous Australians. They currently inform postcolonial Trans-Tasman Indigenous political struggles and cultural production. I begin this discussion of Trans-Tasman Indigenous history, identity and political struggle by referring to Sydney, Australia’s largest city.
POIHÄKENA (SYDNEY): A BRIEF INTER-CULTURAL CONVERSATION
To this day Māori people refer to Sydney and wider Australia, as Poihäkena, a transliteration of ‘Port Jackson’, Sydney’s main harbour. This name is based on a recollection, orally transmitted. Passed down through generations of Māori people are references (Rankin Family, 2001-2) to the international travels of Māori rangatira (chiefs), including those of Ngāpuhi rangatira Hongi Hika at the turn of the 19th century (Ramsey, 2002). Although some mention has been recently made (Denoon, Mein-Smith and Wyndham, 2000: 67-8) of Māori visitors to Australia and their attitudes toward Indigenous Australians in colonial times, this has not been complemented with any substantial published engagement with other accounts of Ngāpuhi visits to Australia, such as that of Hongi Hika. The yet-to-be published Trans-Tasman oral histories of Hongi Hika mirror the erasure of Indigenous narratives from official histories worldwide.

Whilst this thesis is limited in its capacity to radically alter that situation, it remains concerned with similar discursive silences in published accounts of Ngāpuhi presence in Australia that date back to the colonial times in which Hongi Hika lived. These silences shroud Ngāpuhi and other Māori migrants currently living in Australia along with their many forms of cultural production, including raranga. Somewhat ironically, these silences ‘speak’ loudly of Australian Māori marginalisation from Australia’s histories that privilege non-Indigenous subjects and accounts.

This sanitised history privileged colonialist myths that did not adequately or accurately acknowledge Indigenous people in Australia. It failed to acknowledge the devastating consequences of colonialism for Indigenous Australians. The Indigenous Australian artist Gordon Bennett expresses his view of this mythologised official history thus:

The dominant myth of Australia was the history of exploration and colonization: the spirit of the explorer, the pioneer, and the settler was a spirit in which all Australians could share ... I also learnt something of the hidden histories of colonial Australia, of
the outrageous violence perpetuated in the name of ‘civilization’ (Bennett, 1996: 166 and 168).

Dennis Foley (2001; 117), a descendant of the tangata whenua (Gai-mariagal, Indigenous to Sydney) of Poihākena provides a similar perspective:

Our old ones continue to go to their graves, clutching the knowledge often unspoken and unrevealed. This wealth of information is wrapped tightly within the scar tissue hidden within their hearts and minds, caused by the relentless hatred and ignorance of the Redcoats and their descendants. Two hundred and twelve years of contempt by what was once thought to be the superior race, their genocide towards our people in the name of their King and Christian God. The loss of knowledge with the passing of the old ones is perhaps the greatest crime suffered by our current generations.

Foley (2001: 117) further summarises Gai-mariagal political struggle that includes people of other cultures:

We are fighting for recognition, we are fighting for acceptance. We are fighting for the continuation of our lives, for without our cultural knowledge we are a people with nothing ... Perhaps others will join in the rejuvenation of our culture and the recording of our knowledge ... There are good people out there, white and black. Let us hope we can work together to prolong our existence in harmony.

An affirmation of a Trans-Tasman Indigenous political struggle can be gained from Foley’s viewpoint. This struggle currently wears the blanket but separated labels ‘Indigenous Australian’ and ‘Māori’ but in fact comprises a rich and varied number of different facets and interwoven dimensions. For example, Māori cultural discourses on raranga and women that I have discussed so far are part of this struggle that draws attention to the shared plight of Indigenous peoples in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. A current hiatus in published discourse on shared Indigenous struggles of this kind may yet be filled by critical engagement co-operatively undertaken in both countries.

I would therefore add to Foley’s (2001: 117) list of ‘good people out there, white and black’, who help in this struggle for Indigenous Australian cultural continuation, those who are ‘grey’,

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referring to the voices of people who are neither totally ‘white’ nor ‘black’ by genealogy, political persuasion or deliberate hegemonic complicity. Raranga discourse that fosters inclusivity of all cultures is an indispensable part of this culturally integrated effort. In order to clarify this connection between raranga and political struggle further, I now discuss deeper implications of ‘mixed’ Trans-Tasman Indigenous identity.

**ESSENTIALISM AND STEREOTYPES IN AUSTRALIAN MĀORI IDENTITY**

At the outset of an examination of Māori migrant identity in Australia it is necessary to engage with currently existing essentialisms and stereotypes. Australian Māori people interact in various ways with combinations of internally based essentialism as well as stereotyping from non-Māori people. For example, participation in Australian Māori cultural performance groups manifests cultural collaborations amongst Māori migrants who enjoy ritualised, rehearsed displays of songs, chants and dances. Tikanga (Māori customary laws) associated with these rituals and rehearsed displays do not preclude the participation of non-Māori groups, though the primacy of Māori culture is continuously affirmed. There is, however, a tendency amongst some performers of these ritualised and rehearsed affirmations to essentialise and reify Māori identity in the process of acknowledging genealogical and geographic connections, to the exclusion of others. Recognition of the importance of Māori rituals can consequently, translate into notions of Māori cultural superiority.

Belief in special difference in Australia can lead to uncritical and ill-informed acceptance of Māori cultural ideals, such as the notion of male Māori superiority or warrior status, over Māori women. This kind of acceptance is soporific and soothing, to borrow terms from feminist cultural theorist, Trinh T Minh-Ha (1989: 88), especially for those Māori who feel powerless or disadvantaged in a capitalist Western society. Such notions are often based on a narrow, rather than a critically thought-through version of Māori culture.
They can be used as an excuse for crime can also adopt the notion of savagery or predilection for 'uncivilised' behaviour that depend on essentialist stereotypes of Māori identity. A mix of knowledge, sometimes first hand considering Māori often come to Australia seeking a better life, of socio-economic disadvantages, and popular representations of Māori people, such as the internationally distributed movie, Once Were Warriors (Tamahori, Scholes, Brown and Duff, 1994)) adds fuel to this essentialism.

Notions of superior strength, good looks and predilection for law breaking amongst Māori people are sometimes shared by non-Māori people in their stereotyped estimations of Māori people, which can be reinforced by media coverage. As discussed earlier in relation to the Outlawed exhibition, the nationally circulated newspaper The Australian, for example, has printed two articles (Australian Magazine, 1995; Raffaele, 2003), written by non-Māori reporters, over a span of eight years that focus on Māori men within a framework of warrior-based discourse. In both articles the social disadvantages of Māori people in Aotearoa are emphasised in relation to Māori men's roles in contributing to, and finding solutions to such problems.

Only occasionally are feelings of shared Māori identity reinforced by critical discussion and detailed reference to memorised or written genealogical tables. A game of sport or the last or next party or the 'job' or any other business of the day takes precedence as a topic of conversation, though consciousness of being Māori within a group of Māori is rarely abandoned. A desire to learn more about Māori culture is also rarely abandoned, though competing education curricula, work and family commitments, for example, can frustrate many attempts.

There is a commensurate lack of substantial and sustained published academic discourse in Australia concerning Māori migrants that has led me to coin the phrase 'invisible migrant' in a conference paper (Diamond, J. G., 2002b) on Māori residence in Australia. Most significantly for my raranga-based research, there is
no record of engagement through popular press or scholarly publication with Australian Māori cultural issues concerning Māori women. I now show that many aspects of Māori migrant experience in Australia justify critical engagement that may in future enter published discourses in Australia and further afield.

**Māori Migration: A Liminal Condition**

As indicated earlier, my critical engagement with Trans-Tasman Māori identity-based discourses and their relationship to raranga relies heavily on my family’s presence in Australia. My immediate family’s history within Australia is now some twenty years old. It is set within a wider context of Trans-Tasman Māori migration that is at least around 200 years old and contiguous with ‘White’ settlement in Australia (Beteille, 1998: 188) and Aotearoa New Zealand. To examine this presence adequately it is important to firstly note that iwi-based affiliations can persist in Australian contexts. From this perspective it is then possible to progress further into the realms of ‘mixed’ Australian Indigenous cultural identity.

**Iwi-Based Identity in Australia**

Māori cultural identifications can depend on tribal affiliations in Australia, as they do in Aotearoa New Zealand, and on the amount of time spent away from ‘home’ in Aotearoa New Zealand. Ngāpuhi migrants in Australia, for example, may distinguish themselves apart from other Māori migrants despite their willingness to participate in ‘pan-iwi’ Māori cultural performance groups. Opinions on assertions of Ngāpuhi or any other Māori identity may vary according to gender, age and personality. Ngāpuhi, women may agree in principle with some aspect of their identity, for example, and be opposed by younger or older Ngāpuhi women. Ngāpuhi men may also oppose them. Notions of Ngāpuhi identity and home-place gain their momentum in the narration of Māori migrant (or movement) experiences that can be summarised in the following terms:

[The] basic relationship between identity (knowledge, perception) and movement: the universal way in which human beings conceive of their lives in terms of a moving-between –
between identities, relations, people, things, groups, societies, cultures, environments, [is] as a dialectic between movement and fixity. It is in and through the continuity of movement that human beings continue to make themselves at home; seeing themselves continually in stories, and continually telling the stories of their lives, people recount their lives to themselves and others as movement (Rapport and Dawson, 1998: 33).

None the less, the fracturing of sources of knowledge, along with distancing amongst relatives due to migration, is a part of my family’s reality and that of many other Trans-Tasman Indigenous people. It is small wonder when a history of cultural alienation leads to an over-essentialising of cultural identity in Indigenous political struggles against European hegemony in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. The cultural significance of being away from a ‘home’ iwi and rohe may be felt much more keenly in Australia, resulting in a stronger tendency to freeze essentialist understandings of Māori identity, and an unwillingness to change them, regardless of the injustices to ‘outside’ groups, that this adherence may cause. It can equally result in an abandonment of Māori culture.

For some people, including those of ‘mixed-iwi’ or ‘mixed-race’ Māori descent, their cultural identities are flexible, fugitive or context-dependant, if not totally unnecessary, yet their life stories remain important to them. Their personal narratives are significant in a self-defined notion of being Māori in an Australian ‘home’ that is away from ‘home’ in Aotearoa New Zealand. This doubled sense of being ‘at home’ may also be reinforced by frequent or occasional return trips to Aotearoa New Zealand.

A FAMILY OF MIXED IDENTITIES
As an example of contributing factors to Trans-Tasman Indigenous identity I refer again to my family’s history and views on cultural identity. There has never been an imperative amongst my immediate family members to marry (and produce children) ‘within the tribe’. One salient piece of advice regarding matrimony came from my parents, as it might from many parents in the world. Namely: ‘if you marry at all, marry right’. While such advice may or may not go
unheeded amongst us, my siblings and I have children of many ages, personalities and, most relevant to this chapter, different genealogical ties with many ‘races’. The majority of our children are boys, including my only child.

Through genealogical connection, we may publicly identify as Ngāpuhi, though some of us do not do so automatically. We do not necessarily, or consistently, identify with any constituent of Māori at all, depending on a particular moment and social context. Therefore, our collective identification cannot be taken for granted. We are all often more likely to describe ourselves in terms of our occupations or genders rather than according any primacy to race based or ethnicity based concepts. Capitalist endeavours influence my family as they do many others, Māori and non-Māori, and so our occupational designation often prevails as an identity marker. Religious affiliations have been a factor in my family’s identity formation though this kind of identity marker lost favour for various reasons. One important reason was the fact of us children no longer feeling obliged to meet our parents’ wishes for us to attend church, as we reached maturity.

There is no enforcement of a race or ethnicity-based mould on to our children. This is the case regardless of the fact all of my immediate family knows that we are Ngāpuhi. This knowledge at least amounts to partial acquaintance with the fact that much of our ancestry is of the Ngāpuhi iwi. Other Ngāpuhi families in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand have similar attitudes and physical appearances as ours. I know Ngāpuhi families who differ from us in many ways though they identify similarly as Ngāpuhi and have more archetypal physical features such as black hair and brown eyes and skin that can generally be defined as ‘Māori’. Other families who could very well identify as Ngāpuhi, genealogically speaking, prefer their religious denomination as an identity marker. Here is an extract from various impromptu and informal conversations I have had with Māori people residing in Australia:

Question: How would you describe yourself to other people?
Answer: Māori or Pākehā?

Q: Either.

A: Well it depends on who asks and how they ask it. Some people should mind their own business. But if the Mormons come to the door, I say I’m Catholic. Course, to our [Church] Minister, we’re Church of England.

Q: Does it matter that they’re Māori or Pākehā, the person asking?

A: Yeah, because some Aussies mix you up with other people so you have to tell them that you’re a Māori. The bros [brothers, fellow Māori] know you’re Māori, so I’d probably tell them what I do for a living instead. Anyway I’m only telling you this cos you’re doing that university work. Usually it doesn’t even bother me.

Q: What about being Ngāpuhi?

A: Well we only talk about that with Māori in the know eh [don’t you think]? Otherwise what’s the point? Pākehās think we’re all the same anyway.

It is clear in some cases such that Ngāpuhi identity is not equated with action of any particular kind. It is enough for some people ‘just to be’ Ngāpuhi without any commensurate need to display or assert this identity. There is less of a preoccupation amongst these people with how one becomes or continues to be Ngāpuhi as most settle for their hakaheke (genealogy), whether it is known of generally or in detail, as the only necessary qualifier. Verbal expressions in private and public contexts often refer to parents, grandparent as in the comments ‘we’re Ngāpuhi through my mother’ or ‘I’m Ngāpuhi through both my parents and their parents’. Apart from these generalised details, the only action necessary for the survival of Ngāpuhi, the argument follows, is procreation and staying alive. Intermarriage with other Māori tribes or non-Māori is regarded as having no adverse effect, provided Ngāpuhi ties (even in sketchy detail) continue to be recalled amongst progeny.
However, such examples should not necessarily be seen as denoting a need for cultural action merely to rest passively on a bed of ‘blood matters’ essentialism where exact details do not matter. Sometimes, they can be seen in relation to other variables including dysfunctional family backgrounds and even criminal activities (as perpetrators and victims) that prompt departure from Aotearoa New Zealand for a freer more anonymous life. In this sense I would agree with the observation that:

One of the more complicating factors about identity is that diversity between Māori groups, iwi [tribe], hapu [sub-tribe], whanau [closely related family group], and between different contexts that underpin what counts as identity, is often overlooked. [Quoting Stuart Hall who] reiterates those diversities when he states that...the politics of living identity through difference is the politics of recognising that all of us are composed of multiple social identities, not of one. That we are all complexly constructed through different categories of different antagonisms, and these may have the effect of locating us socially in multiple positions of marginality and subordination, but which do not yet operate on us in the same way. It is also to recognise that any counter-politics of the local which attempts to organise people through their diversity of identity has to be a struggle which is conducted positionally (Johnston, 1998:7).

Although I have discussed in Chapter 1, the multi-dimensionality of Ngāpuhi identity in Aotearoa New Zealand rather than Australia, this observation serves equally well in Australia.

An easier lifestyle where material goods, such as houses, cars and furniture, and a commensurate increase of work opportunity, can be acquired more easily was also a powerful motive for some departures from Aotearoa New Zealand to Australia. Often this same circumstance motivates people to become involved in social circles connected to work or other leisure activities rather than those that actively assert Ngāpuhi identity. My family members all have in our liberal society today a free choice of identity that rather than being necessarily collective, often boils down to an individual decision. This decision may change. It also may be fiercely defended for an extended period of time if not a lifetime. Each decision is made on
the basis of many different factors such as personal pride, a desire to belong to a group or fear of not belonging and party or personal politics that in some though not all cases respond to public opinion. Some of these decisions are made on a ‘spur-of-the-moment’ basis, whilst others are very considered and develop over many years. Some cannot be taken so strictly as ‘decisions’ because they are more ‘taken-for-granted’ ways of thinking that the statement ‘I don’t know, I was born that way’ neatly encapsulates.

Ngāpuhi identity in Australia can be plotted along gendered lines. The women in my family, for example, are likely to discuss issues they consider as ‘Māori’ with me as they are aware of my interests. We often make more personal statements concerning attitudes to other Māori and Māori identity generally in terms more intimate than those that we would share with our male relatives do. My identity-based conversations with my sisters tend to revolve around concerns for our children’s present and future welfare, as we are all mothers. Although the majority of my brothers are godparents, they are not biological parents and this tends to affect their concerns over Ngāpuhi identity differently. For example they tend to focus on their own identity, self-reflexively, rather than on our children. Gender-based differences within our family exemplify the need to examine intricacies of opinion within a group for a full appreciation of what it is to be Ngāpuhi in Australia.

LEAVING: AT THE AIRPORT AND OTHER PLACES
With these points in mind I continue with some moments of my family history that exemplify departures and arrivals not only in terms of place, but also of identity. Ngāpuhi identity in Australia is in this way confirmed as a socially created value system that includes interwoven, complex and contradictory cultural identifications and identities. At particular issue are notions of belonging to groups of people and to an abstract, rather than concrete, idea of ‘home’.
It was commonly agreed, if not openly discussed, amongst members of my immediate family for many years that Dad was a ‘stick in the mud’. I remember asking him why he never saw fit to move away from Mount Maunganui, my birthplace in Aotearoa New Zealand. My question was probably equivalent to many teenage moans of boredom with living in a small town and involved dreams of moving to a big exciting city away from the familiarity and mundanity of ‘home’. My father replied that he was quite content to stay put. It took me many more years to leave that town mostly on my own volition though the hope of academic success influenced my parents into letting me go.

To this day I believe in the university’s ability to raise my aspirations and to widen my perspective of the world. University comprises a good deal of my composite and personal understanding of ‘home’. Waikato University in the riverside town of Hamilton, Aotearoa New Zealand was very new when I began my first academic year there. After a three-year degree, during which I saw a number of fellow students leave Auckland Airport for Australia, I felt I was ready to leave Aotearoa New Zealand myself.

My decision to leave was influenced by a number of circumstances including having a friend to depart with who knew people in Sydney. There was also some much-needed financial backing available from my parents as a reward for attaining my first degree plus my own savings. I was also determined to leave my loved ones regardless of the emotional pain, my own and theirs, which my departure entailed. Although I had seen fellow students leave for Australia their departure was usually a quiet affair where undeniably sad (and no doubt at least slightly worried) parents gave a brief though affectionate farewell. These departing friends and their families were Pākehā denoting a numerical imbalance between Māori and Pākehā student enrolments and the fact of a majority Pākehā population in Aotearoa New Zealand. These friends were more likely to have the funds for the flight than my Māori friends were. This microcosmic example resonates with the work
opportunity and income disparities between Pākehā and Māori people.

I am, however, referring particularly to a smaller group of the country’s total population, university students, who unlike many of their contemporaries generally do not have independent, stable or substantial incomes. There was, nevertheless, a commensurate unequal opportunity to travel that favoured Pākehā students. Economic constraints can adversely affect Māori University students differently from other Māori belying any ‘blanket’ statements of Māori social disadvantage. University involvement can also afford privileges unattainable for most Māori due to cultural disadvantages imposed by the prevailing education system in Aotearoa New Zealand. I am able to encapsulate my experience in stating that as a mother, a Māori woman of Ngāpuhi, Irish and other genealogical descendencies, and a university student I am privileged with an essential multi-faceted social identity that can shift as circumstances, including financial constraints and opportunities, require. In a capitalist system where departure tickets require monetary payment, for example, strict cultural adherence to one identity is often unpractical, unrealistic and unsustainable.

DEPARTURE CEREMONIES
Apart from income, however, there were other features beside departure frequency that reflected cultural differences between Māori and Pākehā cultural display and ceremony. For example, whilst small family groups came to farewell my Pākehā friends at the airport the opposite was true for Māori friends who were most often farewelled by a large attendance of extended family members.

On the day I first left Aotearoa New Zealand I was determined not to shed a tear, an expression of my own individual personality, youth and adventurous spirit rather than that of any particular identity group. My friend who accompanied me is Māori (not Ngāpuhi) and a large group of her extended family and friends (some Ngāpuhi) entered into a vocal and tearful farewell that almost
convinced me that I would have to leave alone. My friend recovered enough to eventually join me on the plane though the emotion of our departure heightened my sense of cataclysmic change. Looking back now after many Trans-Tasman flights I can reflect on how experience tempers such emotions.

The wrench away from home is too great for some of us though. My friend’s stay in Australia after our first flight did not last a year. Owing to the proximity between Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand a return was an easier option than it would have been for European migrants for example. I chose to stay in this ‘new big land’ that the airplane reached in less time than it takes for the road trip between Mount Maunganui and Hamilton, where I first attended university. My case was atypical in the sense that members of my immediate family alone attended my initial airport farewell. While lengthy airport farewells may be the order of the day for many Māori migrants, and shorter farewells for Pākehā may prevail, there are always exceptions.

Short travel times do not necessarily alleviate a feeling of loss when an international border is crossed and my feeling of loss on leaving ‘home’ in Mount Maunganui was vastly magnified upon leaving Aotearoa New Zealand. The difference between regional and international migration, aside from visa and passport requirements, boils down to ‘state-of-mind’ that often includes a mixture of excitement, adventurous spirit, sadness and national pride. In Māori terms, the sense of displacement and alienation that can result from being born outside the Ngāpuhi rohe (territory) had the potential to increase with migration to Australia. Wider senses of belonging to two countries, for example, can also occur depending on various factors such as the degree of comfort in reaching the new destination, and the sense of not being too far away from a particular departure point.

From my experience of subsequent of Trans-Tasman travel following that initial departure in the 1980s it is appropriate to reflect on the observation that:
Migrants of identity are not only involved in a personal, social psychological journey between various personal home sites that they choose, within a fragmented world, for the purpose of developing private identities. The process of getting to know oneself may involve a deeply personal process of reflection and self-awareness; but this process also necessarily engages migrants of identity in a dialogue with significant others. Individuals are therefore not entirely free to conceptualize home sites according to individualized needs. They must somehow deal with homes that are also credible to others (Fog Olwig, 1998: 231).

Whilst it is appropriate to apply this statement to the act of living in another home after migrating, the same process can also begin at airports. Here collective actions and impressions of departure and arrival can heighten a sense of another home (potential or actual) that is situated elsewhere. It could equally bring a sense of ‘homelessness’.

An informal or semi-formals ceremony of ‘leaving home’ accompanies many Māori departures where elders and other family members may provide seemingly spontaneous farewell speeches (poroporoaki) and waiata (songs). We can feel quite important when our families undertake such measures. Our family’s expressions of emotion such as weeping, wailing, speeches and singing (termed in Māori language a ‘poroporoaki’ or in English ‘a ceremony of farewell’) can bolster our strength for the arduous break away from our loved ones. For those of us who wish to avoid such emotional outpourings we can enjoy a fuller feeling of freedom once we pass through the departure gates. Regardless of the various possible reactions our sense of being Māori and part of a family is very much part of such ceremony and it can affect our psyche as much as a pōwhiri (public ceremony of welcome) can on our homecoming. In many instances, portable farewell gifts such as raranga items affirm family ties, acting as Māori mementos that support notions of Māori cultural belonging.

However, it is inappropriate to assume that such ceremony takes place on all such occasions for all Māori people or that ceremony and emotional outpouring happens only for and amongst
such people. Much depends on how contact is maintained after
departure, how ‘close’ our family stands prior to departure and the
age, gender and disposition of people involved (those remaining as
well as those departing). Any associative conclusion that Māori
people are by definition more emotional because of their ceremony
or other behaviour at airports, or at funerals for that matter, should
be confounded by deeper examination. Like many other airport
departures around the world those of Māori people may be
considered more as a mixture of deep emotional attachment to the
traveller, politically led affirmation of cultural identity and perhaps
some envy by those left behind at not being able to take the trip too.
While public displays of emotion may predominate in ceremonies,
formal, less formal and informal, they do not necessarily signify
some essential ingredient of a recipe for Māori identity. They are,
however, examples of how Māori cultural production can affirm
senses of cultural belonging and identity. This is a process of
constant value creation punctuated by episodes of ritual that may
change in character depending on social circumstances.

AN AMENABLE STATE OF EXILE
In some ways this constant value creation in migrant settings is a
condition of cultural exile, where at least two different cultural
viewpoints can be incorporated simultaneously into everyday life.
While experiences of actual exile from one’s home country may
entail more extreme distances, and painful loss, than those usually
associated with migration between Australia and Aotearoa New
Zealand, there is a redemptive quality in understanding Trans-
Tasman Māori experiences where:

The exile is conscious of other contrapuntal juxtapositions that
diminish orthodox judgment and elevate appreciative sympathy.
There is also a particular sense of achievement in acting as if
one were at home wherever once happens to be’ (Said, 1990: 366).

As I discuss later in this thesis this positive apprehension of a
perpetual state of exile has implications for a globalised migrant
identity that respects cultural differences and similarities and is based on raranga metaphors.

**RARANGA AND AUSTRALIAN Ō ĠĀPUHI**

From this concentration upon cultural identity, I now discuss actual connections between Ngāpuhi people and raranga in Australia. I highlight Ngāpuhi people’s interactions with raranga as a case study that may be compared with future, more substantial studies amongst Māori migrants from various iwi who live in Australia.

Many Ngāpuhi people in Australia know at least some aspects of raranga. This knowledge ranges in detail from a desire for material items such as kete (bags) and backpacks to the regret of not having learnt the art from a cherished tupuna whaea (female grandparent) ‘back home’ before she died. When asked whether or not they would like to learn now, reactions are mixed. Some Ngāpuhi express regret at not having enough time to learn ‘from scratch’ or to continue weaving after some introductory lessons, due to other competing responsibilities. In some cases, relatives and friends (not necessarily Ngāpuhi) residing in Australia or visiting on holiday have given raranga lessons voluntarily in which Ngāpuhi enthusiastically participate.

Some Ngāpuhi do not expect to find raw materials for raranga in Australia as they would in Aotearoa New Zealand and such thoughts prevent any further investigations. Time constraints and family commitments usually contribute to this lack of inquiry even though other items such as naturally growing vegetables and seafood that are considered adequately similar to those found in Aotearoa New Zealand are often vigorously sought and found.

Many more Ngāpuhi women than men express an interest in raranga though I never found it as a full time occupation amongst them in Australia as I did amongst some Ngāpuhi women in Aotearoa New Zealand. As in Aotearoa New Zealand men are more likely to be interested in whakairo (woodcarving) and moko (tattoo) than raranga though Ngāpuhi men and women have emphasised the
fact that their more liberated Australian lifestyle that allows them to undertake any activity they choose. Accordingly, some have visited non-Māori tattooists with designs that are based on Ngāpuhi referents and carry their moko (tattoo) with a great deal of pride.

Somewhat in contrast, raranga items such as kete do not always attract the same sense of cultural pride. Their function as carry-bags can outweigh any notions that they may be considered as taonga, whereas manaia and tiki (various forms of Māori pendant) are generally highly valued as taonga. However, ambivalence exists in Australia over taonga of any kind. Some Ngāpuhi, for example value all items associated with Māori culture as taonga, whilst others assign that kind of value to weapons and pendants alone. As in Aotearoa New Zealand, more aged taonga are more highly valued that those newly made and items made in Australia are not necessarily assigned the same value as those that were made ‘back home’. At this stage, I can only assume that attitudes towards raranga items may change with more exchange of ideas and critical engagement of cultural issues amongst Ngāpuhi and other Māori in Australia. Australian Māori sociological and spiritual associations with taonga therefore constitute a fledging and developing subject in the field of Trans-Tasman Māori discourses.
THE AUSTRALIAN PARI: AN UNACKNOWLEDGED MIGRATORY EMBLEM

Figure 6.10: A. Te Kotuku Māori culture group showing items of performance apparel including pari, Sydney, Australia. Sydney Opera House, 1999. Courtesy of members of the Te Kotuku Māori cultural performance group, Sydney. B. Brochure for ‘Sundays ‘round the House’ activities.

By now, it should come as little surprise to the reader that the pari is an important, though largely unacknowledged, part of Australian Māori culture. In Sydney alone, numerous examples of pari exist
amongst various Māori performance groups today (figure 6.10A). These pari are present at cultural events including multi-cultural festivals at venues. In mid-1999 for example, the Māori culture group named Te Kotuku performed at the Sydney Opera House for a program of multicultural events that took place over a year entitled ‘Sundays ‘round the House’ (figure 6.10B).

Earlier examples of pari may be found in Sydney’s State Library archives that contain photographs of pari worn in the 1950s in Sydney (figure 6.11).

![Figure 6.11: Unidentified Māori women in dance performance wearing a variety of pari. Pickwick Club, Sydney, 1962. Australia. With permission Picman collection, Mitchell Library, Sydney](image)

The discursive silence of these pari joins other aspects of migrant Māori history in Sydney, and other Australian locations, that call for extensive academic engagement. Without this engagement, the presence of pari in Australia, along with the Māori people, who have designed, made and worn them, remain effectively and unjustly removed from Australia’s multi-cultural history.

**A CANBERRAN MĀORI COMMUNITY AND A PARI**

The pari is sometimes a taken-for-granted necessity in the performance regime of Canberra’s Māori cultural performance group, TROTT, that begins with practice sessions, involves fund-raising activities and culminates in public dance displays. As
mentioned earlier, female performers of this group wear a distinctive pari (figure 6.12). It is obviously emblematic, at the very least because of its colours. Predominantly green and gold those colours evoke others of Australian teams particularly within competitive sports and are the TROTT pari’s most Australian reference. Beside its colour the pari appears very similar to other tapestry and taniko pari that dominate the design of most pari in Aotearoa New Zealand. Its design composition is geometrical, incorporating complex patterns of oblongs achieved by a series of diagonal tapestry stitches. The tapestry takes on average a number of weeks to complete (Kämira, 2002).

Figure 6.12: Pari of Te Rere o Te Tarakakao Māori culture group worn by group member Natalie Sullivan Canberra Multi-cultural Festival, Glebe Park Canberra, 1999. Display of this photograph kindly supported by Natalie Sullivan.

Often the Pākehā wives and mothers of Māori group members make the pari and take on responsibility for their upkeep.
These women also take on other supporting roles in the group meetings and performances such as ensuring their children (and their performance apparel) attend. Whilst a cooperative effort between Māori and Pākehā ensures every performer wears the appropriate attire, this does not translate into overall social cohesion within the group. I discuss this point more in the next chapter, when engaging with cultural differences and Australian Māori children.

TROT'T's pari represents the group's metaphorical attachment to the Tarakakao, a species of godwit whose migratory flight path extends between Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. The design is repeated on other components of the group's performance apparel such as the tapeka (men's sash worn diagonally across chest and back) and tīpare (headband). Owing to the group's popularity amongst various audiences in Canberra and its involvement with the New Zealand High Commission the pari is well known locally. The actual meanings and history behind the pari and its design are subjects that escape the knowledge and interest of many spectators.

In asking questions about the group's opinions of the pari such as whether or not it is a taonga, I needed to be careful not to prompt or influence a staged response. I therefore elected to ask about its importance to the group and how that importance compared with that of taonga such as taiaha, mere, patu and korowai that also made up the group's stock. Most responses were adamant in their support of the pari's importance to the group though no in-depth reasons for this assigned value were offered. Some of the younger members took it as a necessary, though not critically assessed, part of their participation in the group, as did some of the older members. It is definitely not the case that any consciousness of the pari and its function as a cultural signifier is high on the group's list of priorities. The group, under the instructions of its haka tutor, is more interested in achieving a good, if not excellent, performance (Kapea, 2002).

For some women and girls, the pari and other items of TROT'T's performance apparel, are definitely taonga. However, a
sense of its value as taonga amongst the younger members has to be actively maintained in the group, by the adults. Overall, the group’s primary contact with raranga is through the pari and that small group of women who nurture plants for raranga. A preference for whakairo and other male-exclusive activities persists, though no express attempts are made to diminish the importance of the pari and other raranga items.

To this end, the pari becomes part of a uniform that must look immaculate along with the rest of the performer’s appearance. The pari and other parts of the performance apparel are therefore usually well kept and best attempts are made to wear it with minimum non-Māori accessories. Accordingly, jewellery such as rings and watches are prohibited while taonga such as pounamu (greenstone pendants) and manaia (bone pendants) are encouraged during the performance. The pari becomes part of a regime that seeks to promote an impression in the audience at least of an authentic Māori performance. The pari is therefore part of a value-building regime. Whilst not so successful at gaining any special mana for itself it is an indispensable part, in the group’s eyes, of building TROTT’s overall mana in Canberra.

CANBERRA RARANGA – A CASE OF DO OR DIE
Currently the cultural importance of raranga in Canberra is relegated in favour of other activities such as dance and song performances. TROTT members certainly know of raranga but their practical experience of this activity ranges from a little to none. Two women members of the group grow raranga materials, namely kōrari, but due to various constraints, such as work and family obligations, have not woven it. Of course, the state of their plant sources also determines whether or not raranga takes place. Some of their plants, for example, have not reached maturity or have suffered damage and need to be coaxed back to health. A different climate in Canberra affects the kōrari in ways that are not seen so frequently in Aotearoa
New Zealand. For example the growing kōrari leaf needs to be sheltered differently to avoid coarseness and moisture loss.

The presence of raranga is mostly confined to the apparel of TROTT performers in the form of taniko-based pari, for example. Small-scale efforts are afoot, mainly through my own instigation and that of a small number of Māori kairaranga, to promote raranga and encourage its production in Canberra. My efforts are made easier by the existence of a well-established pa kōrari (patch of kōrari) in the Centre for Cross-cultural Research grounds at the ANU.

The cultural origins and significance of raranga are rarely a topic of conversation in the Canberra Māori community and most continue to equate raranga with kete, whariki and other items that are rarely, if ever, made by its members. These items are not given the same acknowledgement as taonga, as are other items of Māori cultural production, such as whakairo. Kākahu (cloaks) are a predictable exception here, given their importance in Aotearoa New Zealand. It remains to be seen whether or not raranga is developed further in Canberra. The continuity of raranga production in Canberra relies on the conscious efforts of Māori themselves, the support of other non-Māori weavers, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, and the policies, awareness and funding of Australian institutions. As with raranga and other forms of Maori women’s cultural production in Aotearoa New Zealand, its existence in Canberra very importantly depends on the collective will and action of Māori women (figure 6.13).
Figure 6.13: Ngāpuhi women Jo Kāmira and Sandra McLaren at Stage 88, Commonwealth Park in Canberra during Waitangi Day events (commemorating the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in Aotearoa New Zealand in 1840) organised by TROTT in February 2002.

CHAPTER DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the presence of raranga items, motifs and concepts in Australia were discussed in dialogue with Indigenous Australian representations. Issues surrounding ‘mixed’ genealogical connections in Australian contexts revisited earlier concerns regarding multi-faceted Māori (particularly Ngāpuhi) identity. At particular issue were a number of different though interconnected forms of social marginalisation.

The design of a war memorial and its construction and opening ceremony in Canberra, and its implications for raranga-based discourses formed the primary focus of discussion in section 1. I extended the monument’s Trans-Tasman Indigenous references toward discussion of broader cross-cultural links between kairaranga and Indigenous women weavers. The existence of uneven distributions of power was addressed in my analysis of the opening
ceremony where non-Indigenous imperatives prevailed. Yet, the
ceremony and the monument have been viewed as auspicious. The
co-operative efforts of the Māori and Indigenous Australian weavers
who designed the paving, along with the Ngunnawal people who
took part in the memorial’s opening ceremony have inspired my
continued engagement with Trans-Tasman Indigenous discourses
that are weaving-based. The ‘New Zealand’ memorial monument is
thus incorporated into this thesis as a site of resistance against
dominant discourses that exclude Indigenous women and weaving.
In the words of Black American feminist, bell hooks (1990a: 343):

This is an intervention. A message from that space in the margin
that is a site of creativity and power, that inclusive space where
we recover ourselves, where we move in solidarity to erase the
category colonized/ colonizer. Marginality as a site of
resistance.

In section 2 my focus on discursive dialogue was presented
in terms of individual or small-group perspectives, gained through
oral history and ethnographic research, in the absence of published
accounts. I included a multi-faceted view of Ngāpuhi identity that
acknowledges genealogy from other Indigenous and non-Indigenous
groups of people.

My focus on ‘mixed identity’ and sanitized history
highlighted the detrimental effects of colonialism on Indigenous
peoples, but also extended beyond essentialist notions of this
identity. Identities were therefore analysed in terms of cultural
constructions, built by individuals and societies (in legislation,
imagination, ideologies and creative acts for example), more than
essential genes.

However, I continued to show that Māori women remain
‘silent’ in this process, where scarce engagements with Australian
Māori migrants continue to focus on the cultural production of
Māori men. The denial of raranga, especially the pari, in favour of
male-based cultural production (such as weapons) and the
stereotyped ‘warrior’ image, continues as an important factor of
Australian Māori cultural discourses. It echoes the problems in
current social and discursive hierarchies for Māori women in Aotearoa New Zealand, discussed earlier, for which Māori women’s political activism seeks redress.

As I have continually highlighted in previous chapters, Māori women, including kairaranga, are subjected to various forms of oppression. This oppression of women is a sub-marginalisation within an already marginalised group that constitutes the Māori populations of Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. Other groups of Māori people, including gays and lesbians are similarly marginalised. There are important implications of understanding such sub-marginalisation for my scholarship as a Māori woman of Ngāpuhi descent. The words of gay Black American lawyer Darren Lenard Hutchinson (1999: 191) are particularly relevant to this point:

Opposition to internal criticism within oppressed communities and progressive social movements frequently occurs because members of these communities embrace oppressive ideologies of patriarchy, heterosexism, and racism.

I have shown that oppression within Māori societies, including those of Australia, can be deliberately or unwittingly carried out and perpetuated as a social norm through uncritical acceptance. My actions amount to Hutchinson’s ‘internal criticism’.

However, my deconstruction of Māori essentialism in this chapter also aligns with Hutchinson’s observations of constructive criticism from within:

While internal critiques might unveil negative aspects of oppressed communities, these critiques may appear less threatening if their ultimate goals of equality and social change are made explicit and clear (Hutchinson, 1999:198).

My scholarly and pro-active approaches towards equality and social change are inspired by raranga-based discourses, including those that concern ‘interwoven’ cultural identities that respect differences and avoid hierarchies of value. The furtherance of raranga-based engagement remains dependant on various notions of
Māori identity in Australia, and Māori people’s awareness of the importance of raranga in Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses.

Australian Māori cultural perspectives have also been posited in this chapter as comparable to exile in that they depend on an existence away from Aotearoa New Zealand. My engagement with this ‘exile’ began at airports where aspects of Māori culture were shown to undergo various forms of ‘arrival’ and ‘departure’, various forms of cultural disjuncture and continuity. In Australia this exile is self-imposed by the option to remain a Māori resident in Australia, due to lenient immigration policies, and is more cognizant with memories of a ‘home’ culture across the Tasman Sea, rather than its lived actualities. It is therefore comparable to cultural theorist Edward Said’s notions of contrapuntal exile:

For an exile, habits of life, expression or activity in the new environment inevitably occur against the memory of these things in another environment. Thus both the new and the old environments are vivid, actual, occurring together contrapuntally. (Said, 1990: 366)

There is an opportunity for cultural change in Australia that could differ from that of Aotearoa New Zealand. In this chapter I conclude that although raranga suffers similar relegation in Australian Māori cultural discourses, there remains a chance to alter the course of its decline. A large contributor to acknowledging the importance of raranga in Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses will be the acknowledgement of a long-standing Māori presence in Australia’s history and its ability to engage respectfully and sensitively in dialogue with Indigenous Australians. Realisation of these special Australian characteristics may yet encourage greater knowledge of and respect for raranga and other Māori cultural discourses within its continuously evolving multi-cultural society.

In the next chapter I take the idea of self-imposed Māori ‘exile’ in Australia a step further into a speculative exploration, inspired by raranga-based discourses, of interwoven, global identities that share similar political agendas.
1 Ngunnawal are acknowledged as tangata whenua of the Canberra area and its surroundings.
2 The official organiser of the event was the New Zealand High Commission in Canberra supported by a number of Australian Government authorities and services as well as the local Māori cultural group Te Rere o te Tarakakao (discussed later) and the local Ngunnawal [Indigenous to Canberra] Land Council.
3 Explain background to this term.
4 Daisy Nadjungdanga is one of a number of Indigenous weavers from Maningrida, Northern Territory of Australia. Their work has been exhibited on tour in Australia (Carew, Hughes and West (Eds.), 1995).
5 I am remiss in not extending my doctoral fieldwork research to include conversations with and the insights of Daisy Nadjungdanga. Although I have left messages with the Maningrida Arts Centre to let her know I am including references to her work in this thesis we have never spoken together. Whilst I expect that Hamby and Mellor’s insights (2000) are applicable to Daisy’s sense of her work, this point requires further investigation. For the moment, I can only hope that the opportunity to undertake such research arises in future.
6 The song written by Neil Murray and recorded by Indigenous Australian singer/songwriter Christine Anu in 1995 inspires this subtitle.
7 I use this term advisedly acknowledging that it as one that presupposes a monolithic incommensurability far removed from most if not all actualities. To my mind if there is a ‘race’ at all it is the ‘rat race’ of our speedy modern times and there is also the ‘human race’ to which many of us presume we belong. These terms prevail in conversation if not academic discourse despite those constructionist theories denoting the idea that life and life’s meaning is merely that which we make.
8 It is not always obvious whether such occasions are pre-planned or spontaneous hence my distinction between informal and semi-formal. They may also be partly pre-planned and it is only their content that is impromptu. They are rarely rehearsed in the family context. With visiting and departing officials and famous ‘stars’ a more formal and rehearsed ceremony sometimes occurs that can be organised by the group itself or through being hired by organisers from outside the group. The visit to Auckland of the U.S President Bill Clinton for an APEC meeting in 2000, for example, occasioned a formal and rehearsed welcome by a Ngati Whātau performance group of Tamaki Makarau (Auckland). This formalised welcome began its progress at the Auckland International Airport.
CHAPTER 7: A GLOBAL WEAVER'S IDENTITY

KA NOHO PUMAU TIKA TE KAİRARANGA I TE AO WHĀNUI (WEAVERS THRIVE GLOBALLY).

Kete mahi and kete kahurangi
INTRODUCTION

This concept of a whiri [multi-stranded plait] excites me, for the gathered strands supply endless possibilities of combination and of supplementary additions ... yet to be explored. Our whiri, now begun, has enormous creative potential (Maihi, 1992: 4).

I begin this chapter with a published quotation from my raranga kaiako (teacher), Toi Maihi regarding an exhibition of ‘fibre art’ entitled Nga kaupapa here aho: fibre interface, which she co-curated in 1992. The exhibition was ‘the first opportunity to present the fibre art of Aotearoa from the duality of a Maori and Pakeha perspective’ (Scharroth, 1992: 7). The whiri, to which Toi refers, is symbolic of current and future cultural interactions that begin with co-operative actions of two different cultural perspectives.

Figure 7.1: Toi Maihi and Marokura engaging in raranga at Kohewhata Marae, 2000. Note the multi-coloured whiri hanging in the upper centre foreground of this photograph.

This penultimate chapter places raranga more completely on a global stage from the perspective of kairaranga, based on Toi’s metaphorical references to the whiri, a significant feature of raranga techniques (figure 1.2, cropped in figure 7.1). It is replete with references to Māori spirituality, some of which were briefly referred to in previous chapters. Following the whiri analogy, I draw together discursive ‘strands’ featured in previous chapters and connect them with Māori mythological and metaphorical references to birthing,
nurturing and eschatology. This discussion privileges the perspectives of kairaranga on spirituality, environmental and cultural sustainability and world peace, within a framework of postcolonial feminism. Although I do not venture far into globalisation issues, I discuss their relevance to notions of interwoven, multi-dimensional cultural identities and inter-cultural networks based on raranga metaphors, yet continue to question the social equity of 'unearned privileges' (McIntosh, 1992), a hallmark of colonialism. In response to the colonialist privilege of dominant discourses on Māori culture I therefore incorporate Māori metaphors and vocabulary more fully into the discursive marae of this thesis.

In section 1, I consider the notion of an interwoven versatile social identity that respects cultural variety, and is based on a whiribased metaphor. This exploration proceeds on the basis of theory grounded in the concept of ururuwhenua, discussed earlier. I include references to a knowledge system formed from interconnected references to Māori cosmology, raranga, and other forms of weaving. I consequently attach a raranga-based rationale to cross-cultural research that is inspired by the Māori word hinengaro (mind, intellect). This rationale, and its attendant vocabulary, fosters a generous spirit, rather than essentialist fundamentalism in academic research.

Section 2 extends this rationale and vocabulary beginning with references to the Māori word for spirit, wairua. I offer interpretations of wairua and a selection of other references to a vast Māori spiritual world. I include a short narrative that briefly describes aspects of a Māori cosmology and extend my earlier work (Diamond, J. G., 1998; 1999) that interpreted Māori feminism and its relationship to female atua (deities), with a final reference to the Kohewhata Marae. Regarding Australia, I also refocus briefly on the Canberra pari noting that its functional purpose as an item of clothing and group insignia enters the discourses on Māori spirituality and education. In doing so, I reiterate the links made
earlier in this thesis, between kairaranga and a spiritual environment based on Māori cultural discourses.

SECTION 1: IDENTITY, KNOWLEDGE AND RARANGA

In this section I draw upon an analysis of cultural production that is based upon weaving metaphors and the work of philosopher Martin Heidegger:

Dwelling in the world, in short, is tantamount to the ongoing, temporal interweaving of our lives with one another and with the manifold constituents of our environment (Ingold, 2000:69).

I consider this ‘dwelling in the world’ in terms of knowledge systems based on Māori language, intercultural identity and kairaranga-based perspectives.

A KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM BASED ON MĀORI CULTURE

Knowledge exists in many forms and its dissemination is dependent on political power, prevailing social attitudes, norms and sanctions. A generalised view of knowledge systems and their social history is encapsulated in following statement:

Thus the social history of knowledge, like the social history of religion, is the story of the shift from spontaneous sects to established churches, a shift which has been repeated many times over. It is a history of the interactions between outsiders and establishments, between amateurs and professionals, intellectual entrepreneurs and intellectual rentiers. There is also interplay between innovation and routine, fluidity and fixity, ‘thawing and freezing trends’, official and unofficial knowledge. On one side we see open circles or networks, on the other institutions with fixed membership and officially defined spheres of competence, constructing and maintaining barriers which separate them from their rivals and also from laymen and laywomen. The reader is probably tempted to side with the innovators against the supporters of tradition, but it is likely that in the long history of knowledge that two groups have played equally important roles (Burke, 2000: 51-52).

It is clear from this statement that currently existing knowledge systems are not intrinsically static or permanent. They can change depending on situational context, place and time and often rely on dominant discourses that separate such dichotomous entities as ‘outsiders and establishments’. It is useful to keep this perspective in
mind in academic pursuits that privilege critical enquiry. An expansive historical view of knowledge should not be used to berate politically driven efforts to usurp those dominant discourses that marginalise alternative perspectives.

In this sub-section I incorporate knowledge systems based on Māori concepts that are relevant to critical engagement as part of academic pursuit. I primarily apply the Māori word for intellect, *hinengaro* to this discussion. My argument is both politically and philosophically driven, noting that the prevailing powers of colonialism in countries like Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia cannot be denied, but also that modes of Indigenous knowledge can serve as valid alternatives.

**MĀORI WOMEN AND A POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE**

Maori women offer insights into Māori politics of difference including the need for Māori women to be brought from the periphery of Māori cultural discourse and Pākehā perceptions into the centre:

For Māori women there are many differences which ‘count’. These include a diverse range of cultural considerations which must be defined by Māori women. A key difference is located within the unequal power-relations that exist in this society which have been instrumental in the marginalisation of Māori women. Dominant group interests have been served in the perpetuation of such relations and therefore have benefited from the maintenance of discourses which associate ‘difference’ and ‘other’ with inferiority. As previously noted, how ‘difference’ is constructed, how it is defined and how it is used in given situations is both contested and challenged. For Māori women that includes the inverting of dominant discourses, the assertion of our own definitions as opposed to those constructed outside of us, and the re-presentation of our realities through analyses in which we are at the centre. (Johnson and Pihama, 1995:86)

Nevertheless, three questions concerning Māori identity can be asked in relation to this view: How limiting is Māori identity especially given the fact that the hakaheke (genealogy) of self-identifying Māori often includes Pākehā and other non-Māori ancestry? Is there an alternative to current constructions of Māori identity and viewpoints that remain viable in a world of conflict and
exploitation? How does migration affect ‘our realities’ as Māori women in Australia? Some responses to these questions begin with references to a developing, rather than ‘dominant’ discourse on intercultural weaving.

In this sense it is relevant to note that the Black American feminist scholar bell hooks (1994) conceptualises ‘interlocking systems of domination’ that include race and gender difference based on her experiences and those of other Black Americans. She (1990b: 63) also advises, in similar fashion to Irihapeti Ramsden’s views (1995) on Māori women and men, that ‘Black women and men must participate in the construction of feminist thinking, creating models for feminist struggle that address the particular circumstances of black people’. Implicitly, hooks presents a challenge to liberal, socialist, marxist, postmodern, psychoanalytical and radical strands of feminism, many of which are founded on European and White American premises:

[hooks] urges African American intellectuals and artists to embody in their work and presence all the complexity and variety of the cultural traditions which have shaped them. Only through such embodiment – by means of which elements of identity developed ‘at the margins’ are brought to the ‘center’ – can the hegemony of existing cultural styles of subjectivity be challenged (Bordo, 1992: 164).

Although this thesis assigns value to raranga and Māori women as indispensable to Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses, it makes no attempt to limit raranga to strict, unchanging cultural confines based on narrow definitions of Māori identity that do not take into account the fact of ‘mixed’ ancestry. It posits raranga as inter-related and interpellating with others aspects of Māori culture as well as those of other cultures.

A CRITICAL STRUGGLE

My analysis of this possibility takes place in terms of a ‘critical struggle’. Māori film critic and educator, Leonie Pihama (1994: 240) states that: ‘critical struggle [by Māori people] is related to our
images and the ways in which we are presented and re-presented by the dominant voice'. It is a deconstructionist effort to uncover underlying assumptions upon which our epistemological positions are based...[that] necessitates a depth of analysis that reaches into questions which seek to unmask modernist metanarratives that validate the belief that eurocentric constructions of history, and in particular of the histories of the colonised, present the 'one true' interpretation (Pihama, 1994: 241-2).

Pihama’s observation of a Māori critical struggle can be used as a model to combat inaccurate and inadequate representations of Māori women generally, thus counteracting the trivialisation of raranga and kairaranga, not to mention other weavers and women in the world.

However, as discussed earlier, the privileges of academic involvement may lead to elitism that perpetuates the status quo so that discursive silences, such as those of kairaranga, remain unchanged. The academic élite remains, in this case, colonised for all its de-, neo-, postcolonial self-avowal. There are alternatives to this colonised position, based on Māori cosmological perspectives, an example of which I now discuss.

HINENGARO: A CONCEPT OF KNOWLEDGE

Hinengaro is a composite word that is translated in current dictionaries of the Māori language as intellect and activities of the mind, heart and spleen (Ryan, 1997: 58). A literal English translation splits the word into hine (women) and ngaro (missing). During my doctoral candidature I asked a female relative, Wai Mason, for her opinion on the word hinengaro, suspecting some male chauvinism in its etymology. She offered me an alternative view, based on Māori cosmology that I return to later.
Figure 7.2: Robyn Kahukiwa *Hineahuone* 1980 oil on board 118cm x 118cm (Kahukiwa and Grace, 1991). The superimposed multi-headed figure represents Tane, whilst the female forms represent the female deity Hineahuone. Note also the waka, top right and the tukutuku panel lower left, symbolizing various aspects of Māori cultural identity.

It is firstly necessary to pre-empt the Māori cosmological emphasis of the second part of this chapter by introducing one female Māori atua (deity) named Hineahuone. Hineahuone represents the female element (uha) of creation. In one narrative (Alpers, 1964: 22), Tāne Mahuta, the male creation god fashions Hineahuone from earth. From the sexual union of Hineahuone and Tāne the birth and growth of flora and fauna results. Although this narrative resonates with biblical ‘Adam’s rib’ mythology, it might equally be viewed as an illustration and/or idealisation of gender complementarity (Diamond, 1998 and 1999).

In earlier work (Diamond, 1998) I described Hineahuone’s representation in an oil painting (figure 7.2) by Māori woman artist Robyn Kahukiwa. The primacy of female fertility and fecundity that
are conveyed this painting are intended to appeal to Māori women particularly in terms of their self-worth and respect within society as a whole. The presence of a waka (canoe) and a tukutuku panel are direct references to the importance of Māori culture (including raranga) to this artist’s work. There is also a link with the earth mother Papatūānuku, discussed later in this chapter and environmental concerns that connect female reproductive health with that of the planet. This painting, and its Māori cultural influences, also has some bearing on interpretations of the word hinengaro. I now return to Wai Mason’s interpretation of hinengaro and the narrative of Hineahuone.

Wai’s interpretation (Mason, 2000) broadens published definitions (Ryan, 1997; William, H. W., 1975). She agrees that Tāne, the god of creation, sought a mate, a female essence to complement his maleness. In Wai’s opinion, his search can be likened to finding any missing and vitally important elements, a philosophical and intellectual pursuit rather than an exclusively sexual one. Although this explanation gives a male entity primacy, it is also fostering inter-dependence between (or amongst if we consider that there may be more than two) genders and could inspire gender equality rather than conflict.

For Wai Mason, academic enterprise is certainly a matter of hinengaro (intellectual pursuit) and that word signifies not only the importance of women but also of any other missing elements that are currently denied relevance or acknowledgment. This denial relates mostly to a limited perspective and can be equated with patriarchal colonialism of any shape and form that relegates or diminishes Indigenous presence in official national histories and cultural discourses.

Postcolonial critic and academic Gayatri Spivak (Spivak and Papastergiadis, 1991: 66, referred to earlier in chapter 3) has also linked references from Greek mythology (as I similarly incorporate Māori mythology into this raranga based ‘discursive marae), to the
potential for critical analysis in using well-defined ‘spaces’ of inquiry that exist between the ‘coloniser’ and the ‘colonised’:

We are shuttling between Narcissus and Echo: fixating upon the prefixed image, a pre-fixed staging, saying to other women within the culture that is how we should be identified. On the other hand, the construction of ourselves as counter-echo to the Western dominance, we cannot in fact be confined to behaving as we have been defined. Where there is a moment of slippage there is also a robust aporetic position, rather than being either the self-righteous continuist narcissism in the name of identity, or the message of despair of nothing but Echo.

Spivak’s view corresponds with hinengaro and its intellectual imperative to view all aspects of a subject in research and analysis. Hinengaro therefore qualifies in Spivak’s terms as a ‘robust aporetic position’.

To my current knowledge hinengaro has not been documented as deification. Nor has it received publication as an official institutionalised religious symbol or system. However, I am inspired by the word and some trains of thought that surrounds it, in my own intellectual pursuits. From hinengaro I gain inspiration towards a generous, courageous spirit in academic endeavour that extends beyond monetary gain and careerism. This ‘spirit’ involves rigorous critical engagement, is open to change, furtherance and proactive involvement where women, politically, physically or spiritually are neither missing nor forgotten. In this endeavour hinengaro is a guiding principle, part of my daily spiritual belief system and ritual, where any stereotype or prejudice receives vigorous critique.

**URUURUWHENUA: THE SOUL OF THE WEAVER**

I now take the rationale of hinengaro-based enquiry a step further by applying to cultural identity discourses. In the previous chapter, I addressed Trans-Tasman Māori identity that acknowledges and respects Indigenous Australian ancestry. This compatibility was presented as a discursive ‘silence’ that needs to be understood via postcolonial feminist modes of critical engagement. Now, I extend this exploration by engaging with the notion of an interwoven global
identity. Rather than electing to view social identity as a fragmented, ungrounded discourse, I incorporate the concept of uruuruwhenua described earlier as a ‘soul of existence’ into this discussion.

To understand intercultural identity in terms of uruuruwhenua more fully it is necessary to become familiar with concepts relating to birth, nurturing and belonging. Various affirmations of Māori cultural identity and belonging, affirming the importance of nurturing offspring, appear in raranga-based discourses. Consider the kīrari plant for example. As discussed in chapter 2, there is a commonly held appreciation of kīrari (flax) as a popular and frequently used raranga medium. Alongside its fibrous attributes, the kīrari plant has other physical features that are metaphorically assigned to genealogical connections and the nurturing responsibilities of kairaranga, parents and anyone else who fosters the growth and welfare of young people:

It is important to understand the place that flax holds in the philosophy of the Māori people. If the beginner is to regard weaving as something more than manual skills, then she must understand the relationship between the natural resources, the people and the customs. Flax grows in a fan-like formation, with the young shoot in the centre. This centre growth is called the rito. In speeches, the rito is often used as a metaphor, likening the young centre shoot to a human being. The leaves either side of the rito are known by the northern tribes as matua [parents] … The rito and those either side are never cut. Logically, this will ensure the life cycle of the flax plant, but in terms of Māori philosophy it is also acknowledged as a link between the plant and the people (Puketapu-Hetet, 1989: 3).

Such environmental links between kairaranga, plants, genealogy and nurturing of the young (plants and people) flow into notions of uruuruwhenua as described in earlier discussion of karakia. The basis of my further engagement is the application of uruuruwhenua to a weaving collectivity, bringing forward the concept of an intercultural identity, or the conceptualised identity of an ‘intercultural weaver’ who in all actions engages in ‘making culture and weaving the world’ (Ingold, 2000). My adoption of this intercultural weaver’s identity directs my exploration of ways in
which cultural identity is grown in migrant contexts and how it can be extended theoretically, using a Māori vocabulary.

**URUURUWHENUA IN AUSTRALIA**

In my research amongst Māori people in Australia, including my family, I have noted that Māori culture and identity can be perceived as ‘objects’ of possession. For example, some of us need to clutch tightly symbols of Māori culture in affirming our identity in Australia’s multi-cultural society. Symbols of Māori culture and identity become as important to us as passports and photograph albums. In general, this possession of culturally based identity is continually reaffirmed by ritual practices, including public ceremonies discussed earlier.

Māori people in Australia may affirm their ururuwhenua (sense of belonging) with ritual practices that begin at a child’s birth. These rituals include the burial of afterbirth on Australian soil, or having it transported back to Aotearoa New Zealand in order to ‘ground’ Māori cultural identity in significant places. Once done, we are free to travel the world, always knowing that ‘home’ is where our afterbirth is buried.

This cultural ‘grounding’ that can be associated with ururuwhenua can be incorporated further into an epistemological rationale. It can be included as part of a vocabulary that affords Māori identity a theoretical basis but also engages with its complexities and those of other forms of social identity. To develop this point further it is necessary to consider details of Māori culture in Australia relating to children and authority.

Efforts to ensure cultural continuity amongst migrant Māori children in Australia are exemplified by the Kohanga Reo (Māori language ‘nests’) classes that are voluntarily run by Māori women of TROTT, the Māori performance group in Canberra. Language lessons are supplemented with references to atua, usually of Māori cosmology and following Christian influences, usually male. Christian karakia in Māori language regularly occur in the Kohanga

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reo, during rehearsals and immediately before performances. The
group’s senior members most often perform them as a sign of their
own mana, to consolidate and focus the group’s attention on the
performance, as well as to assert of the mana of Māori culture.

They can also be performed out of habit, routinely, because
of the group’s own in-house traditions. TROTT’s kohanga reo and
karakia signify valiant efforts to both ensure Māori cultural survival
in Australia and to ward off its trivialisation, including the blinkered
view of Māori culture being mere show business. It is an example of
Trans-Tasman Māori value creation, offering social alternatives for
Māori children and youths beyond those of ‘mainstream’ Australian
life.

However these efforts can also meet with confusion and
frustration, stemming from issues of cultural authority, both local
and Trans-Tasman. Conflicts can arise from gendered interpretations
of tikanga. In Australia, an example of conflict arose over the role of
kaikaranga. Various candidates vied for the role and the ensuing
conflict was resolved by the executive decision of an elder man of
the Māori community in Canberra. His decision was unpopular with
some TROTT members and those adversely affected by it verbally
expressed their discontent and scepticism over his authority
(Kāmira, 2002).

This incident is mirrored by many others in Australia and
Aotearoa New Zealand where tribal authority is not fully respected
by a group of people from diverse tribal backgrounds (particularly in
urban contexts), and where an elder does not have peer group
support. The primary example of these tensions was referred to
earlier in relation to the representation of Hone Heke Pokai at the
National Museum of Australia. Such tensions indicate not only a
lack of social solidarity, but also an absence of a full knowledge
base equally available to all parties involved. Thus, cultural guesses
can initiate conflict. The limited idea can develop amongst those
who witness these kinds of conflict, that conflict alone defines Māori
culture.
As discussed earlier, a politics of difference currently exists that privileges the authority of Māori men over the actions of Māori women, including kaikaranga, in formal ceremonies. Such is often the case in Aotearoa New Zealand as well as Australia. The collective ‘voice’ of Australian Māori women is therefore stifled by patriarchal interpretations of Māori tikanga (protocols, rules) and is interpreted by many Māori women in Australia, particularly though not only those with educational qualifications, as undemocratic and oppressive. Such views can resonate with the opinion (expressed to me by many family members and Māori associates) that Australian lifestyles need not include the conservative restrictions that Māori culture currently imposes on Māori women. Māori women in Australia therefore join other Māori feminist efforts towards Māori women’s deprisonisation, discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis. A feminist politics that fosters intercultural cooperation is not at variance with Māori culture per se. It does, however, provide for alternative interpretations of that culture beyond those that subjugate women and divide humanity into an ‘us’ and a ‘them’.

URUURUWHENUA AND AN INTERCULTURAL WEAVER
In focussing on the worldwide relevance of raranga, a question arises as to what makes kaikaranga, and other weavers of the world, special in terms of political and intellectual contribution. One answer relates to the fact that very little separates their efforts from the plight of many indigenous women around the world and the political struggle towards change.

Tolerance for cultural difference and a generous spirit within dialogue with other weavers, especially those women who have suffered under European colonialism, already exists amongst weavers, including kaikaranga. In contemporary political struggles many kaikaranga recognise their common interest with weavers of other cultures. For many of us, kaikaranga identity must remain versatile and inclusive, though firmly grounded and identifiable with Māori culture. Whilst hierarchies of expertise are present in raranga
circles (between teachers and students for example) and personality clashes can occur, codes of behaviour also exist that encourage co-operation and generosity.

The metaphoric ‘sharing of breath’ in the hongi (‘nose-pressing) of greeting in Māori ceremony, for example, translates into the tukutuku technique of raranga that relies on cooperation and shared creative spirit. This hongi-based ethos or code-of-behaviour can be applied to all ages, genders and creeds of people who weave (Maihi, 1999-2001). Such codes are capable of making valuable contributions to emancipatory politics through their inclusive versatile positioning that accepts cultural differences, while emphasising shared creative (rather than destructive) passions.

Toi Maihi is an exemplar of what Cornel West (1990: 19) has described as ‘a new kind of cultural worker [who is] associated with a new politics of difference’. She (2003a) notes that an escape from oppression may reside in the trans-national interweaving of cultural difference that Māori kairaranga and Indigenous Australian women weavers, discussed earlier, are so willing to undertake when they weave. The seeds of liberation from patriarchal oppression can be sown in similar fashion to those of the Kohewhata kairaranga, within international contexts. Toi’s choice to communicate internationally with weavers from other countries, for example has borne fruit in recent collaborative efforts, including those of the New Zealand war memorial monument in Canberra, discussed earlier.

Other events in Canberra manifest this mode of inter-cultural weaving though they may not focus exclusively on weaving. For example a symposium held at the Australian National University in June 2003 concerning beading, threaded items and rugs involved Indigenous Australian artists, Māori artists including Toi Maihi and other artists and interested parties from around the world (Diamond and King, 2003). During this symposium, the imperative to encourage respect for Māori women, Indigenous Australian women and other marginalised groups around the world was unanimously supported.
NON-MĀORI CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ‘SOUL’ OF THE INTERCULTURAL WEAVER

Raranga-based discourses based on the notion of a raranga-based ‘intercultural weaver’ can be broadened to include corresponding views of non-Māori writers. For example, American cultural theorist Doris Sommer (2000: 176) expresses a similar epistemological position in terms of ‘double consciousness that ‘enables conversation between parties who respect the differences that fissure their own identities’. Sommer (2000: 176) further observes that ‘perhaps double consciousness ensures democracy by embracing the particularities of citizens who must be tolerated in their difference from others. Otherwise, what would tolerance mean?’ Tolerance of differences in a society is therefore superimposed by democratic ideals. It is not difficult to understand such democratic ideals within the discourse of intercultural weaving, where similarities and differences are welcomed and respected.

Another view takes ‘double-consciousness’ and therefore tolerance of difference a step further. It incorporates an understanding of social values that while encouraging dialogue and political action, acknowledges cultural origins (roots) that in a political context may shift:

Firstly, the process of shifting should not involve self-decentring, that is losing one’s own rooting and set of values … It is vital in any form of coalition and solidarity politics to keep one’s own perspective on things while empathizing and respecting others. … Secondly, and following from the first point, the process of shifting should not homogenize the ‘other’. As there are diverse positions and points of view among people who are similarly rooted, so there are among members of the other group en bloc, but with those who, in their different rooting, share values and goals compatible with one’s own (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 130)

It should indeed be noted that ‘Transversal politics are not always possible, as conflicting interests of people who are situated in specific positioning are not always reconcilable’ (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 130). However, the potential for people to ‘share values and goals compatible with one’s own’ indicates the possibility of a
versatile optimistic politics that proceeds with open-minded enquiry, rather than prejudice.

This versatility also pertains to Sneja Gunew’s (1994: 45, in writing about marginalised literature) observations of cultural theorists Jacques Derrida and Stuart Hall:

Referring to Derrida’s concept of difference as encompassing both ‘difference’ and ‘deferral’, Hall remarks that this does not mean that because there can be no permanent positioning there can be no meaning, but rather that because positioning is always temporary, meanings are always provisional. The importance lies in always recognising the role of history and prevailing circumstances of power.3

In terms of the identity of weavers, their work, whether it involves the creation of kete or baskets, whariki or textiles, nurturers, teachers or political activists, is a culturally based position of meaning that changes and responds to history and mechanisms (including institutions) of power. Its versatility leads to its endurance and perseverance in the face of powerful efforts to render it invisible, inferior, unimportant and ultimately extinct. Marian Pastor-Roces (1991: 9) has observed that textiles ‘narrate’ a larger picture and it is the makers like Toi Maihi, who have the highest stake in the resolution of today’s ‘conflicts of translation’ (Pastor-Roces, 1991: 10). This is not to place pressure on the makers of textiles to represent entire cultures but rather sheds light on their centrality as important figures in cultural negotiation and transformation.

Raranga-based discourses therefore give my scholarship cultural grounding, based on Māori culture but also comparable with discourses on identity and weaving around the world. The key to this position is non-colonialist apprehension and dissemination of knowledge. It is a position that strives towards informed critique, and against cultural arrogance and ignorance.

**INTERIM SUMMARY**
Domination over and oppression of groups such as women in patriarchal systems, and others who are continuously marginalised
by colonialist hegemonies, often leads to such identity-based conflict. Equally, the discursive positions from which engagement with raranga is possible are diverse, complex and replete with colonialist and indigenous influences. Engagement with Australia-based Māori identity requires strenuous and agile critical awareness coupled with inter-cultural respect and generosity. In this sense, raranga-based discourses can serve as conduits for postcolonial feminist alternatives.

For example, I showed how a ‘shuttling aporetic position’ between Gayatri Spivak’s (Spivak and Papastergiadis, 1991: 66) ‘Echo and Narcissus’ could be favourably compared with Leonie Pihama’s (1994: 240) call for a ‘critical struggle’ against the misrepresentation of Māori women. This fluid positioning encourages respect for various contributions in numerous social contexts and is capable itself of recognising and respecting a number of different opinions and viewpoints. Accordingly, and given the need for a revised critically based discourse on Māori women and raranga, this chapter joins that ‘critical struggle’, positing an inter-cultural basis for intellectual enquiry. This basis has been presented in terms of an ururuwhenua, a positional ‘soul’ from which to engage in a respectful inter-cultural relationship based on weaving metaphors and action. My exploration of ururuwhenua has developed from a knowledge-based focus on the postcolonial feminist implications of the Māori word for intellectual enquiry, hinengaro. From this knowledge-based platform it is now possible to launch further into cosmological realms that relate to Māori women and raranga.

SECTION 2: RARANGA, SPIRITUALITY, POLITICS AND EDUCATION

This section continues on from the references made earlier to Māori cosmology and spirituality. Discourses that engage with Māori women and raranga are posited as important contributors to academic discourse on worldwide spiritual concerns. For example, re-evaluation of Māori cosmology emphasising female strength that
contributes to nurturing humanity and the environment can be incorporated into a different sense of social identity. It is an identity that departs from limited phallocentric notions of the muscular Māori warrior archetype (discussed earlier) as the Māori cultural ideal.

**WAIRUA: MĀORI SPIRITUALITY**

In Māori language the word for spirit and spirituality is *wairua*, a composite word translatable into English in a literal sense as two waters: wai meaning water, rua meaning two. The Māori word *wai* can also be interpreted as an energy source, current, dimension as well as a number of water sources such as springs, streams, rivers and oceans. The idea of two waters points to inter-relatedness in Māori perception of physical and spiritual realms (Hotere Whānau, 2000-3).

Wairua, its interpretations, usage and etymology deserve a much larger focus than is possible in this thesis. In this ‘discursive marae’ of raranga it should be noted, however, that throughout my life and recent official fieldwork *waïrua* as a word and as a concept has often been associated with raranga and senses of belonging to particular geographic areas. For example, when I return to the Hokianga region, Northern Aotearoa New Zealand in which all four of my grandparents were born and are buried along with many of our ancestors, my living relatives describe me as coming home to the place of my wairua. Also, as explained earlier, when the undertaking of raranga produces an item that is highly valued, particularly with appropriate karakia, it is said in formal whaikōrero, mihi and casual conversations to have the powerful presence of wairua.

**A ‘MYTH’**

Further discussion of raranga in relation to wairua can occur in terms of Māori women - our knowledge, our representation, our participation in social settings and our deification in Māori spiritual cosmology. Emphasis on hakaheke (genealogy) is maintained in this cosmology with cosmogonic relationships amongst deities, ancestors
and living descendants clearly stated. Deities represent aspects of a
cosmology that respects balance of worldly elements, such as earth,
sky, flora, fauna, wind and sea, the inevitable cycle of life from birth
to death to rebirth, and the presence of spiritual connections. I briefly
describe the cosmology they inhabit with a narrative of creation
involving spirit entities that are evoked in many strands of Māori
politics. My version of this narrative stems from an oral tradition
that, despite Christian influences, persists today. This version
necessarily begins with the creation of our world.

A recalcitrant son, Tāne Mahuta, pushes his father Rangitāne
the sky father, away from his mother, the earth-wife
Papatūānuku, and light entered the world, as we know it. Tāne
needed to headstand upon his mother’s torso in order to push his
father away with his feet so that he and his siblings, deified as
they are, might enjoy the comfort of space and sunlight. This
atua (deity) shares dominion over forests flora and fauna,
human life, procreation and growth with his female consort
Hineahuone. Trees, their height and shape, symbolically evoke
Tāne’s deed of separating his parents.

Not all of Tāne’s siblings are pleased with his efforts. Some are
destined through spite and sorrow over their parents’ separation,
to wreak havoc on Tāne. Tāwhirimatea the wind, loyal to their
father, continually assails Tāne with storms and squalls. He
niggles with gale force warnings, icy breezes, other inclement
weather and the occasional hurricane. Tāwhirimatea often
shows his anger in this way to supplement the tears of rain, hail,
snows and sleets his father passionately cries for his separated
wife of the earth. Tangaroa of the sea also joins in with furious
assaults on the land and its inhabitants. Many attempts at coastal
land use and reclamation are frustrated by his actions. All the
while the turbulent warrior atua Tūmatauenga incites war
amongst humanity, elements and deities.

Our earthly human destiny is always that of challenge from the
elements as much as ourselves. Deities and people, female, male
and otherwise continuously negotiate between positive and
negative forces, to and fro in perpetually recurring conflict. The
world crumbles under the pressure of waste, resource depletion
and destruction. Those deities who continue to cling close to
their earth mother as they did before her marital separation; the
food deities, Haumiatikitiki and Rongomātāne, of peace and
cultivation, of cooked and raw repasts also fail to escape foul
winds, currents and contamination. The mist and fog, signs of
their mother’s grief and longing for her sky-husband now mix
with industrial pollution. Tangaroa, who guards the sea, is himself awash with oil slick and effluent.

In the end death ruled by a female deity Hinenuitepō, triumphs - but only so long as there is life to take. Hinenuitepō is after all only one of three female inter-related components of a life and death cycle. Her cohorts, Hineahuone, the earth-formed wife for Tāne and the dawn-maid Hine-Titama bring forth humanity but they are also complicit in the actions of their death-bearing sister. Life and death are complementary and cyclical, not oppositional, forces.

AN ESCHATOLOGICAL EXPLORATION
My version of Māori mythological narratives necessarily leads on to eschatological concerns. Death and interment, such a preoccupation of the Living is relevant to Māori concepts such as ūkaipō that literally translated into English refer to nighttime breastfeeding. The earth deity Papatūānuku might be considered as a feminised source of nourishment for living inhabitants of this planet, despite her diminished health due to environmental disasters. Her personification as a mother extends to comforting breast milk symbolising maternal nourishment. Various intertwined references to the planet Earth personified as a mother, mother’s generally, and breast milk can figure prominently when the location of a burial place for men and women is debated by bereaved Māori family members. Ūkaipō can also refer more specifically to the burial place of one’s mother. Her gravesite is thus associative with place of suckling, comfort and peace after life’s pain and toil. Interment, in at least some Māori cultural terms, is replete with female references.

Places of death and interment extend to another dimension of spiritual departures and travel. Te Rerenga Wairua (northernmost point of Aotearoa New Zealand), for example, is a place of departing spirits that reconnects Māori people with the sea after death. From this location, spirits of those who have departed this physical world, despite tourist buses that trundle past in droves, leave for a homeland somewhere in the Pacific, whence Māori migration began centuries ago. A life-death cycle continues, however, with birth, the beginning of new life. We are reminded of this event, our first splutter after
leaving our mother’s womb, in whaikōrero (Māori formal speeches) during tangihanga and less formalised recollections of our elders with the onomatopoeic exclamation ‘Tihe Mauriora’. This expression vocally resembles a sneeze or splutter and refers to the beginning of earthly existence.

**HINENUITEPŌ: AN ATUA OF DEATH REVISITED**
From these brief points regarding death and interment, it is clear that aspects of tangihanga previously in chapter 5 can be discussed further in more spiritual terms. I choose in this chapter to approach such matters with references to female deities in Māori cosmology. One deity, Hinenuitepō and the cultural production surrounding her are a particularly telling example of the relationship between death, after-life, spirituality and women.

In Māori mythology, Hinenuitepō vanquished the demi-god Maui in his search for immortality. She represents a spiritual world that one enters after death. Upon death a person’s spirit is considered by many Māori people to be freed from the body forever. Human remains (now referred to as ‘it’ rather than ‘he’ or ‘she’) are consequently regarded in Māori custom as an empty shell that, due to the living memories of the deceased, must be interred with appropriate care, respect and ceremony. Lying in state, it gives bereaved friends and relatives a chance for final farewells. Often, on the night before the funeral, all those people present will be given an opportunity to mihi (vocally address) the departed and bereaved, affirm local kinship attachments and relationships to land including references to local and national histories. In honour of seven female relatives who passed away during my doctoral candidature I now describe tangihanga in terms of spirituality. As with other sections of this thesis concerning tangihanga I do not include photographs of these ceremonies and focus mainly on relevant Māori cosmological matters particularly in relation to females - those deified, deceased or living.
The coffin, tūpāpaku, a physical casing left behind after its spirit has departed, lies at the feet of an image of Hinenuitepō surrounded mostly by female whānau pani (close relatives of the deceased woman). This image may be tangible or intangible, a carved figure or a designated symbolic space, for example. We, Ngāpuhi, refer to this position as the ‘front’ of the whare, a large meeting and sleeping house that contains references to ancestors and is representative itself of a founding tupuna (ancestor). Other viewpoints might interpret it as the back of the house considering the entrance door is at the opposite end. This position looks out, figuratively speaking, towards eternity and the after-life, the spiritual realm of Hinenuitepō. A kaikaranga (always a woman caller) waits to welcome mourners. She will call to them as they enter the marae and draw them in towards the coffin. Greenery as in leaves from indigenous plants such as kawakawa and koromiko adorns our heads and hers and as we manuhiri (visitors) arrive to mourn we drop them at the foot of the tūpāpaku as a symbolic gesture of grief. They are referred to in our whaikōrero as roimata (tears) and are often associated with women mourners and their tears. Waiata (sad songs) often sung by women embellish whaikōrero (speeches – most often the exclusive preserve of men) that refer to ancestors, and gods including Jesus Christ.

In the northern regions of Aotearoa New Zealand (Ngāpuhi robe) the tangihanga often has adjunct Church services and numerous Christian hymns led by women in the congregation. The tangihanga is an opportunity to refer to and demonstrate spirituality in many ways. This spirituality has a complex and highly gendered array of manifestations where Māori women as deities, nurturers, mourners, environmentalists and scholars abound.

The teasing out of separate and compartmentalised Māori referents in tangihanga is definitely not a primary concern of those in grief. If we are to engage in such academic pursuits as analysing tangihanga in postcolonial feminist terms let it be with utmost sensitivity and compassion. It needs to acknowledge women
responsibly as major players in most aspects of the tangihanga where rituals and protocols can contain evidence of Christian influence. Beyond issues of cultural authenticity is the fact that this ‘mixture’ of cultural references, Māori and Christian, can help people to cope with frequent grief and loss.

Vocal references to Hīnimatepō are not always made during tangihanga. They are usually dependent on public acknowledgment and contend with strong Christian counter-forces. Men are the main speakers during these occasions and others on the marae where the male god Jesus Christ and male ancestors often receive primacy. Tangihanga in Northern Aotearoa New Zealand, since the advent of European colonialism are social sites of Christian influence mixed with Māori language and other cultural referents, often leaving out women and female deities. The whakairo (carving exclusively undertaken by men) and kowhaiwhai (painting, more often though not so exclusively undertaken by men) prominently displays references to Gods, male ancestors and male anatomy. These are references to patriarchal power on earth and in the after-world. Women are assumed to have few sacred qualities, despite the presence of female atua such as Hīnimatepō and the numerous other female-based spiritual references I have discussed in this chapter. The importance of women in Māori cosmological thought cannot, therefore, be denied.

Nor can their relevance to raranga be under-stated. Aside from karakia-based features relevant to raranga that I discussed in chapter 5 there is presently an important raranga-based reference to Hīnimatepō and the after-life being constructed at Kohewhata Marae. The carved representation of Hīnimatepō on this marae is complete and the design of its complementing tukutuku is in progress. It is agreed between Allen Wihongi and Toi Maihi that raranga will be used as tukutuku in abstract design form to accentuate the connection between Hīnimatepō, life, death, place, belonging, the universe and eternity. The idea of belonging to geographical spaces in death as well as life is paramount in
considering the nature of this design and gives primacy to Hinenuitepō and her spiritual realm in complementary raranga and whakairo forms. I pay one last visit to Kohewhata in relation to environmental concerns later in this chapter.

Tangihanga rituals and raranga-based symbols of spirituality exemplify of the important roles that Māori women currently hold in marae procedure. More conservative attitudes, suspicious of changes to these roles, deride and discourage male youth from participating in unconventional ways, including encouraging women and girls to speak. However more open-minded approaches and new, positive contributions from women and men may in fact breath new life into Māori cultural discourses as a counter-measure to the disadvantage many Māori people continue to experience. Such pro-active engagement, including the encouragement of critical debates rather than blind adherence to blinkered ideology appeals to me in principle far more than elitist and egotistical knowledge grinding by a select few in the interest of a select few.

Tangihanga have been analysed (Sinclair, 1990) in terms of cultural identity, particularly focussing on ways in which Māori people assert their cultural identity during the proceedings. Such theorisation seems in its analytical expression to forget or deny the genuine pain of loss expressed in tangihanga along with the coping mechanisms of socialised expressions of grief. It fails to mention the seemingly constant run of such events and psychological and physical effects this frequency can have on surviving community members, especially close relatives. One example of these effects is an increased preoccupation amongst some members with the ‘supernatural’. Also the frequency of tangihanga can adversely affect the health of those attending as well as bring financial strain similar to many bereaved relatives from any culture may experience in providing a funeral. I have often heard the candid comment ‘Oh no not another tangi’ that bespoke of the numerous deaths of young and old Māori people through sickness, accident and foul play. As discussed earlier in this thesis official statistics show this
disproportionate ill health, crime figures of perpetrators and victims, and mortality rate amongst Māori people compared to Pākehā. Tangihanga are also a sad consequence of these factors.

Nevertheless, given the various sociological and religious factors present, tangihanga they should not be regarded as purely causative to all forms of Māori spirituality or only as assertions of Māori cultural identity. Other social values that more directly concern living may also be at play.

**BACK TO THE LIVING: PAPATŪĀNUKU REVISITED**

Māori spirituality does not only manifest itself in relation to death. In order to re-emphasise a holistic relationship between raranga, spirituality and the environment I now revisit the ‘earth mother’ Papatūānuku. In Chapter 2 I discussed a poem by Trixie Te Arama Menzies that Papatūānuku, the ‘earth mother’ of Māori cosmology and her connection to muka (flax fibre) and raranga. This poem joins others that exalt the ‘earth mother’, wife of Rangitāne the sky-father and her connections with women’s health, fertility, fecundity and strength. Māori woman poet Roma Potiki (1995: 73) offers another poetic reference to Papatūānuku:

```
i am Papatuanuku

Giving them completely i hold strength in its upright form—

my base maps the pattern of mottled life, rain and rivers.

when the rest is gone
you will know me –
    you who press on my skin
tread the body you do not recognise.
with my face made of bones
my stomach eternally stretching
```
i need no definition

i am Papatuanuku, the land.

Deliberate deviations from grammatical and poetic norms join a metaphorical reference to the bodily structures of women in this poem that are not necessarily expected or respected in everyday life. References are made to physical features of our planet ('the pattern of mottled life') and are subtly joined to a plea for recognition of the earth’s personification as Papatūānuku and respect for women in a patriarchal world. They can also be related to a concern for environmental health amongst Māori women, including kairaranga, I subject I return to in due course.

Māori women’s strength in relation to Papatūānuku has also entered the composition by another Māori women, Mihipeka Edwards (1995) of a haka for women. This haka composed in Māori language pays respect to ‘Te Wahine Atua [Woman god] Papatuanuku’ and ‘Te Whare Tangata’ (women as bearer’s of children). Edwards’ haka belies the idea that haka are exclusively Māori men’s ‘war-dances’ and is another form of Māori women’s politically based campaign for equal standing with Māori men via published literature.

Edwards’ haka, and poems by Potiki and Menzies are all forms of value creation that promote respect for Māori women and female deities within a world that continues to privilege men above women. The importance of Papatūānuku in this politically driven effort also contains the proposition that Māori women who are attuned to Māori cultural referents also respect and act as kaitiaki (guardians) over environmental health and sustainability.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFINITY AND KAIRARANGA

For the future, despite the depletion and abuse of natural resources, we must find hope in the wisdom of the past: the past as it is preserved by the present – such as the work of the weaver of fibres, the woman who cultivates, gathers, recycles ... the woman who knows and loves Papatūānuku and
celebrates the bounty of the earth, the woman who teaches, and strengthens. And endures, endures (Te Awekotuku 1991: 70).

A mixture of fibre, raranga, environmental consciousness and the material concerns connected with artistic enterprise also a part of a value-creating system that relates politically to Māori women. This system is heavily associated in raranga education with both the construction and maintenance of various ideas of ‘being Māori’ and being a kairaranga. This system includes the associations made between the botanical features of kōrari plants and kinship relations that I discussed earlier in this chapter. Spiritual connections between kairaranga and the environment are exemplified in the following instructions for a tauira (student). They involve a number of different references to Māori cosmology and culture. Therefore I quote them at length:

It is expected that the first piece of weaving completed is given away. In some tribes the custom of giving the first piece away is quite clear cut – it goes to the senior member of the family. Some tribes bury the first piece, giving it back to papatuanuku [sic]. The tauira is told this when the first piece is begun. As it is being woven, she begins to think where it will go. Usually this is to someone the weaver cares for, respects and knows will appreciate the time, energy, thought and feeling that has gone into the piece. ...By caring for the material, the weaving and for someone else, the wairua (spirit) of weaving is being acknowledged. ...The weaver normally experiences feelings of being linked with something greater than herself and the present. Māori people call this a link with nga tupuna (ancestors). Feelings of achievement and tiredness resulting from all the creative energy that has been expended add to the weaver ‘giving of herself’ when gifting that first piece away. The tauira begins to understand why weaving is more than learning manual skills (Puketapu-Hetet, 1989: 5).

This concern for maintaining connections between raranga undertaking, family connections and wairua is something I emulated by giving my first piece away to renowned kairaranga and scholar the late, Freda Kawharu. Freda provided me with many insights into raranga and other aspects of Māori tikanga relating to women and in giving her my first piece I acknowledge the great importance she has had in my subsequent work including this doctoral thesis.
Instructions for raranga tauira (students) continue in terms of raranga materials and the sustainability of their supply:

When a woven article is completed, it is time to give thanks to Tane Mahuta for the material whose life force has been given another dimension so that it lives again in another form, to give pleasure and usefulness to human kind. When we take from Tane Mahuta, we have a responsibility to this life force. This custom helps explain why flax should not be burnt. Material that is not required should be allowed to die naturally, returned to papatuanuku to begin the cycle again (Puketapu-Hetet, 1989: 5).

These instructions were, in essence at least, followed in the raranga project at Kohewhata. Therefore in discussing connections between raranga, Māori spirituality and environmental sustainability I now re-visit that marae.

A connection can be made between raranga and environmental sustainability when the health and availability of raw material is fully considered. This connection is exemplified in the concerns of Toi Maihi whose raranga tutelage at Kohewhata included an in-depth regard for the botanical features, ideal climate, water and fertilisation of plants. Her knowledge of plants extends beyond those customarily used for weaving. This knowledge has led to unconventional use of other natural materials, such as sea kelp. Her paving design for the ‘New Zealand ‘twin’ monument in Canberra is another example of her interpretations of fibre-based raranga practices innovatively transformed.

Many conversations regarding environmental problems and possible solutions took place as we wove at Kohewhata. The concern for environment therefore became part of our raranga consciousness. This was the case for both new and more experienced weavers. Two particular environmental concerns had developed by the time I began raranga at Kohewhata. Their politically driven course ran concurrently with our raranga. One of the concerns centred on a proposal by the Corrective Services Department in Aotearoa New Zealand to build a prison in Ngāwhā – a small settlement near Kaikōhe. This proposal was officially approved by the Regional Council but met with vehement opposition from local
Ngāpuhi people and other Māori on cultural and environmental grounds. The other concern relates to Lake Omapere, also located near Kaikohe that continues to show signs of deteriorating health brought about by mismanagement and chemical pollution. Efforts amongst Māori people, including kaumatua and kuia toward viable solutions to this problem continue to be on going with minimal resolution.

Whilst the Ngāwhā prison project was the centre of strident Māori protests it was generally seen at Kohewhata as connected to concerns with Lake Omapere. The Ngāwhā area includes thermal springs that are perceived by some of the Māori protesters (including kaumatua) as interconnected with other bodies of water including Lake Omapere. The validity of these perceptions was an issue in decisions of the local Council who approved the prison plans in the first instance. They were also included in a subsequent unsuccessful appeal to the Environment Court. My work at Kohewhata included discussions over these concerns, participation in Hui (meetings) including numerous court sittings relevant to the protest efforts, and help with the drafting of submissions and pamphlets.

Whilst the political struggle against the prison establishment continues and the Lake Omapere pollution levels remain, two salient connections can be made between them and raranga at Kohewhata. Firstly the environmental concerns of the surrounding area were not perceived by kairaranga as a separate issue to their work at Kohewhata. This connection reflected Māori perceptions of the inter-relatedness between environmental health, raranga materials and wairua, the deterioration of which could adversely affect human beings. Such cognitive connections were further influenced by Toi who employed raranga materials-at-hand and personal involvement in community issues to reinforce the notion of raranga practice as being intrinsic to environmental and cultural sustainability. Some of the kairaranga attached this involvement to spiritual belonging. Discussion, during raranga, often revolved around wairua though such conversations could be light-hearted rather than seriously
analytical or proselytised. Thus the values of kairaranga identity, based on raranga, spirituality and political activism have been built, albeit subtly and spontaneously, amongst Toi and her raranga students.

THE CANBERRA PARI: A SPIRITUAL REFERENCE, A CULTURAL CONTINUITY?

Māori spirituality also exists in many raranga-related forms outside Aotearoa New Zealand. The green and gold pari of the Canberra performance group Te Rere o te Tarakakao (TROTT) is a case in point involving references to deities and tapu. To explain this case further it is necessary to recall a brief observation I made in chapter 5 concerning my own pari and my mother’s association between it and the concept of tapu. Whilst issues surrounding tapu and noa have not been openly discussed by TROTT in relation to the pari, one incident occurred during a practice session I attended that veered somewhat toward these concepts.

A more senior female member instructed the women and girls on why it is not correct to raise their arms above shoulder height in performance allowing the audience to see their armpits. The reason for this precaution relates to the Māori myth involving the god Tāne and his search for a mate to procreate humanity with. In his search Tāne tried to fertilise and therefore bring to life a female form that he fashioned from earth by sexually penetrating it via its various orifices. One of these was the armpit that with its hirsute covering is comparable with the female vulva. Both vulva and armpit are tapu parts of the female body according to the Māori tikanga referred to by the woman leader. Owing to her instruction references to both tapu and Māori cosmology influences the group’s performance style. The narrative of Tāne’s search for a female uha (essence) has thus trickled down over time to Canberra and TROTT’s female performers. The fact that it has no published source does not necessarily refute its validity but points instead for the need for further research and more comprehensive education programs.
However, as yet no further discussion has been undertaken within the group over the spiritual connections, tapu or noa that might be associated directly with the pari. Given its proximity to the breasts and armpits it warrants at least some discussion over associations with tapu and noa but its significance is not incorporated in this way within the group. Nor is it part of a wider discursive context of mana, tapu and noa that includes published text, whaikōrero and mihi as well as critical academic engagement. This discourse would extend past the groups avowed knowledge of Māori tikanga that rests mainly on achieving the best performance for a paying audience or for winning a cultural competition. In terms of the earlier discussion in this chapter such engagement could begin with a critical examination of hinengaro and Māori women in relation to Māori cosmology. In this way other Māori concepts relating to kairaranga may yet take an equal place in the informed cultural awareness of the many sectors of Australia’s multicultural society.

CHAPTER DISCUSSION

The common ground of many global struggles for recognition are eloquently described by Gloria Anzaldúa (1990:210-211)

Los chicanos, how patient we seem, how very patient. There is the quiet of the Indian about us. We know how to survive. When other races have given up their tongue, we’ve kept ours. We know what it is to live under the hammer blow of dominant norteamericano culture. But more than we count the blows, we count the days the weeks the years the centuries the eons until the white laws and commerce and customs will rot in the deserts they’ve created, lie bleached ... Stubborn, persevering, impenetrable as stone, yet possessing a malleability that renders us unbreakable, we, the mestizas and mestizos, will remain.

Similarly to the mestizas, raranga has revived and regenerated despite the ‘wasteland’ that has for so long attempted to negate it. The prevailing influence of colonialism has engendered a countermeasure in this chapter. It privileges new interpretation of Māori language terms, including uruuruwhenua, hinengaro and wairua, taking into account the ‘need to invent new vocabularies so
as not to remain trapped by those that already have a hold on us’ (Olson, 1995:172).

This chapter has presented a variety of pathways towards an ideology based on raranga-based discourses and Māori terminology. No attempt is made to idealise Māori identity and belonging as a superior discursive position, yet this chapter has drawn upon raranga-based metaphors such as the whiri and other Māori terms for knowledge, an epistemological rationale and an engagement with spirituality that transcends intercultural conflict. Accordingly, concepts such as ururuwhenua are extended beyond their localised application to Māori culture into wider trans-national and transcultural concerns. Uruuruwhenua therefore becomes an ideology that requires a rigorous and critical understanding of social behaviour yet incorporates Māori language and concepts in its discursive engagement. It is this ideology that I referred to in chapter 5 as the ‘soul’ of this thesis. This ‘soul’ has now been personified in this chapter as an idealised kairaranga.

This kairaranga, a collective entity rather than a specific person, weaves together inter-cultural relationships despite the divisions and divisiveness it must also acknowledge as part of global existence. This entity also attunes itself to a spiritual world that provides models for responsible guardianship and nurturing of global resources (human, floral, and faunal for example) in perpetuity. The ururuwhenua or soul of an intercultural cultural weaver, such as myself, must therefore be cognizant with the continuities, complexities and contradictions of Māori cultural discourses in which raranga plays an indispensable part. In concluding part 2 of this thesis, I have only begun to explore sociological connections between kairaranga identity, knowledge, politics, education and spirituality.

1 The word atua is not gender-specific.
2 The symposium entitled Translocalities took place at the Canberra School of Art on the Australian National University campus. It was jointly organized by this school and the Centre for Cross-cultural Research and ran over three days.
3 Gunew (1994:45) includes in her argument Stuart Hall’s observation that:
Far from being grounded in a necessary ‘recovery’ of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which, when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past.

4 I refer to common conversational usage of the word *wai* alongside dictionary definitions (Ryan, 1997; Williams, H. W., 1975).

5 This narrative is my distillation of other accounts represented in literature (Alpers, 1964), paintings (Kahukiwa and Grace, 1991) and songs (Pipi, 1999).

6 The Māori words of this haka entitled *He Haka ma te Wahine* are the first of a series of perspectives from Māori women writers available in the anthology *Toi Wahine* (Irwin and Ramsden (Eds.) 1995).
KA PUÄWAI TE KÖRARI, KA MUTU TENEI RARANGA (THE FLAX FLOWER MATURES, THIS WEAVING ENDS)

Various details of my kete mahi and kahurangi, signifying their collective importance to all chapters of this thesis.
'BIRDS' WEAVE THE WORLD

My mother's childhood recollections include a ruri (chant) performed by her mother in time with the flight of a pihoihoi (lark) that she frequently observed on their family homestead in Kaikohe. My grandmother's ruri combined references to a bird and its flight, with place-names, landscape features and raranga-based metaphors. My mother has composed a new ruri, capturing the same lyrics and themes of her mother's. This ruri encapsulates the darting actions of the pihoihoi in flight, rising up from its nest and eventually returning to it. The bird's flight-path is a directional interweaving that extends from and continues the bird nest's woven form. Like my grandmother's ruri, some of my mother's lyrics are untranslatable and onomatopoeic in character, combining the sounds and rhythms of avian flight and raranga. I therefore translate this ruri into English only where possible, leaving interpretation of the 'sound-words' to the reader's imagination and own sense of rhythm:

Ti-riti-riti ti
Ti-waru-waru ta
Rere atu, rere mai (fly out, fly back)
Tipi atu, tipi mai (lean out, lean back)
Tipi-tipi ki te matau (veer right)
Tipi-tipi ki te maui (veer left)
Tu-rere (hover) tu
Tu-rere (hover) ta
Pio-pio-pio

Ka rere, ka rere, ka rere kaha (fly, fly, fly strong)
Whiti mai ki Whiria (cross over in the direction of Whiria, our sacred mountain)
Whiria-haere ki Ramaroa, ki Whirinaki, ki Omanaia ('plait' towards Ramaroa, Whirinaki and Omanaia, our homelands)

Ka pae! Ka pae! Ka pae! (Pause, pause, pause)

Rere mai ki Te Tairāwhiti (fly east)
Rarangahia te katoa (weave the world together)
Ki Putahi, ki Kaikohe, (to the sacred mountain Putahi, and Kaikohe)
Ki nga taonga-whenua, (to sacred lands)
I Omapere, i Utakura (of Omapere, of Utakura)
Me oki, me oki, me oki (then rest, rest, rest, hovering in flight)

Tuwhera-ana nga parirau (wings unfurl)
Kopari-ana nga parirau (wings furl in readiness)
Ka huri raro ki te kohanga (turn now, down towards the nest)
Ka ruku! Ka ruku! (Swiftly descend, descend)
Ki te whenua (to the land, your nest, your grounding)
Tio

Tio

Tio

Ka tau! (Land safely) Whiti! Whiti! Ora! Ora! (Replenished)

Nā (composed by) T. E. Diamond

On the 'other side' of the world, in the United Kingdom, a contributor to a monograph entitled Matter, materiality and modern culture (Graves-Brown (ed.), 2000), Tim Ingold, has written:

In all likelihood the human basketmaker has an idea in mind of the final form of the construction whereas the weaverbird almost certainly does not. Yet in both cases, it is the pattern of regular movement, not the idea, that generates the form. And the fluency and dexterity of this movement is a function of skills
that are developmentally incorporated into the modus operandi of the body, whether avian or human — through practice and experience in an environment (Ingold, 2000: 67).

My mother’s (and my grandmother’s) ruri and Ingold’s observations of the weaving methods of humans (into wastepaper baskets, for example) and weaverbirds (into nests) combine auspiciously with the Canberra-based diasporic Māori cultural group’s name Te Rere o te Tarakakao (TROTT). The latter, as explained earlier, makes direct reference to a migratory bird whose flight path extends across the Tasman Sea, including the landmasses of Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. All three references to birds as weavers, weaving nests and flight paths (both short distance and migratory) equally inspire the structure of this final chapter that looks back over the discursive marae constituting this thesis, and looks forward towards future study beyond it.

THE DISCOURSE FIBRES OF THIS THESIS: A CONTEXT OF THEORETICAL, CORPOREAL, POLITICAL AND SPIRITUAL INTERWEAVING

Like the pīhoihoi, this thesis has flown in various directions, yet has maintained its grounding (or ‘nest’) in Trans-Tasman Māori culture. It has provided a broad multi-dimensional, generic interpretation of the indispensability of raranga in Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses. In chapter 1, discussion of this generic characterisation began with a linguistic foray as a general term that approximates the English word, weaving. It was shown that generic raranga comprises more than the diagonal plaiting techniques that result in such items as kete and whāriki, disrupting strict categorisations of raranga that limit it to one technical form. References to raranga (in its many fibrous forms) have been shown to exist in building architecture, clothing, hold-alls, and household furnishing, as well as in a variety of other two- and three-dimensional items including paintings, photographs, websites and war memorial monuments. Under the generic umbrella of raranga, fibre was thus presented as versatile in its material uses.
RARANGA AND THE STRUCTURAL DESIGN OF THIS THESIS

Figure 8.1: Detail of kete whakairo showing dyed strands of fibre that are woven to form decorative patterns. These patterns may signify belonging to groups of people and/or places, awareness of fashions and market trends and/or the innovative design skills of a kairaranga.

Aspects of raranga techniques and items have also inspired me in the visual presentation and structure of this thesis. Every chapter-heading page, for example, has featured photographed images of two raranga items taken from various angles. Also, this thesis comprises continuous strands of argument, much as the strands of fibre woven in raranga items are continuous and ever present, though they may be temporarily submerged beneath other strands. Such strands are often dyed to achieve continuous patterns overall (see figure 8.1). Each strand may therefore be traced individually, though the overall dyed patterns of each raranga item inter-relate each individual strand with the others. Similarly, this thesis comprises discursive strands, which are both separate and inter-related.

RARANGA AND IDENTITY
Raranga was also demonstrated as not only referring to various weaving techniques and items resulting from those techniques. Raranga references, including those relating to fibre, were also shown to occur in Māori proverbs, mythological narratives and philosophical viewpoints that feed notions of Māori cultural identity. Therefore, my focus on raranga items and techniques does not
outweigh the importance that this thesis places on people (particularly Māori women) in terms their cultural affiliations, creativity, contradictions, conflicts and commonalities that at various and, in some cases, simultaneous points, undergo change. This emphasis on people as well as raranga techniques and items, stemmed from the fact that raranga is undertaken predominantly though not exclusively by Māori women. My aim within this thesis is value-laden in its attempts to provide a conduit for weavers (particularly Māori women kairaranga, but also Indigenous Australian weavers) who in various ways articulate (Clifford: 2001) particular senses of cultural identity and belonging within local, regional and global contexts. Our articulations include creative practical skills, vocalised and written thoughts, political actions and spiritual affirmations.

However, another related discursive strand in this thesis also problematises social identity. Māori cultural identity, for example, was posited as diverse in make-up and dependent on gender, tribal and geographic variables. In chapter 1 an interpretation of terms relevant to raranga and categories of cultural identity including ‘women’, ‘men’, ‘Māori’, ‘Pākehā’ and ‘Ngāpuhi’ conveyed complex cultural identities and social values. In the first three chapters, for example, I located raranga within Aotearoa New Zealand alone, emphasising the northern rohe (tribal territory) of Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu. I have therefore distinguished Ngāpuhi from other Māori world-views to demonstrate differences amongst Māori tribal identifications, affiliations and ways in which these are affected by migration and gendered social hierarchies. This Ngāpuhi distinction also provides a critique of any racist or sexist ideology that sees all Māori people as essentially the same.

A CRITIQUE OF COLONIALISM
Another important discursive ‘strand’ in this thesis examines the shortcomings of past research and the oppressive prisonisation of Māori women that is a hallmark of postcolonial experiences in
Aotearoa New Zealand. A karanga (a written ‘call’) into a discursive marae at the beginning of this thesis therefore signified its focus on Māori women and raranga within a wider view of postcolonial Māori life dating back to the early 19th century. This emphasis on Māori philosophies was juxtaposed with a preference for Māori language terms within this English language thesis and comprises an in-built critique of colonialist systems of the ‘West’.

This critique extends to colonialist notions of time and space. Raranga, as an important postcolonial discursive subject, was therefore related in this thesis to its practical undertaking and cultural symbolism that has changed with time. Raranga discourses were presented anecdotally and analytically, as being in a state of constant cultural flux, yet also enmeshed within a temporal web of inter-related events. Time in this thesis therefore ceases to have clearly defined borders between the past and the present. Thus, its discursive marae predisposes itself to alternative timeframes; non-Western understandings of landscape and geographic mapping and non-Christian cosmology, predominantly derived from Māori culture, rather than Western hegemonies.

**Ethnographic research**

Ethnographic research has fuelled this form of postcolonial critique. My current understanding of raranga has developed due to personal experiences and other’s accounts of my family history, and other Māori people in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, who have expressed opinions on various aspects of Māori culture, including raranga. In each chapter of this thesis, I have endeavoured to provide spaces for these views. As I have explained in chapter 1, they are important voices that build upon rare published accounts of raranga; part of a corpus of scarce though growing archival resources from which more published exposition may flourish. To this extent much of my intellectual effort is politically laden in fostering increased and sustained academic engagement with raranga and Māori cultural contexts.
However, it was also made clear in my descriptions and analysis of raranga praxis at Kohewhata that the language of kairaranga is not always spoken. It was, for example, demonstrated that raranga knowledge is connected to human senses and sensualities and that my ethnographic research needed to take into account non-verbal modes of communication. It would have been remiss of me to ignore this kind of communication that was such a part of my learning at Kohewhata in the ‘writing up’ stage that comprises this thesis; a thesis that privileges written forms of communication. As I soon discuss in relation to future directions in which this thesis may travel, alternative methods of exposition such as video-theses may better capture the sense-based non-verbal communication that is very much part of raranga praxis.

A RELEGATION OF RARANGA AND MĀORI WOMEN

Once the importance to this thesis of postcolonial feminist theory was established in chapter 1, it was progressively shown that Māori women and raranga are often absent in dominant discourses on Māori culture. This thesis has, therefore, focussed on the relegation of values attached to raranga and Māori women in a number of different Trans-Tasman social contexts. This relegation was made especially obvious in discussing contexts where Māori men, whose exclusive roles in whakairo and whaikōrero, for example, have dominated both popular and academic perceptions of Māori culture. Hierarchical levels of status and sanctity under Māori conceptual frameworks including mana, tapu and noa, for example, were shown to also relegate Māori women, raranga practice and raranga items in relation to other forms of Māori cultural production undertaken by men. This relegation was shown to be the case despite the over-all social disadvantage of Māori compared to Pākehā people, and burgeoning Māori cultural revivalism, particularly in the latter quarter of the 20th century. It relies on memory losses where the importance of kairaranga and raranga are not adequately acknowledged in dominant discourses on Māori culture.
By contrast, my participation in raranga activities at Kohewhata Marae, resulting from university-sponsored research discussed in chapter 3, brought me into my initial, then ongoing contact with practicing kairaranga. This kairaranga-based network has since grown and now includes weavers of many different cultures. At Kohewhata I was able to learn from experienced and highly talented kairaranga in practical raranga skills and well as Māori philosophical perspectives. Importantly, Māori women kairaranga at Kohewhata informally discussed their personal histories and the various ways in which raranga engagement changed their lives in terms of cultural consciousness, assertion and self-respect. This liberating aspect of raranga praxis was posited as one of many reasons why the importance of raranga to Māori cultural discourses should not be denied.

Values attached to marae construction (chapters 3 and 4) also featured in thesis, in terms of Māori cultural assertion and taking into account highly gendered labour distributions. For example, while highlighting the high value that Māori women on marae placed on the practice and outcomes (physical, intellectual and spiritual) of their raranga, I also engaged with their imposed and restrictive gender roles.

Marae-based restrictions on women were also linked to patriarchal, colonialist social contexts within and outside marae. Marae protocols and organising bodies were thus analysed as sites of both inspiration and contention for kairaranga and this focus on uneven power distributions extended beyond the marae context. Value issues surrounding raranga were therefore conveyed in relation to locations of power on marae and further afield within local, regional and global communities. In chapters 4, 5 and 6, for instance, I provided examples of how raranga and Māori women fared in plans for a museum’s exhibition, a monument’s opening ceremony and the activities of a Canberran Māori cultural performance group.
IMPLICATIONS FOR CULTURAL REPRESENTATION

Cultural representation is therefore an important strand in this thesis that on the one hand includes Māori voices and on the other, considers ways in which raranga, kairaranga and wearers of raranga items are portrayed visually, and inaccurately. In chapter 2, European colonialism and its aftermath that continues today in Aotearoa New Zealand, was linked to shortcomings of visual representations of raranga, raranga items and Māori women including kairaranga. Such shortcomings as a high visual profile of people wearing raranga items despite very little recorded information about the wearers and makers of these items, were linked to general discursive silences surrounding Māori women and their lives. In chapter 2’s discussion of various raranga items, I observed that portraits (available to the general public in brochures, published books and the collections of public institutions) of Māori people often include raranga items such as cloaks and pari. Raranga items were therefore shown to have effectively contributed to race- and gender-based stereotypes through their inclusion in visual representations such as photographs and paintings of Māori people. Nevertheless, it was also shown that very little information exists regarding the makers of raranga items that feature in these representations.

Similar silences and invisibility of kairaranga were also incorporated into my discussion the National Museum of Australia’s (NMA) planned exhibition for late 2003 that will include the Ngāpuhi chief Hone Heke Pokai (Heke). As chapter 5 showed, in my role as research consultant for this exhibition I considered culturally sensitive negotiations between the museum and Ngapuhi descendants of his family as highly appropriate given that such a procedure was not always institutional policy in the past. I also argued that best attempts should be made to include kairaranga and raranga items in the exhibition displays and protocols as an improvement on earlier institutional practices that have denied their importance.
This inclusion would apply to the content of the displays and to receiving taonga and Ngapuhi people within the museum with culturally appropriate ceremony that must include Māori women. It was also argued that such measures would enable a more even-handed representation of Heke than simplistic representations of him as 'savage', 'warrior' or 'outlaw' would. Representations of the Ngapuhi chief were therefore incorporated into this thesis as relevant to representations of Māori people generally and Māori women in particular due to a taken-for-granted, unacknowledged and disputed presence of raranga items.

This point has particular currency as events associated with the *Outlawed* exhibition have taken another, as yet unresolved, turn. The whāriki's appearance in the exhibition display, discussed earlier, is currently under threat. Following the advice of one Māori cultural advisor, David Rankin, the NMA is now questioning the validity of the whāriki in relation to Heke's biography (Duke, 2003). An ongoing dispute has subsequently developed involving Toi Maihi, who defends the whāriki’s relevance to exhibition display (advised in personal communication – see Maihi, 2003b).

A newspaper article has also appeared in the *New Zealand Herald* (Watkin, 2003) featuring David Rankin’s demand to the Auckland War Memorial Museum (AWMM) that it returns all taonga that can be associated with Heke to unspecified Ngāpuhi kaumatua. The article also provides a summary of AWMM's response that disputes David Rankin’s authority and right to make such demands. Renata Tane, a kaumatua who signed the official Ngāpuhi mandate to support the NMA’s inclusion of Heke’s representation in *Outlawed* is quoted as also disputing David Rankin’s authority, indicating that the details of the exhibition’s theme were falsely conveyed to him.

It is becoming increasingly clear, therefore, that the Ngāpuhi mandate signatories are divided in their opinions over the exhibition’s theme and David Rankin’s representative authority. In terms of published accounts of these events, it appears to be a
contest amongst men, as no women's opinions have yet entered its media coverage. It is this point that primarily links the current controversy to the overall question of this thesis, with its focus on the indispensability of raranga and Māori women in Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses.

There is a possibility that the issue of Heke's whāriki will be dragged into the current media coverage of *Outlawed*. There is an equal possibility that any significance of whāriki in Heke's life story will be dismissed by more dominant discourses concerning Māori culture. The choices of NMA staff members working within colonialist frameworks will ultimately decide the fate of Māori representations within their institution, including the appearance of the whāriki in the exhibition. This dependence can be linked discursively to the tenuous position raranga and Māori women generally hold in dominant Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses that privilege Māori men.

Other Māori cultural representatives and representations, for example, may yet undermine Toi Maihi's authority in defence of the NMA's inclusion of the whāriki replica in *Outlawed*. Exactly how the outcome of this dispute over representative authority impacts on the overall status of kairaranga views in Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses, remains to be seen. Thus, Webster's (1998: 39) 'whole way of struggle', discussed at length in this thesis in relation to raranga and Māori women, continues.

**THE Ubiquitous, Unsung Parī**

Representations of Māori women discussed in chapter 2 also extended to those dressed in 'traditional Māori costume' including the parī as featured in tourism brochures and books on Māori art. The parī was shown to provide a telling example of social issues relating to Māori representation (both by Māori people and of Māori people by Pākehā people) and values. Though readily available on the Internet and reproducible with permission from State and

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National libraries, the cultural significance of pari and the identities of their wearers remain undetermined by those institutions.

In chapter 2, for example, I discussed a photograph of my mother wearing a kuta pari in the 1940s, linking it with a photograph of a pari worn by children in a cultural competition in Maraeora, Northern Aotearoa New Zealand in the 1950s. The latter photograph is currently held by the National Library of Aotearoa New Zealand.

In technical terms, the two examples were included to demonstrate that pari forms range from those made from tāniko and tapestry to diagonal raranga that is similar to that of kete and whāriki, exemplifying syntheses of various forms of cultural production. While they are often used to signify Māori cultural belonging, they also resonate with 20th century Māori cultural adaptation to other cultural influences.

In describing relationships between my mother’s pari and the Maraeora example I barely touched the surface of a history of the pari (in its many different forms) that deserves far greater engagement in northern Aotearoa New Zealand and elsewhere, including other countries such as Australia. In chapters 5 and 6 I also discussed my own pari that has travelled with me to Australia and another ‘green and gold’ example worn by a Māori cultural performance group in Canberra. This subsequent discussion broadened the local context of my mother’s pari and the Maraeora example, to a transnational one.

However, my analysis of the ubiquitous presence of pari as cultural emblems usually (though not always) designed and made by Māori women and their significance to Māori cultural performance groups was offset by its notable exclusion from dominant raranga discourses. Pari do not strictly qualify as raranga items, according to some kairaranga more engaged with notions of traditional raranga, for example. Yet, I also showed that notions of sanctity (tapu and noa) could be associated with pari. Thus, I engaged with a variety of values beyond the question of whether or not pari are authentically demonstrative of Māori culture, given their tourism-based origins.
Nevertheless it remains clear that pari are doubly marginalised by dominant discourses on Māori culture that also currently deny the significance of raranga and kairaranga. Pari have been presented as pivotal examples of cultural creativity that can be taken into account when considering notions of authentic Māori culture, Māori cultural production, and ways in which Māori women have been visually represented since British colonisation, particularly in the 20th century.

RARANGA IN MIGRATION
The importance of Trans-Tasman social contexts to this thesis cannot be over-emphasised. In chapter 6, for example, I provided a brief history of Trans-Tasman Māori migration that dates back to the beginnings of British colonialism in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia followed by airport scenes and their relevance to Māori cultural migration. Also included in this chapter was a description of a raranga-based Anzac monument in Canberra that was officially opened in 2001. A description and analysis of its opening ceremony was related to opinions held by Ngāpuhi residents in Australia on Māori identity and raranga that pertain to value creation, maintenance and change. Thus, each context of Māori identity featured social values that either directly or indirectly involve raranga.

The Australian contexts indicated socio-economic changes for Māori and a variety of attitudes towards Māori (specifically Ngāpuhi) identity and cultural belonging. Identity issues affecting raranga and kairaranga were also discursively linked with Indigenous Australian weavers who have similarly been affected by, and continue to negotiate various social and institutional derivatives of British colonialism. As cultural theorists, Deleuze and Guattari (1990: 59) have suggested in relation to literature, a ‘minor’ artistic practice (in this case, raranga) is not about its ‘lack’, but rather about its relativity to dominant discourses. They argue that the primary mark of these practices is that they are inflected by ‘a high co-
efficient of deterritorialization'. Their view reinforces my argument that raranga is a critical point of social and political energy at this moment of transnational movement and after intense deterritorialization. The current ubiquity of raranga is dependant on political, technical, social, educational, environmental and historical factors and speaks of its relevance to Māori people in Trans-Tasman postcolonial contexts today.

A QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE AND A SPIRITUAL ENVIRONMENT

However, this regional focus that grew from a more localised view of raranga and Māori people in Aotearoa New Zealand and then reached Australia, was also extended into more global and spiritual realms, that feature in many conversations amongst Māori people. To add emphasis to the importance of references to raranga and women in Māori cultural discourses, I explored issues surrounding philosophies relating to knowledge and a spiritual environment. For example, raranga, Māori women and intellectual enquiry were discursively linked with a literal and metaphoric interpretation of the Māori word hinengaro, as a research rationale based on Māori vocabulary.

Also, from an insider’s perspective of Māori culture, both raranga and Māori women were seen as the uruuruwhenua, the soul of this thesis based on a spiritual environment attached to raranga discourses. In this sense the discursive strand regarding uruuruwhenua that began with a discussion of the Ngāpuhi ancestor, Nukutawhitihia and his karakia as he arrived in northern Aotearoa New Zealand, became an epistemological grounding for this thesis. It is a grounding based on Māori cultural discourses but open to other theoretical perspectives that respect and acknowledge cultural differences and commonalities.

The raranga-based discursive marae of thesis has thus extended to senses of global belonging, to the inevitably of death and to spirituality. Here, raranga-based social values are also apparent. Whereas various attachments to the local environment
were particularly evident amongst some kairaranga during my fieldwork, for example, such concerns also extended globally via an identity politics that fosters environmental, social and economic sustainability. The inclusivity of this raranga-based philosophy was therefore shown to point to the possibility and actuality of inter-cultural collaborations that emphasise respect for differences as well as common goals.

A CHALLENGE TO MARGINALISED CULTURAL PRODUCTION

In its critique of the relegation of Māori women and raranga, this thesis throws up a challenge to the ongoing marginalisation of creative cultural production. It is presented in similar terms to those of a co-editor of the book *Out there* mentioned earlier, Russell Ferguson:

Too often the alternatives to dominant cultural power have been successfully segregated, so that many different bodies of marginalized creative production exist in uneasy isolation. Such isolation can only contribute to the security of a political power which implicitly defines itself as representative of a stable center around which everyone else must be arranged. The juxtapositions made in this book are intended to challenge that pattern (Ferguson, 1990: 9).

In spite of its connections with other forms of weaving around the world (exemplified in this thesis with links to Indigenous Australian weaving), raranga has not previously attracted the focussed academic engagement provided by this thesis. In political terms and given the disadvantages faced by Māori people since British colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand, this thesis provides an opportunity to offer some redress, a chance to engage with an imbalance that has over time, privileged some aspects of culture within that country and relegated others. This imbalance is not only apparent between cultures that may be distinguished as Māori or as Pākehā but is also evident within those groups depending on other variables such as gender differences, religious beliefs and locations of residence. They are presented in this thesis as part of a field of values that reflect cultural entanglements, disjuncture, arrivals and departures. They contribute to global weaving-based fields of
enquiry involving women, though much of it has yet to reach the published page.

I have aimed to follow what Cornel West (1990: 31) has described as an approach that is: ‘partisan, partial, engaged and crisis-centered, yet always keeps open a skeptical eye to avoid dogmatic traps, premature closures, formulaic formulations or rigid conclusions’. In the process of presenting this thesis, relationships between raranga and other Māori cultural referents (including identity), and Pākehā ‘art-cultural systems’ (Clifford, 1988: 222-229) have received critical engagement. I have argued against strict compartmentalised methodological frameworks for raranga-based enquiry. I am inspired by the views of kairaranga who continue to be open-minded on raranga traditions and innovations, in recommending that future research methodologies contributing to raranga discourse maintain an inclusive rather than divisive disposition.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS
In revaluing raranga, therefore, this thesis remains open-ended, providing groundwork for subsequent study of raranga in Trans-Tasman contexts. It has highlighted various areas where published information on raranga and Māori culture either does not exist or is scarce. A history of the pari in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, for example, is one subject that could be taken further. Representation issues associated with pari are discussed in this thesis in order to encourage further academic exploration, rather than to complain about academic negligence. The pari was analysed in relation to cloaks and to visual representations of Māori women but deeper analyses would also compare it with other examples existing around the world, beyond the Australian examples I have discussed in this thesis.

The significance of Ngāpuhi views of raranga in Aotearoa New Zealand has been extended to Māori cultural discourses in Australia. Such ‘insider’ views of Māori culture including raranga in
Australia have given greater insights to this thesis beyond those that may be gained from official recorded demographic statistics. Much more work can be done in this area to highlight cultural differences and commonalities amongst Australia’s migrant Māori population. This area of research has not attracted substantial academic engagement despite a long-standing relationship between Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia that has involved Māori people, directly and indirectly through British colonisation. With further study, more insights may be gained into transnational Māori cultural identification and practices over time, beyond the Trans-Tasman examples provided in this thesis.

There is also the matter of Indigenous Trans-Tasman histories. A history of relations between Māori and Indigenous Australians, for example, has received some introductory examination in this thesis but could be extended. Tools in this research may include oral accounts, genealogical records and as yet unearthed archival records. In relation to raranga, such historical investigation could reveal local histories predating more recent weaving co-operative ventures such as those that contributed to the design of the Anzac monument in Canberra. It could provide more substantial comparisons amongst Trans-Tasman Indigenous groups of their experiences of colonialism, relating them to weaving practices and outcomes.

The privileging of Māori women kairaranga and Indigenous Australian weavers in this thesis, itself also open to further research must be extended to include other weaving practices and practitioners. A study of Pākehā and male practitioners of raranga may, for example, build upon the findings of this thesis. Focus could also, for example, extend to male kairaranga in relation to the hegemonic masculinities currently affecting Māori cultural production. The discursive strands of this thesis may also be taken up again for future projects that contribute to greater understanding of ‘mixed identity’ (race- or gender-based for example) and its
ramifications for raranga and other forms of cultural production in Trans-Tasman contexts.

As indicated early in this thesis, raranga based discourses can also be extended further in relation to globalisation theories that reach beyond its Trans-Tasman focus but spring from its postcolonial feminist theoretical bases that are grounded in references to Māori culture. Issues such as the marginalisation of women and weaving in dominant patriarchal discourses on culture may yet be addressed in a worldwide focus that includes raranga. Translocal, transregional and transnational engagements with raranga could therefore be extended in future. They could contribute further to intercultural studies of the effects of globalisation on women and the various forms of weaving practices (and their attendant philosophies) that currently exist around the world.

Lastly, but not least, it is clear that raranga is an indispensable part of Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses, yet it has been a great challenge to convey the various nuances of raranga praxis and theory in the written form of this thesis. If raranga is metaphorically compared to a bird then surely its discursive ‘wings’ would be strengthened with other forms of discourse that communicate with all human senses, beyond those that rely on written words and still photographs frozen on paper. A thesis that fully demonstrates the value of raranga in cultural discourses would continuously convey the rhythmic sounds, the heady scents of fibre, the grunts, gasps and muscular tensions, the joys and frustrations, laughter and tears; that vast variety of raranga praxis and lived experiences of kairaranga. From this praxis, a plethora of philosophies (including cosmological interpretations) may yet be confirmed, disputed and created anew through alternative thesis forms, including video- and sound-recordings. Thus, if the ‘bird’ called raranga discourse is to fly well, then available technology extending beyond written documentation, rather than the sky, is its only limit.
POROPOROAKI (FAREWELL)

As marae hui (gatherings) draw to a close, a ceremonial poroporoaki often takes place that includes mihi, karakia and waiata. The mihi on such occasions may contain some final announcements, reflections and comments relevant to matters discussed earlier and suggestions for a related kaupapa (agenda) for subsequent hui. These mihi, therefore, often refer to unfinished business. Similarly, I now provide a final mihi relating to the discursive marae of this thesis.

The discursive strands that have so far been woven in this thesis must now be left unfinished, awaiting further developments. Indeed, if this thesis is compared to a well-made kete whakairo, then it is only the plaiting of its ‘handles’ constituting the examination process that ensures the completion of my doctoral candidature. Eventually, however, this ‘kete’ that metaphorically carries a discursive marae may gather fresh insights and the critical engagement of other discursive fibres from other ‘weavers of the world’. Here is a kaupapa or agenda for future ‘hui’ (discursive ‘gatherings’).

In closing, I therefore foster in the form of a combined karakia and waiata that embellishes my final mihi, continued engagement with raranga in Trans-Tasman Māori cultural discourses. I have composed this prayer-song of hope for the future of raranga-based engagement:

Tiakina te rito o te kōrari

Nurture the heart of the kōrari plant

Tiakina te uruuruwhenua o te kairaranga

Nurture the soul of the weaver

Kia puāwai ano te ao o te iwi
So that our world will flourish once again

*  

For the moment, this work rests

Heoi ano mō naianei

Pai mutunga!
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