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**The Colonial Gaze In Aotearoa New Zealand:
Origins, Residue, and Means for Mitigation**

An Honor's Thesis
Presented By
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To
The Department of History
The Department of Museum Studies

Connecticut College
New London, Connecticut
May 4, 2020

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INTRODUCTION

In this thesis I will discuss the colonial gaze as it has affected Aotearoa New Zealand. Aotearoa is the Māori name for the land that is now the country of New Zealand. The most popularized meaning of the name translates from *Te Reo Māori* to English as 'land of the long white cloud.' In the early nineteenth century, 'New Zealand' was created as a British colonial project. Prior to European arrival, Aotearoa was inhabited by Māori, who had a living society of their own, with an indivisible relationship with the land. The *tangata whenua* (people of the land) of present-day New Zealand feel the lasting effects of the unwarranted treatment of their ancestors during the colonization of Aotearoa. 'Postcolonial' experiences of indigenous people across the globe are eerily similar. British colonizers did not simply colonize the land, along with their descendants and the society they constructed, Aotearoa and the Māori people were intellectually colonized. Colonialism reaches multidimensionally, minds, bodies, culture, and ecosystems have been colonized, which is why the twenty-first century is seeing major efforts towards decolonization.

Chapter One will explicate the origins and development of the colonial gaze, with a focus on the British Colonization of Aotearoa. I will reflect upon the roles of key historical figures such as James Cook and Edward Gibbon Wakefield, and position my discussion within the present context of the 250th anniversary of *The Endeavor's* landing on Aotearoa. Chapter Two will delve into the ways in which museums have both contributed to and mitigated the colonial gaze. Chapter Three will explore unique perspective and potency of Māori contributions to decolonization in the contemporary.

A working definition of the *colonial gaze* is requisite in this paper. The *colonial gaze* to which I refer is a gaze on the indigenous people, culture, and landscape of Aotearoa, independent though now intertwined with Western people, culture, and constructions of landscape. This gaze is the inferior way through which Māori bodies and culture is viewed by the white man who has long and unjustly dominated greater society in New Zealand. The choice to use the term *colonial gaze* as opposed to *post-colonial gaze* is deliberate. Though Aotearoa New Zealand has enjoyed dominion status within the British Empire since 1907, and a member of the United Nations since 1945, the residue of colonialism remains palpable. It is one thing to remove the Crown government, the nucleus of imperial power and center that inherently generates a periphery – in this case the Indigenous Māori, but that does not mean that all is decolonized.

Beginning in the twentieth century, legislation to promote harmonious relations across Aotearoa has been written. In 1971 the Race Relations Act outlawed discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, and/or ethnicity. In 1977, the Human Rights Commission Act extended the legislation by adding marital status, sex, religion, and ethical belief. Most recently, the Human Rights Act 1993 added sexual orientation, family status, and disability. These legal documents aim to protect the Māori people against blatant racism, but have no jurisdiction when it comes to less overt forms. In the contemporary we most often see racism in modern form. By way of illustration, the rhetoric that refers to indigenous people is revealing of their place as a group in society, and where they sit on the social ladder.

The white man has controlled history books for centuries. In turn, narratives have been Eurocentric. Misunderstanding, misrepresentation and essentialization, contribute to the othering and barbarization of a group. Simple-to-understand stories and concepts have been complicated and misunderstood due to xenophobic approaches. Māori had no written history until Europeans came to Aotearoa New Zealand and started writing their English or roughly-translated stories down. Today, we have British journals to learn from as a means to understand the mentalities of their authors. For Māori, oral tradition and lived practices have been the primary means for passing down information generationally. 'We,' non-Māori, and citizens of the globalized world, cannot access that information in the same manner we would open a primary text. Unfortunately, this means that the narratives are imbalanced as historically, and presently, the Western approach to accessing information has dominated scholarship. White colonizers have long enjoyed a monopoly on the production of 'scholarly' knowledge, especially that pertaining to Māori.

Britain's colonizing project in New Zealand infused the narratives with imperial loyalty and a sense of settler nationalism. I plan to illustrate how contemporary Māori, and those sympathetic to their cause, are challenging and rewriting this biased colonial history, and exposing the ways in which colonial controlled narratives have lasting detrimental effects. In the contemporary, for Māori people and culture to truly thrive in greater New Zealand society, and heal from the wounds opened in the seventeenth century, requires reparations to their reputation in society. They must be valued as equals in order to avoid the diminishment of their culture, and transversely promote the revitalization of integral elements of their culture, like *Te Reo* (the language). Museums

and galleries are institutions that people believe provide a source of trustworthy and credible information. To reshape the image of Indigenous people and cultures, means to reshape their representation in such places.

POSITIONALITY

I was born and raised in Milford, Connecticut in the United States of America. I am currently a senior at Connecticut College, a small liberal arts school. I am majoring in history with a concentration in East Asia and am in the museum studies certificate program. Until February of 2019, I had never left the United States. I spent six months in 2019 in Wellington, New Zealand where I studied at Victoria University of Wellington and interned at the New Zealand Portrait Gallery Te Pūkenga Whakaata.

I am eager to make this academic contribution in the field of globalization as an emerging area in scholarship as I have been particularly fascinated by the role of global capitalism as it relates to the experience of marginalized groups. The capitalist mindset inherently produces and reproduces power imbalances that lead to the othering of people that threaten the agendas of those in 'superior' positions, which revolve around productivity. The spread of the seeds of the capitalist systems we know today have strong roots in colonial times, and the historical practices of imperialism.

My positionality means that I am not an expert on New Zealand history, nor am I a museum professional. I acknowledge the privileges I enjoy and am grateful for the opportunities that have allowed me to research and write this paper. As a college student living and learning in 2020, I am enveloped by concern for the future of the globalized world. As I have trained for a career in museology, I have confronted the moral conflicts presented by the idea of museums and galleries as institutions.

Historically, museums are elitist and deeply imperial. In the contemporary, as museums have become increasingly aware of this pitfall, they are making efforts to reverse these values. I aim to explore the ways in which individuals and institutions in the field are

moving to tackle such a task. In the 'postcolonial' world, I seek to see how we are 'decolonizing,' representations of various colonized peoples and mindfully working to avoid perpetuating misrepresentation and inequality.

CHAPTER ONE

Historical Origins and Evolution of the Colonial Gaze

The past is never contemporary, but history always is. History is always bound to the present in some way. History always represents the present in the ways it re-presents the past. -Greg Dening, *History "in" the Pacific*, 1989

This chapter provides the historical and historiographical background for understanding contested Māori representations in contemporary times. In seeking to map the post-contact understandings of and relating to *tangata whenua* (people of the land, Indigenous people), a proper historical narrative is necessary to understand the conflicting attitudes toward the history of this region and its indigenous peoples. This chapter will illuminate the magnitude of lasting influence of the colonial period. To this day, conflicting attitudes relating to the British colonization of Aotearoa remain palpable and present as a site of representational conflict in New Zealand. Chief among them is the contemporary commemoration of prominent characters in the story of the British colonization of New Zealand. These public exhibitions point to the tensions that remain regarding the ways in which such figures are remembered. A discussion of the colonial construction of New Zealand as a concept and project will follow, which will lead to a discussion on the colonial construction of nature as New Zealand was advertised in England as arcadia. Next, this chapter will delve into the complexities of the Treaty of Waitangi versus Te Tiriti o Waitangi, documents that have remained paramount to New Zealand society. Biculturalism, an integral feature of the postcolonial era will next be addressed, as it is promoted in revisionism. The last section of this chapter will delve into the contemporary implications of the colonial gaze. Each of these sections play an integral role in the development of this thesis. In mapping the historical constructions

and development of Aotearoa New Zealand's image for the consumption of the Western eye, they will provide context for the inequalities that have snowballed into the contemporary.

Commemorating Cook

James Cook, Captain of *The Endeavour*-- the first ship to land on Aotearoa. He remains a trivialized figure in New Zealand history. Consequently, a range of conceptualizations of his legacy are present today. In present-day New Zealand, and the greater global sphere, he is both honored and villainized, some have vandalized artworks of him, others have named hotels after him. Some believe he is responsible for the decline of Māori society and culture; others salute him for his contributions to science, astronomy, and geography. The contemporary commemoration of James Cook is a prime example of a remaining and palpable site of representational conflict. Examining the ways in which Captain James Cook is remembered is particularly relevant this year because it is the 250th anniversary of his landing on the shores of Aotearoa on *The Endeavour*. Many present-day New Zealanders, especially Māori and other Pacific Islanders with lineages in the Pacific¹, consider this anniversary to be an inappropriate celebration of the loss of nine Māori lives, and ultimately a robbery of Indigenous sovereignty. In commemoration of the historical event, a replica of *The Endeavour* has been sailing around the coastline as a part of the flotilla, *Tuia 250*, whose voyage is taxpayer funded. Some *iwi* (tribe, kinship group) are of the opinion that

¹ The British -- Cook included, were imperialists in the broader Pacific. They colonized many other Polynesian islands and Australia.

using taxpayer money to celebrate what ultimately led to Māori land colonization is wrong.² The North Island village of Mangonui has banned the Tuia 250 from making stops on their shores. Anahera Herbert-Graves, the head of Northland's Ngāti Kahu *iwi*, commented on Cook:

He [Cook] was a barbarian. Wherever he went, like most people of the time of imperial expansion, there were murders, there were abductions, there were rapes, and just a lot of bad outcomes for the indigenous people. He didn't discover anything down here, and we object to Tuia 250 using euphemisms like 'encounters' and 'meetings' to disguise what were actually invasions (Herbert-Graves, 2019).

In a similar fashion, *iwi* in Gisborne refuse to welcome the Tuia 250, and they were unwilling to hold a *pōwhiri* (welcoming ceremony) for its arrival. Unrest within the Māori communities in Gisborne have been unrelenting since Cook's landing -- present long before the trip of Tuia 250. In 1769, Cook first landed on the east side of the Turanganui River, in the area known as Tūranganui-a-Kiwa, which he renamed 'Poverty Bay.' On October 11, 1769, Cook stated that he chose this name "because it afforded us no one thing we wanted."³

The naming of places is a powerful colonial act, as names are a means for claiming and asserting one's dominance in a space, which is reinforced as names are adopted and repeated. Poverty Bay is but one of many examples of a colonial place-name that is still in use today, further trivializing the notion of a 'decolonized' society. James Cook and Joseph Banks named a piece of the Australian coast, 'Botany Bay' for its variety of plant life.⁴ Though 'botany' does not have a negative connotation as

² Eleanor Ainge, Roy *New Zealand wrestles with 250th anniversary of James Cook's arrival* (Dunedin: *The Guardian*, 7 October 2019).

³ JC Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 201.

⁴ Neil Chambers, *Endeavouring Banks: Exploring Collections from the Endeavour Voyage 1768-1771* (Paul Holberton Publishing, 2016).

'poverty' does, in like manner the name is a subjective qualification of the land, influenced by pre-existing socially constructed Western standards. These contrasting names suggest a British notion that some areas of the land were better than others, according to their own criteria. British naturalists stimulated the intensification of imperialism through the research dimension. Collecting and possessing what they believe to be useful natural elements granted them dominance. This is not a new practice for the British as imperialists. Similar practice was seen in Qing China, the collection of 'useful' information from the British naturalists laid the groundwork for imperial surveillance.⁵

The pressure of addressing the 250th anniversary has not been limited to New Zealand. The symbolism in commemoration of the historical event has prompted responses not only domestically, but from England as well. The British government has responded by expressing 'regret' for the British killing of Māori that took place upon Cook's arrival in the eighteenth century. In late September of 2019, British high commissioner to New Zealand, Laura Clarke stated,

...it's a really significant part of our shared history, and a sad one, so it felt really important to acknowledge that pain of those first encounters. Acknowledge that the pain doesn't diminish over time, and if you do that, if you look back to address the wrongs of the past, it equips you better I think to look to the future and build a partnership (Charlotte Graham-McLay and Laura Clarke, Wellington 2019).

This acknowledgement is a drop in the bucket of the contemporary effort to mend the social unrest and injustices that pinpoint their advent back to the early nineteenth century. New Zealand today is seeing a growing decolonization movement. The distress

⁵ Fa-ti Fan, *British Naturalists in Qing China: Science, Empire, and Cultural Encounter* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

exhibited by both Māori and non-Māori surrounding James Cook, a single historical figure, centuries later in the present-day, underscore a greater force-- the colonial gaze.

Colonial Construction of New Zealand

This section will unfold the colonial fabrication of New Zealand as a concept and project. The name 'New Zealand,' came from Dutch explorer and mapmaker Abel Tasman, who first called the land 'Nieuw Zeeland,' which translates to sea-land in English. though Tasman never actually landed on Aotearoa's shores. This name remained on European tongues as it was adopted by the British, despite the fact the land had an existing name -- Aotearoa (land of the long white cloud), which is what Māori call New Zealand. The propensity to name desired lands, despite the possibility that they had existing names, is a shared trope among many colonial narratives, as is the idea of the frontier as a wild and uninhabited or uncivilized space to be civilized. The conceptualization of New Zealand as a frontier, a malleable entity, has played a consequential role in the establishment of the colonial gaze on Aotearoa and its indigenous peoples. Moreover, the construction of Māori-- in text and art, for the purpose of communicating the conditions in New Zealand back to England played another key role.

The national history of Aotearoa New Zealand is one of conquest and suppression with European imperialism at its core. 'New Zealand' was a systemic colonizing project for Britain. Founded by Edward Gibbon Wakefield in 1839, The New Zealand Company, originally established as the New Zealand Association, was a commercial operation to systemically construct and develop enclaves of British society

in the South Pacific, designed to attract people to New Zealand from Great Britain. Wakefield sought to alleviate the social stress that was taking place in the British Isles that followed the agricultural and industrial revolutions. His aim was to create what he believed to be a civilized society, unlike other 'barbaric' settler colonies. The creation of that society depended on attracting wealthy land-purchasers able to afford 100 acres of farmland and the laborers to sustain it, allowing for the transfer of an idealized population. In his writing as a political theorist, he critiqued what he described as unplanned settler emigrations. He sought to improve and reform 'the evils of lawless British colonization.'⁶

Such a project, in Gibbon's eyes, was first and foremost a civilizing project. Steven Harrell, anthropologist at the University of Washington deploys the term, *peripheral peoples*, in writing on civilizing projects. He avoids the more common term, *minorities*, and as well as the more specific and restrictive, *national minorities*. Harrell denounces such terminology as it implies complicity in relation to the *civilizing center*.⁷ The civilizing center and its counterpart, the peripheral peoples, make up an imbalanced and unequal relationship based on the civilizing center's claim to a superior degree of civilization.⁸ This framework can be used to understand the British colonization of Aotearoa to create New Zealand. The overarching goal of the civilizing center is to raise the peripheral peoples' civilization to the center's level, or as close as possible. The

⁶ Jack Harrington, "Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the Liberal Political Subject and the Settler State," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 20, no. 3 (February 2015): pp. 333-351, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2015.1075268>

⁷ Stevan Harrell. *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers* (University of Washington Press: 2001), 4: "the civilizing center draws its ideological rationale from the belief that the process of domination is one of helping the dominated to attain or at least approach the superior cultural, religious, and moral qualities characteristic of the center itself."

⁸ Ibid.

civilizing centers, like the British Crown, rationalize this agenda by rooting it in the belief that the process of domination benefits the peripheral peoples, helping them reach the 'superior' cultural, religious, and moral qualities of the civilizing center. Edward Gibbon Wakefield referred to the project as, "cultivating a moral wilderness -- that of civilizing a barbarous people by means of a deliberate plan and systematic efforts."⁹

In 1839, Wakefield authored *The British Colonization of New Zealand*, just two years following the establishment of the New Zealand Association. The text articulated a detailed description of the Association's plans to form the British colony, aiming to attract new members and potential colonists.¹⁰ *Section IV, General Character of New Zealanders* is steeped in egocentric orthodox imperialist attitudes by which the indigenous peoples are otherized:

They are ignorant of some of the commonest of arts; their clothing is rude, their agriculture is imperfect, they have no knowledge of metals; writing is unknown to them: and yet they exhibit the keenest sense of the value of those acquirements which render Europeans so greatly their superiors (Edward Gibbon Wakefield, 1837: 172).

This quote exemplifies the typical typological distinction of colonial narratives between civilized and savage. The language deployed by Wakefield in his text is remarkably imperialist, exhibiting what can be considered covert racism. Wakefield wrote on the Māori people's 'aboriginal character,' and blatantly barbarized them, describing them in what he considered to be their 'savage state.' His writings suggest that though he believed Māori had the potential to be equals with the British, they would have to be

⁹ Edward Gibbon Wakefield. *The British Colonization of New Zealand: Being an Account of the Principles, Objects, and Plans of the New Zealand Association* (Cambridge University Press: 1837/2011), 27-28.

¹⁰ Ibid. Cambridge University Press back cover description.

elevated to such a level only through assimilation and adaptation to British culture. He exhibited a clear 'savior complex,' a common characteristic of colonizers, the belief that the process of colonization and assertion of their values are superior thus beneficial for the colonized group. He reflected in his journal that post-contact with British missionaries "have become, in many important matters, a different people from since Christianity dawned on their horizon. From the teaching and example of the missionaries, they have benefitted extensively..."¹¹

The common practice of justifying colonization in the name of God or simply in general charity is evident. This was exhibited early on in the first chapter within the opening line, as Wakefield, using borrowed words, deemed the plantation of a colony 'heroic work.' Moreover, Wakefield hailed the colonizing project, pointing to its unprecedented structure of intent:

This, indeed, will be an experiment; for, though professions of a desire to civilize barbarians have often been used as a pretext for oppressing and exterminating them, no attempt to improve a savage people, by means of colonization, was ever made deliberately and systematically (Edward Gibbon Wakefield, 1837: 28).

For centuries, for the white British man -- as invaders, settlers, or inhabitants, land was a possession to be shaped by men. Aotearoa was often described as vast and unknown, inferring with self-righteousness that if something was 'unknown' if it was not familiar to the white man. Consequently, the word 'frontier' has often been used to refer to Aotearoa New Zealand during the colonial period. Edward Gibbon Wakefield believed that New Zealand as a colonizing project, to become a purified British society, had a

¹¹ Wakefield, *The British Colonization of New Zealand: Being an Account of the Principles, Objects, and Plans of the New Zealand Association*, 170.

uniqueness that came from the careful and informed planning by the New Zealand Company, himself included. Wakefield opens his second chapter by stating,

Natural state of the New Zealanders-- Their capacity for civilization-- Improved by intercourse with a superior race-- Actual British Colonization of New Zealand-- Proposed measure not one of mere Colonization, but a deliberate and systematic plan for preserving and civilizing the native race (Edward Gibbon Wakefield, 1837: 27).

The deliberacy of the project did not make it any less imperialist. The vision was of a transplanted British society, a purified society, based on the colonial trope of pollution and purity, which came through conquest at a cost -- Aotearoa and Māori were the ones to pay. Aotearoa New Zealand was in peace until the coming of the European missionaries, aspiring to bestow Christian grace upon Māori people.

The Construction of Nature: Advertizing Arcadia

The colonial constructions of nature, as a means to advertise New Zealand as Arcadia, have contributed to the burgeoning of the colonial gaze. As we see below, scientific and artistic pursuits, such as natural history as an esteemed discourse and landscape paintings as a means of accurate representation, contributed to the British perceptions of New Zealand. Popular British thought during the colonization period associated New Zealand with Arcadia. It was seen as a place open for business, a place to start a new and better life. New Zealand was celebrated as an unspoiled, harmonious wilderness in the colonial imagination, and that image was integral to its advertisement within Britain. However, all of this meant theft of Māori land, the destruction of the existing way of life in order for replacement with the new, and the importation of 'natural' elements like grass, seed, trees, and birds for the desired

effect.¹² Today, cows outnumber people in New Zealand. There is almost six sheep for every human. The only indigenous land mammals are species of bats. The British are largely responsible for the transformation of the ecosystem on Aotearoa New Zealand. There is no evidence for any regard to the possible consequences of bringing foreign plants and animals to the land, as the transplantation of British society was the main objective.

This colonial construction of New Zealand as a natural and idyllic landscape played an important role in initially bringing English settlers to New Zealand and the enduring view of New Zealand that remains today. The construction was of a pure idyllic topography, vacant and ready to be inhabited by British settlers who were to transform it. The New Zealand Company in England, advertised New Zealand to potential land-purchasers, as Arcadia. As Edward Gibbon Wakefield described it: "Very near to Australia there is a country which all testimony concurs in describing as the fittest in the world for colonization, as the most beautiful country with the finest climate, and the most productive soil; I mean New Zealand."¹³ For Wakefield and The New Zealand Company, New Zealand was to be a place for the reproduction of British culture, as it was a frontier open for business.

Natural history was a primary intellectual tool for settlers, and their guide to conquest. In the case of New Zealand, this meant everyone was Adam, possessing the urge and agency to name and arrange what they saw. Moreover, natural history as a study was sometimes considered to be a pious hobby, a display of one's adoration of

¹² Cheleen Ann-Catherine Mahar. *Creating New Zealand from Aotearoa* (Penn State University Press Pacific Coast Philology,

¹³ Quoted in A. J. Harrop, *England and New Zealand: from Tasman to the Taranaki war*. (London: Methuen, 1926), 39.

God through the examination of his wonders.¹⁴ The discipline can be understood as both a hobby and a study. It was a means for connecting social activity and science via rural nostalgia and the way people viewed landscapes.¹⁵ Joseph Banks accompanied Cook on the Endeavour's voyage to the Pacific, serving as a passionate naturalist. Banks was an exceptionally wealthy 25 year-old, using his privilege to secure a spot on the Endeavour, for himself and four others that he recruited to assist him to work as draughtsmen, as well as four servants.¹⁶ Banks exhibits the centrality of capitalism in Britain at the time, his collecting and surveying of Pacific lands was all on his own dime, the quintessence of his economic privilege within the hierarchical society to which he belonged.

¹⁴ Thomas Dunlap. *Nature and the English Diaspora: Environment and History in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 2.

¹⁵ Dunlap, *Nature and the English Diaspora: Environment and History in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand*, 18.

¹⁶ Chambers, *Endeavouring Banks*.



Figure 1. *Sir Joseph Banks*, Benjamin West 1773.

The American Benjamin West painted his image of Joseph Banks, after Banks concluded his three-year voyage on the Endeavour. Banks's privileged status is emblazoned with materiality in West's work. Banks is depicted with a small selection of artefacts from the Pacific, including a Māori paddle and spear and a *kaitaka* draped over him.

The accounts in the journals, authored by Banks, Cook, and others prove the colonial gaze as it was present in the minds of the authors. For instance, many journal entries refer to Māori people objectively, not in a humanizing manner, presenting them as the other, often supplementing their descriptions with remarks about how different the Māori were from anything they had seen before, or comparing them to another otherized group. For example, Banks wrote:

The faces of some were painted with a red colour in oil that had very little smell, more lice than I ever saw before! And in most of them a small comb neatly enough made, sometimes of wood sometimes of bone, which they seemd to prize much. Some had on their faces or arms regular scars as if made with a sharp instrument: such I have seen on the faces of negroes (Joseph Banks, 1896).

In this entry, Banks is referring to the Māori he encountered in an objective manner, referring to human beings matter-of-factly, as 'some' or 'most,' in a deliberate effort to qualify and quantify them, absent of fellow feeling. In this way, Indigenous peoples were treated as objects of scientific inquiry, subjects in need of identification, rather than equal human beings.

The objectification and systemic approach of getting-to-know the land and people present on Aotearoa enabled members of British society to gain their understanding of the place and peoples in a single lifetime, in contrast to Māori who spent generations cultivating their relationship with Aotearoa. Moreover, the Anglos transformed the land to their liking at an unprecedented rate.¹⁷ The difference in the ways in which Māori versus Anglos interacted with the land illuminates the differences in their worldviews.

Similar to the way place names reinforce power dynamics, the naming of flora and fauna also contribute to the augmentation of the colonial gaze. The names given to natural elements generally came from the 'discoverer's' own history and experiences, further inserting European-ness in Aotearoa, the adoption of these names speak to the heritage of settlement. Natural history, as culture, differs from folkbiology, local knowledge which is primarily passed down generationally via the context of everyday life. Natural history is generally more organized knowledge, which is transmitted globally

¹⁷ Dunlap, *Nature and the English Diaspora: Environment and History in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand*.

through institutions, developed within the social structures of science.¹⁸ For British colonizers, natural history was a way to produce knowledge of the unknown, an integral part of their quest for national identity -- their own national identity, a reified extension of British society. This mindset exposes their conceptualization of Aotearoa and its peoples. Taking initiative in learning about the landscape with their own hands illuminates their disregard for the people that were present before them.

Landscape paintings were another means through which the British colonizers were able to insert their worldviews. During the nineteenth century, British artists portraying the landscape of Aotearoa and other 'frontiers' like California, appropriated landscapes to support cultural, political, and social agendas. Paintings are inherently and unavoidably subjective, as tangible manifestations of an artist's pre-established and constructed associations and means. Their works reflect the myths inscribed upon the landscape by bourgeois culture.¹⁹

The aesthetic ideal of the 'picturesque' was present within popular European society at the time the British initially colonized New Zealand. In 1792, William Gilpin gave the genre its footing. The 'picturesque' were landscapes that possessed certain qualities that were markedly more suitable than others for artistic portrayal. Contemporary scholars have recounted nineteenth century landscape paintings as a hegemonic myth of bourgeois culture.²⁰ The paintings were a means for colonizers to process visual culture, making the 'exotic' New Zealand more accessible and

¹⁸ Dunlap, *Nature and the English Diaspora: Environment and History in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand*, 23.

¹⁹ Heath Schenker. *A common language of landscape representation: New Zealand and California painting in the nineteenth century* (Landscape Review, 1995).

²⁰ Ibid.

consumable for British society, especially consumers of landscape artwork whose artistic tastes were refined. This process created a shared understanding of the landscape, furthering the rigid, hegemonic colonial gaze. Picturesque landscape paintings granted affirmation to the colonial view of New Zealand, validating the 'good sense' of the viewers and consumers. Picturesque touring and artwork consumption catered to the moral sensibilities of the British middle class, capitalism at the core.

One of the most famous of early landscape paintings of New Zealand is *Mt Egmont from the southward*, painted in 1840 by Charles Heaphy, English artist of the New Zealand Company.



Figure 2. *Mt Egmont from the southward*, Charles Heaphy, 1840.

The title of this work refers to the mountain in focus as ‘Mt Egmont,’ which was the name that James Cook gave the mountain, which Māori have been referring to as *Taranaki Mouna* for centuries. Cook named the mountain after the first Lord of the Admiralty, who died before even knowing of the honor. The Māori name traces its origin to the first ancestor of the Taranaki tribe, who unlike Egmont, had visited the mountain, and climbed it to the source of a major river.²¹ This piece depicts an exaggerated Mount Taranaki, whose steepness and symmetry can be best described as cartoon-like. Whether this quality is a testament to Heaphy’s predispositions regarding natural landscapes, or to his artistic deficiencies, this image’s role remains unchanged -- it acted as an accurate presentation of Aotearoa’s landscape, influencing those who had not seen Taranaki with their own eyes. Today, the painting has become an iconic piece of New Zealand artwork. For contrast, Figure 2.1 provides a photographic image of Mount Taranaki today. Though the terrain has changed over the past few centuries, the general shape has not vastly transformed.

²¹ Taranaki Mouna Project, *History: The Naming of Taranaki* (New Plymouth, 2016).



Figure 2.1. *Majestic Mt Taranaki*, Stefan Marks, April 7, 2010.

Throughout history it has been common practice to include indigenous peoples as subjects in natural history, grouped with natural elements such as flora and fauna. Sydney Parkinson was recruited by Banks to join him on *The Endeavour* to produce natural history illustrations. Parkinson completed 1,3000 illustrations during his visit to New Zealand, illustrating many life forms for the first time-- Māori included.



S. Parkinson del.

J. Chambers sc.

The Head of a Chief of New Zealand, the face curiously tattooed, or marked, according to their Manner.

Figure 3. The Head of a Chief of New Zealand, Sydney Parkinson, 1796.

Parkinson was solely responsible for the first imagery of Māori to be seen by European society. His records were the first depictions of Māori physiognomy, tattoo patterning, dress and ornament.²² Parkinson's works were crucial to the way in which colonial projects produced knowledge. This portrait is more valuable as a primary document because it can be supplemented with Parkinson's journal in which he recorded a reflection of the interactions that allowed for this portrait to be drawn:

On the 12th, early in the morning, we weighed anchor, and attempted to find' some better anchoring-place, as this bay (which, from the few necessaries we could procure, we called Poverty Bay) was not well sheltered from a S. E. wind, which brings in a heavy sea. The natives call the bay Taoneroa, and the point of land, at the entrance on the east side, they call Tettua Motu. In the afternoon we were becalmed, and fix canoes came off' to us, filled with; people; some of them-armed with bludgeons made of wood, and of the bone of a-large animal. They were a spare thin people, and had garments wrap about them made of a silky flax, wove in the same manner as the cotton hammocks of Brazil , each corner being ornamented with a piece of dog-skin. Most of them had their hair tied up on the crown of their heads in a knot, and by the knot stuck a comb of wood of bone. In and about their ears some of them had white feathers, with pieces of birds skins, whose feathers were soft as down; bat others had the teeth of their parents, or a bit of green stone worked very smooth. These stone ornaments were, of various shapes. They also wore a kind of shoulder-knot, made of the skin of the neck of a large sea-fowl, with the feathers on, split in two length-ways. Their faces were tataowed, or marked either all over, or on one side, in a very curious manner; some of them in fine spiral directions like a volute, being indented in the skin very different from the rest: and others had their faces daubed over with a sort of red ochre. The bottom of their canoes was made out of a single tree; and the upper part was formed of two planks, sewed together, narrowed both at head and stern. The former was very long, having a carved head at the end of it painted red, and the stern ended in a flat beak. They had thwarts to fit on, and their paddles were curiously stained with a red colour, disposed into various strange figures; and the whole together was no contemptible workmanship. After we had given them a variety of beads and other, trinkets, they set off in so great a hurry, that they left three of their people on board with us. We were at this time off a cape, which we named Table Cape: we made but little way that night (Sydney Parkinson, October 12, 1769).

²² Ministry for Culture and Heritage, *NZ Identity & Heritage*, (Online, Accessed 2019).

The grand effort to describe Māori in what Parkinson would have believed to be the most accurate way possible, illuminates his predispositions as a member of the New Zealand Company. Moreover, Poverty Bay is mentioned, including an explanation of the origin of the name. The Māori were clearly described as the other, forming the colonial backbone.

Defining Documents: The Treaty of Waitangi and Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Perhaps no other document has been more important in shaping the history of Māori than the Treaty of Waitangi. The Treaty of Waitangi, made up of three articles and crafted in 1840, has been a salient document since its creation. The uniqueness in the case of Māori as an indigenous group can be largely attributed to the fact that their status has been defined by this singular document. The Treaty is largely responsible for sealing the fate of Māori as a group and has historically been the root of injustices against Aotearoa's indigenous people. The Treaty determined central factors relating to sovereignty, governance, and land ownership. There were two versions of the Treaty, The Treaty of Waitangi, which was written in English, and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the translation of the treaty which was crafted overnight by missionary Henry Williams with help from his son, Edward. The two were regarded as the same, though they read very differently. Many of the nuances of language were lost in translation, complicated by a lack of cultural competency.

The Treaty was written in British fear of anarchy in New Zealand, and a means for the Crown to take control of the land and its peoples. In the 1830s, as New Zealand existed as an ungoverned and uncontrolled colony including 2,000 British citizens, the Crown faced threats to law and order. The imperial frontier was feeling pressure relating

to their commercial interests, which tied them back home to England, while impacting the Māori population with technology, diseases, religion, and other ideas.²³ The Treaty was proposed to protect both Māori and British settlers, Māori were meant to be incorporated as British subjects and enjoy the associated privileges, which has precipitated beliefs that the Treaty may be regarded as a token of racial equality. The belief that the Treaty of Waitangi enshrined equal rights for Māori remains as a popular idea, allowing for the belief that modern racism is not a current issue in New Zealand.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Te Reo Māori version of the Treaty uses the term 'kawanatanga.' Europeans and Māori understood the concept of *kawanatanga* very differently. *Kawanatanga* can be translated to 'government' in English, though the concept of government to the British versus the tangata whenua were not the same. In translating the Treaty, the Māori word 'rangatiratanga' would have been more appropriate, which is why it was used in the Declaration of Independence. Māori did not understand government as sovereignty, so when they signed *kawanatanga* over to the Queen, they did not know what they were signing away. *Kawanatanga* is not sovereignty, notwithstanding the popular narrative of the Treaty signing explains that Māori willingly gave sovereignty to the British Crown. Haami Piripi, Chair of *Te Runanga o Te Rarawa in Kaitaia* explains:

We signed a Māori version, it was the only version that was debated and discussed, and the Māori version tells us clearly, linked to the Declaration of Independence, that we did not, could not, would not have, have ceded our sovereignty. Why would you cede your sovereignty to a motley bunch of 2000 Europeans who were living here at the time? (Haami Piripi, 2017)

²³ Peter Adams, *Fatal Necessity: British Intervention in New Zealand, 1830-1847*, (Bridget Williams Books, 2013).

The discrepancies between The Treaty and Te Tiriti is not merely a matter of semantics or mistranslation. The central values of the Western British colonizers and the Polynesian Māori indigenous peoples do not parallel. The common Māori understanding is that matters of environmental guardianship, decision-making authority, and governance are intertwined.²⁴ The Treaty, as it was written by Westerners, including Western values of ownership that were not present in Māori society. Crafting of a treaty in the first place presumes entitlement. The Māori interpersonal relationships and the relationships between people and the land were more interconnected and reciprocal. Its is included in the Māori worldview that tribes are part of the universe -- where they trace their origins, equal to the mountains, oceans, and rivers. This still reigns true today, and legislation in the contemporary aims to accommodate these beliefs. One of the most noteworthy of these cases has been that of the Te Awa Tupua, New Zealand's third largest river. An *iwi* in Whanganui had fought for over 140 years for the river to be recognized as their ancestor. In 2017, the New Zealand government allowed Te Awa Tupua, granting the river the same rights, duties, and liabilities as a human citizen.²⁵ Reparations such as this one indicate the importance of righting the wrongs that began in the colonial period, and that the accommodation of Māori beliefs is vital to contemporary society and wellbeing of Māori culture.

Today, the Waitangi Tribunal acts to determine the meaning of the two texts and ensure the Māori version is honored. Set up by the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975, the Waitangi Tribunal is a permanent commission of inquiry that makes recommendations

²⁴ Maria Bargh, *Opportunities and complexities for Māori and mana whenua representation in local government*, (SAGE Publications, 2016), 157.

²⁵ Eleanor Ainge Roy, 'New Zealand river granted same legal rights as human being,' *The Guardian*, Dunedin, March 16, 2017.

on claims brought by Māori relating to Crown actions which breach the promises made in the Treaty of Waitangi.²⁶ The tribunal has exclusive authority to determine the meaning and effect of the Treaty. It can decide on issues raised by the differences between the Māori and English texts of the Treaty.²⁷ In accordance with international law, Te Tiriti o Waitangi is to be honored, not the English version. The principles covered in Te Tiriti like kawanatanga, rangatiratanga, are still considered and provide a foundation from which racial discrimination can be identified and addressed.²⁸ Article three of the Treaty was to guarantee Māori all of the rights and privileges of British subjects, though equal rights remain unfulfilled today, which is seen in Māori disparities in health, income, and navigation within greater society. The mission of the tribunal is to make sure claims of breaches of the Treaty, which allow for these disparities, do not fall on deaf ears.

Cultural racism is present in the New Zealand education system. When teaching the national history, specifically the Treaty of Waitangi, teachers reproduce the ideology that the Treaty has created an egalitarian society, one in which Pākehā (European in New Zealand) and Māori citizens of New Zealand have equal opportunities to flourish.²⁹ Moreover, the invasion of the Europeans largely absent, and in most cases referred to as 'exploration.' This narrative is quite similar to the history that is taught in public schools in the United States today. The story of Christopher Columbus is still taught as a positive one, and in some cases, celebrated. Like Columbus Day in the United States,

²⁶ New Zealand Ministry of Justice, 'Waitangi Tribunal,' (Online accessed: 2018).

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Keiko Oda and Maria Rameka, 'Students' Corner: Using Te Tiriti o Waitangi to identify and address racism, and achieve safety in nursing,' *Contemporary Nurse*, Volume 43, (Published online, June 13, 2012).

²⁹ Heather Came, 'Sites of institutional racism in public health policy making in New Zealand,' *Social Science & Medicine*, (PubMed, February 2014).

on February 6th of each year, New Zealand celebrates Waitangi Day, the anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. Reproducing a narrative that assumes the resolution of injustices and maltreatment hinders contemporary progress for the oppressed group. The New Zealand government's historical website explains the sensitivity of the holiday stating,

For some people, Waitangi Day is a holiday; for many, and especially for Māori, it is the occasion for reflecting on the Treaty. Since the 1970s the style and mood of the commemorations on Waitangi Day have been influenced by the increasingly heated debate surrounding the place of the Treaty in modern New Zealand (New Zealand History website, Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 'Waitangi Day' August 5, 2014).

Conflicting beliefs like those surrounding Waitangi Day, and the Treaty in general are indicators of the unrest in cultural relations in New Zealand today. Until there is more agreement regarding the history of Aotearoa New Zealand, specifically the British colonization, societal unrest will remain brewing, and grievances on all sides will remain.

Biculturalism: Cultivating a Binary

In problematizing the original sources of the colonial gaze, which has included a discussion on the Treaty of Waitangi, it is necessary to additionally consider the contemporary means for mitigation that have followed. The political promotion of biculturalism has been a dominating response to grievances relating to the Treaty and the quest to rightfully honor it. This section aims to trivialize biculturalism as the ideal response to societal inequalities on the basis of ethnicity. There is hypocrisy in responding to exclusion and inequality with a binary as it inhibits multiplicity. Promotion of cultural complexity must be careful and allow for fluidity and self-definition.

Societal multiplicity, the diversity of identities within society, has been recognized in New Zealand legislature for a number of decades. However, the dominant narrative is one of 'biculturalism.' The reinforcement of biculturalism as opposed to multiculturalism reinforces imperial essentialism and reduces the dimensionality and transculturality of contemporary society. Oversimplification of race-based and culture-based matters are destructive in current debates about discrimination. New Zealand is not made up of two groups of purely Māori and wholly Pākehā. In 2018, 70.2% of New Zealand identified as Pākehā, 16.5% as Māori, 15.1% as Asian, and 8.1% were Pacific Peoples.³⁰ The need for bicultural policies in the first place, are a response to the unsatisfactory representation of Māori in a Pākehā society. It is counterintuitive to respond to underrepresentation and inequality with alternative rigidity. Biculturalism has its shortcomings. By subscribing to a binary, exclusion is cultivated. Oversimplification of race-based and culture-based matters are destructive in current debates about discrimination.

Racial categories, historically created and embedded, both dictate and reflect individual understandings of race, at the intersection of micro understandings and macro structures. Race, ethnicity, culture, heritage, and like notions are conflated in general society. Though there is extensive scholarship on each categorization, as they are all socially constructed, differentiation remains blurred and the terms are often used synonymously. Moreover, fluid categorization is constrained by existing classifications³¹ and the dominating bicultural narrative. Is the Māori/non-Māori binary, the Māori/Pākehā

³⁰ Statistics New Zealand 2019 Census Report

³¹ ZL Rocha, '(Mixed) Racial formation in Aotearoa/New Zealand: framing bicultural and 'mixed race' through categorization,' *Kotuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences* (Online: 2012). See Omi & Wiant theory.

binary productive? The present-day multicultural society of New Zealand is operating under a bicultural national framework. Binaries often leave people polarizing cases that are not seen to be polarized themselves. 'Half-castes' present examples of this phenomenon, leaving people to decide whether or not to label someone Māori based on their Māori-ness, which is generally first determined by phenotype. Societal perplexities regarding human categorization have contributed to the historical baggage of racial hierarchies, and perpetuating them in turn.

Contemporary Implications of Coloniality

This section illuminates the endurance of the colonial gaze at it has and continues to reign in New Zealand, active in modern society. In 1907, the matured colony became the Dominion of New Zealand, later granted full independence from Britain in 1948. Though New Zealand severed from the nation that had created 'New Zealand,' Aotearoa remains colonized by Western culture and institutions. The colonial past has residue in the present, evident in the ways in which Māori cultures and peoples are interacted with.

It is clear that there are existing notions that racism is either a 'thing of the past,' or blatantly denied. Institutional inequalities produced by hegemonic representation and discrimination on the basis of race continue to be a glaring problem. Claims that greater society is void of racism are far from true, which only exacerbates the injustices against Māori, creating a shortage of research and attention to the topic. Māori people were the main issue of the most recent review of New Zealand at the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. In 1969, racism was outlawed in New Zealand.

Further legislation came in 1971 with the Race Relations Act, again in 1990 in the New Zealand Bill of Rights, and 1993 with the Human Rights Act. These legal documents protect people against blatant racism, but have no jurisdiction when it comes to less overt forms of racism, like institutionalized racism. New Zealand's majority is Pākehā. In accordance, Pākehā structures are believed to be egalitarian, which perpetuate and contribute to the belief that underachieving Māori are blameworthy-- that the Māori are not flourishing because of their own shortcomings or lack of effort. This ideological framework is rooted in the colonial history of New Zealand. The British colonizers portrayed the Māori in a negative light, trivializing their culture and language. As imperialists, they have a history of such practices. Māori people were only labeled 'good' when they were accepting of acculturation.³² Māori often refuse to participate in studies, fearful of the potential to be placed in an imperialistic reconstruction, contributing to the othering of people of the Māori identity.³³

Today, Māori experience inequality on the basis of ethnicity in a number of domains including substandard health outcomes, household incomes, and increased rates of incarceration.³⁴ The life expectancy of Māori men is at almost a nine-year disparity, compared to Pākehā men.³⁵ This is worse than that of the Native North Americans, who have about a seven-year disparity compared to white Americans. This disproves the common misconception that the Māori have escaped the decimated and

³² Sylvia Pack, Keith Tuffin, and Antonia Lyons, 'Reducing racism against Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand,' *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, Volume 45, No. 3, (Wellington: School of Psychology, Massey University, November 2016).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Nicole Satherley and Chris Sibley, 'The Modern Racism toward Māori Scale,' *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, (Online, 2017/2011).

³⁵ Raj Bhopal, 'Racism, Socioeconomic Deprivation, and Health in New Zealand,' *The Lancet*, (Online, June 17, 2006).

demoralized fate of colonization. They do not enjoy the level of political control or empowerment that many believe they do. These health disparities are indicators of the lack of agency and access to resources that the Māori have faced and continue to face, as well as consequences of a damaged identity and the struggle to cope.

'Pākehā paralysis' has been an obstacle for social cohesion in contemporary New Zealand. This scholar-generated term refers to a feeling by which Pākehā are immobilized in instances in which Māori-Pākehā relations must be addressed. They become unsure of what actions they can and cannot take in the matter at hand, ultimately doing nothing at all.³⁶ Though this phenomenon has upright roots, it inhibits productive and fair intercultural relationships, and acts as a key barrier. Diminishing Pākehā paralysis is especially important in highly social, interactive settings such as schools and workplaces. Māori staff end up picking up the slack in order to compensate for the lack of contribution from their Pākehā peers and colleagues. The standing issue is that even non-Māori that are interested in fulfilling such roles are unsure how. Historically, Pākehā scholars and researchers have been criticized for overstepping or using Māori to advance their own personal prestige. This has contributed to the reluctance of Pākehā to study Māori or include Māori in their studies, it has also been taught that Pākehā students should deliberately exclude Māori as they have no place in researching the group to which they do not belong.³⁷

³⁶ Alex Hotere-Barnes, 'Adressing Pākehā paralysis with non-stupid optimism,' *EDtalks*, (CORE Education, March 22, 2016).

³⁷ Martin Tolch, 'Cultural Safety for those Researching the General Population of Aotearoa,' *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand Te Puna Whakaaro*, (Palmerston North: Massey University, December 19, 2002).

Research, in multiple discourses, is a prominent site of Pākehā paralysis, and another area that necessitates resolution. Research is dominated by the sociocultural lenses of its researchers, which can lead to the misappropriation and misrepresentation of data, which can then lead to the development of fallacious stereotypes and/or deficit explanations³⁸ -- primarily when marginalized groups such as Māori are part of a study.

Within greater New Zealand society. The notion of cultural safety has become a topical pedagogical subject in regard to Māori. It is impossible to alleviate Māori health disparities -- an ongoing effect of historical trauma that has been reproduced in the contemporary, without establishing culturally safe research and means for addressing societal issues. Culturally safe practices function with respect for the worldviews of all groups, and recognize the presence of culturally-driven differences, and the dimensionality of reality dependent on historical, contemporary, sociocultural, and political factors.³⁹

Conclusion

The epiphenomenon of the colonial gaze that continues to act in New Zealand today functions on micro and macro scales, in social and institutional settings. It has influenced the way in which groups interact, and the legislation that gives order to society. There is an acting effort to mitigate the colonial gaze, though not all New Zealanders subscribe to the mission, which is a side effect of longstanding marginalization of New Zealand's Indigenous people. In order to ignite change in the

³⁸ Denise Wilson and Stephen Neville, 'Culturally Safe Research with Vulnerable Populations' *Contemporary nurse: a journal for the Australian nursing profession*, (PubMed, September 2009).

³⁹ Ibid.

mindsets of greater society, a reconstruction of the sites that reinforce coloniality are in order. This includes the education system on all levels, public healthcare, and political policies. The next chapter will put museums as institutions in focus for their role in both reinforcing and mitigating the colonial gaze.

CHAPTER TWO

Māori in Museums

“Meaning is read in museums, as in other textual representations, through successive, historically accumulated ‘wrappings.’” -Alonda Jonaitis

“We can uncover mechanisms at work in the museum by asking very simple questions, for example: Who is being seen? Who has the power to see? Who represents? Who is representing?”⁴⁰ -Ronaldo Vázquez Melken

This chapter will address the coloniality that is central to the history of museums. It will analyze Māori as a topic and Māori material matter in museums, and Māori participation in museums, including modes of display and practices related to both topics. The same topics will then be addressed in a discussion of contemporary museum practices, Māori inclusion in curation, and contemporary display. The chapter will illuminate the complicated challenges for curators in approaching the representation of peoples and cultures that have been colonized in institutions that have long been colonial enterprises. This involves creating space for Māori people and customs in museums – as museum professionals and as topic matter. The messiness lays in very discussion of Māori involvement in museums as it points to coloniality. Words such as ‘inclusion’ mean nothing without the existence of its opposite -- exclusion.

This chapter is asserting that we decamp the hegemonic social reality in which museums are colonial enterprises, as they have been historically, and to understand museums as valuable tools in fostering positive social collaboration -- interactions that warrant thoughtful contributions from both parties, furthering understanding of the opinion of either side. In pushing the boundaries of orthodox museum practices, the coloniality in museology’s past should not be ignored or forgotten. In contemporary

⁴⁰ Rosa Wevers, ‘An Interview with Rolando Vázquez Melken,’ *Decolonial Aesthetics and the Museum*, (Online: Stedelijk Studies, 2019).

practice it should always be considered and acknowledged, though it should not be a force that limits the potential for museums to be positively impactful on future and present-day society. A necessary distinction must be made between “incorporation,” which comes from decolonization discourse, and “integration,” which is recolonizing practice. Museums have a treacherous history in terms of power and authority, as they were rooted in colonial practice, but that does not have to be the case entering the future. Museums must mindfully and deliberately navigate themselves into the future with their colonial baggage in mind, in order to avoid the subjugation or denigration of the groups they have contributed to marginalizing. Māori society and culture possess many practices and customs conducive to holistic learning and understanding, rooted in human connectivity. Such practices are strengths that should be harnessed in museum work to productively present Māori. In contrast to Māori culture, a major issue in museum culture is that it can be very isolated and individualistic, which is negative social collaboration. Visitors often view displays on their own. Individualism is most central to Western culture, which is evident in the Western history of colonialism. Though museums are cultural centers, they are not always social settings. In many cases, displays lack context and do not call for interaction -- between the visitor and the subject matter, and between visitors themselves. This paper stands to highlight the compatibility of Māori customs with museums as productive social centers and calls for a consideration of the ways in which Māori cultural values can be instrumental in making museums productive and positive social spaces.

An example of transferable Māori values is the reliance on socially based practices to transmit information to underscore human connectivity. Ceremonies are

central components of the traditional culture of most societies, including Māori. *Powhiri* (welcome ceremonies) are an example, which include prayer, challenges, dances, speeches, and other group acts. For Māori and many other Indigenous groups, spirituality and culture are intertwined. Cosmology is central to traditions and values, and therefore cannot be severed from Māori social structures, unlike many Western cultures in which social structures and religious structures have become more separate over time i.e. the separation of church and state. Ceremonies like *powhiri* acknowledge the spirit of a place, and the value of being together in a space.⁴¹ Just as ceremonies have been a means for Māori to affirm their connection with earthly and mythic beings, museums can be spaces of togetherness, spaces to acknowledge and affirm ideas central to the cultures on display. The vitality of tradition underscores the central values of a culture. Ceremonies are invaluable components in carrying traditions and values through to each new generation. The essences of ceremony, the act of participating and being together in shared spaces, centering around a central motive, can be transmitted into museum culture. This is but one answer to the meta-questions of this chapter: can museums work to mitigate the colonial gaze and coloniality that has long defined them? What practices and values might museums adopt to accomplish this important task?

Exhibitions can be permanent or temporary. The legacies that exhibitions generate hold pivotal roles in either mitigating or reinforcing the colonial gaze. Though temporary, exhibitions produce legacies that contribute to the culture of a surrounding topic. In some cases, the simple premise of an exhibition is enough to create a legacy that is noteworthy among popular memory. The Metropolitan Museum of Art's 'Te Māori'

⁴¹ Soren C. Larsen, Jay T. Johnson, *Being Together in a Place - Indigenous Coexistence in a More Than Human World* (University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 78.

exhibit in 1984, which will be discussed later in this chapter as an example of an exhibition that has generated a prominent legacy. 'Te Māori' was the product of the globalization of Māori culture in museums, placing Māori on the world stage in an unprecedented manner. The legacy of the exhibition has been subject to a variation of opinions. In some ways, the exhibition is a sign of progress for Māori culture in the context of the globalized world. In other ways, it reminds us that museum practices are still Eurocentric, forcing many to work against the grain.

The Museum as a Colonial Enterprise and its Contemporary Legacy

Historically, museums as institutions, and museology as a discipline, have been infested with imperial power-dynamics and general power imbalances, with distinguishable central and peripheral groups. Museology and art history as disciplines, are institutional articulations of power and knowledge.⁴² Power and authority are central to the history of museums. Museum professionals and scholars in the contemporary are still working to dissipate these deep-rooted values. Such values can be seen in the architecture of museums, their collections, exhibitions, and the autonomous individuals that can be held responsible for their development.

Museums as institutions have long functioned as institutions dedicated to the glorification of Western culture and society. Arguments can be made that this remains the purpose of many museums in the contemporary. In their earlier days, museums were vastly elitist. In 1927, Professor Richard Offner of New York University stated,

Objects in a museum should be illuminated by scholastic ordering in their installation. They should be displayed in the light of modern scholarship. A museum should not be a public playground. It is primarily for scholars and when

⁴² Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*, (New York: Routledge, 1995).

actuated by considerations of the public at large it soon loses its force (Richard Offner, 1972).

This quote reveals the rationale of many scholars and individuals involved in the early development of museum studies in the early twentieth century. Offner is saying that museums should be institutions that serve the elite, those with a certain level of scholarly merit. During this period, museum studies was focused on teaching students to make judgements in 'good' taste, and how to require works that were of socially constructed value, rooted in highly educated and western culture.

Museums and their related disciplines have always been connected to scholarship and expertise, most of which were dominated by the Western world in the early development of museology and its manifestation into institutions. Western culture has long been elitist, including a history of imperialism, inherently othering cultures that diverge from its central values. The intertwining of the two is largely why power and authority are central to the history of museums. That being said, museums in the contemporary should not be polarized as entirely western institutions, though the history of museums is to be considered in contextualizing what is done in museums today. This is why museums today have vastly different missions, seeking to be more accessible and inclusive.

Historically, Māori and their culture, like many Indigenous groups, have been subject to misrepresentation within museums. They are often displayed as antiquated others in a constructed past. This is hurtful for many Māori, as their race is being displayed in the past tense. Pākehā have also been upset by this practice, the distorted display of Māori culture as if it reached an abrupt ending with the arrival of the European settlers.

Categorization for Consumption

Categorization is a central practice to museum collections and displays. The problem with categorization lays in a relationship between representation and categorization. Categorizing material matter is a means for organization and grouping, which in many cases, simplifies ideas and themes to make dense information easier to comprehend for most visitors. However, organization often means oversimplification – essentialization, which strips away the complex values and meanings a piece of material culture or art can hold. In order to make museum subject matter more easily consumed by the ‘general public,’ -- those targeted by and interested in museums, museums understood as a means to interact with art and material culture, it is often categorized and therefore essentialized, which strips away the complexities of objects, artwork, and ideas alike. Categorization is messy. Categorization is subjective. It greatly affects the ways in which pieces are displayed for consumption. In educating museum visitors on a topic, a general goal is to help them understand the exhibitions as much as possible and make that information as easily consumable as possible. However, simplification does not allow for a ‘true’ or ‘real’ understanding of cultures on display. It introduces many people to topics new to them, but it does not allow for deep conceptualizations. Then, the question becomes: is bad representation better than no representation? Is partial representation better? It has been common practice in the display of Māori history to idealize the Māori past in a generalized form of heritage, available and accessible to all in order to appease the colonial population. Museums have taken bits and pieces of Māori culture to display for oppressors to emulate the

celebration of culture, a colonial practice. This practice leads to the reduction of racialized difference. Moreover, many Māori exhibits suggest a recolonial myth of racial harmony.⁴³ Recolonial practices are practices that take place in the 'postcolonial' world that contribute to the reinforcement or reconstruction of colonial power dynamics. "The named categories that structure the museum system are residue of obsolete nineteenth-century ideologies...they create domains of inclusion and exclusion that continue to inscribe colonial attitudes about race, patriarchal ideas about gender, and elitist notions about class."⁴⁴ This is how museums can be agents of marginalization, via naming domains that foster exclusion and artificial inclusion.

Museums have referred to Māori objects in their collections as 'art.' This practice is closely tied to the colonial norm of exoticizing non-white culture, elevating the white individuals that own or present it as a token of conquest or exploration as a product of status and privilege. This practice is problematic when applied to Māori material culture that was not made as 'art,' which is largely defined by Western culture and ideals. Māori objects are labeled art if and when they display artistic merit, but does that mean they have become art? When that is the case, it gives power to the Westerners that 'decide' that an object is art. It distances the pieces from their actual purposes, which conflicts with Māori values that desire understanding the context and purpose of an object. This is not only an issue when it comes to objects of material culture, the lack of context and history is also an issue in displaying Māori artwork, when it is actually made as artwork. Though the shift from 'artefact' to 'art' has allowed for the validation of Pacific art –

⁴³ Conal McCarthy, *Exhibiting Māori: A History of Colonial Cultures of Display*, (Berg Publishers, 2007).

⁴⁴ Ruth B. Phillips, 'How Museums Marginalize: Naming Domains of Inclusion and Exclusion' *Museum Pieces: Toward the Indigenization of Canadian Museums*, (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011), 95-101.

especially contemporary artworks, the categorization has placed all Māori ‘artwork,’ whether it be objects made as art or simply objects made by Māori, in spaces that are not conducive to their meaning and value. In both history museums or art museums, Māori art displayed in Western means of celebration on spotlight pedestals surrounded by white walls has concealed meaning. Western critics have claimed that categorizing Māori pieces as art and displaying them in a way that provokes an aestheticized aura of art fetishizes the piece and ultimately Māori culture. Such admiration is rooted in exoticism, and does not look past cultural origins, fixing the creative abilities of Māori within their cultural contexts. In this way, cultural determinism leaves Māori objects stuck within categories like ‘primitive art.’⁴⁵ It has been argued that this belief ignores the positive outcomes caused by recategorization. The practice also heightens the reception of the pieces for Māori visitors, who better understand the origin of the pieces. This is an organic result of the way in which Māori interact with exhibitions, separate from the initial intent of the mode of display. The real issue is that there is rigidity in both labels – art and artefact. The two are restrictive viewpoints that can be unproductive in their own ways. The key issue is that reproducing the concept of objects that were not created to be ‘art’ nor ‘artefact,’ places them in the western realm of aesthetic consumption, ridden with colonialism.

Mitigating the Colonial Gaze

Many factors can be taken into account when evaluating an exhibition. ‘Good’ exhibitions elicit personal reactions and impressions. These impressions can vary

⁴⁵ Phillipa Jane Butler, ‘Te Māori Past and Present: Stories of Te Māori,’ (Wellington: Massey University, 1996).

based on a number of factors outside of the museum: preconceptions, prejudgments, and the visitor's reason for attendance. Good exhibitions encourage visitors to think more carefully about the topic no matter what their positionality may be.

Decolonization

“The decolonization process is a self-conscious attempt to reveal the voices that lie hidden within the monuments, archives, and artefacts that have been used to objectify our relationships with the past.”⁴⁶ This includes the decentralization of what has long been the ‘center,’ which allows for the challenging of controlled narratives. In the case of Aotearoa New Zealand, this means the Western society and culture of the British colonizers. Perhaps the largest obstacle for the decolonization effort in Aotearoa New Zealand is those that contest the revision of historical narratives. Polarized treatments of Aotearoa New Zealand's history in the contemporary underscore the need for the facilitation of interactions between people of contrasting opinions in order to find more common ground.

Contemporary Practicality of Museums in the Age of Instagram

This section underscores the value of museums as valuable community-serving and thought-provoking cultural institutions. As humankind enters the second decade of the twenty-first century, in the ‘Age of Instagram’, the globe is more interconnected than ever before. Institutions that cater to the social and cultural aspects of society have been subject to trivialization. Museums are among the institutions that have been called

⁴⁶ Dean Sully, *Decolonizing Conservation: Caring for Māori Meeting Houses Outside New Zealand*, (University College, London: Left Coast Press, 2007).

into question. Now that museum collections can be accessed from anywhere with an internet connection, people are questioning whether or not museums are still useful. Museums can be productive cultural and educational spaces, with potential to serve humankind for years to come. Online databases and digital access to collections do not allow for the holistic experiences that museums provide. Skeptics oversimplify museums as institutions that exist simply to display art and artefacts. If that were the case, the argument that museums are approaching obsolescence with the coming of 2020 and the 'age of Instagram,' might hold water. That is simply not the case, museums are more than just spaces for people to look at objects. Harnessing the social quality of museums, spaces in which people from both the same and differing backgrounds can collaborate and contribute gives them the ability to positively impact each individual, and greater society in turn.

Museums as Spaces for Collaboration

A key issue in the reinforcement of the colonial gaze is institutionalized racism. To combat institutionalized racism, the general claim of the Māori population is a call for interaction-- between Māori and Pākehā, and incorporation -- in the workplace, and relationships. The theory behind this is that if Pākehā took the time to understand and acknowledge the national heritage, through interaction with Māori, they would not continue to behave in a racist manner. In an interview about Māori views on reducing racism in New Zealand, a Māori participant said, "The solution for New Zealand...It's to stop being negative, to have some respect and appreciate one another, instead of trying

to be the dominant person.”⁴⁷ Interaction can open the eyes of the narrow-minded, whose views have been shaped by hegemonic representation.

Online collections, though important, are not the ideal means to interact with pieces of a museum’s collection, they do not allow for the full potential that can be accessed in museum spaces. The ways in which information is displayed plays a powerful role in the representation of pieces in an exhibition. Exhibitions are carefully curated, context is valuable. Placing pieces in context is how museums can be used for ‘good.’ Context, in this case, is not simply a matter of not seeing what-goes-with-what, but the art of display itself. It also has to do with the surrounding architecture, the surrounding community, the lighting, the orientation, the chronology, and many other factors. The field of museology exists because of the intricate and impactful relationships between these elements and museum visitors.

Museums act as a social fabric of community. Following September 11th, 2001, there was a major spike in museum attendance. People in the United States were using museums to reconnect with what Americans valued.⁴⁸ Museums have the capability to reinforce community bonds and identity. This was seen on a large scale following September 11th in the United States and occurs in like manner on smaller scales across the globe. In this way, museums are public service institutions.

Nina Simon of the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and Art History is adamant about making museums participatory institutions. Simon gave a TedxSantaCruz Talk on ‘Opening Up the Museum.’ Simon asserts that, “We desperately need places that allow

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⁴⁸ CNN Staff, ‘Are museums still relevant?’ *CNN Travel* (Online: July 12, 2017).

us to have positive interactions with people that are not like us.”⁴⁹ Today, people interact primarily with people they already know, or people that are very similar to them. In cases when people of contrasting interests interact, there is often clashing as the interaction is centered around their differences. This has only intensified in the face of social media and smart devices. Museums are places in which people truly interact, in a human way -- in person, not behind a screen. When visitors go to a museum, they do not choose the strangers that end up in the space with them, unlike cyberspace which is very deliberate in terms of the individual. The ability to center and motivate people around select topics can be powerful in positively harnessing the inevitable and natural differences between people and groups to highlight the social quality of human nature.

Museums are not limited in capability to their exhibitions. Many museums are esteemed research centers and educational sites for higher education. New students, highly regarded scholars, and people in between have the opportunity to collaborate, learn from, and learn at museums. Museum jobs offer the chance to pull fresh insights from collections. They also provide an opportunity to work with a diverse group of people — including not just researchers in other specialties, but exhibition designers and communications specialists.⁵⁰

Reciprocal learning does not only happen between students and scholars, but between anyone at a museum, whether they are a visitor or a member of the staff. For example:

Museum-based scientists used to focus solely on studies and their collections. “The modern museum is not like that,” says geologist Lori Bettison-Varga, president and director of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County in California. “We’re all

⁴⁹ Nina Simon, ‘Opening Up the Museum,’ *TedxSantaCruz* (Online, September 15, 2012).

⁵⁰ Amber Dance, ‘How museum work can combine research and public engagement,’ *Nature: Career Feature*, (Online, December 12, 2017).

about having our research scientists and curators and collection managers engaging with the public.”

Scientists working in modern museums have a range of public-engagement tools at their disposal, including social media, the printed or spoken word, and citizen-science projects. “Museums, in general,” says Matt Rayner, “suit people who get on with people.”

These quotes are a reminder of the social quality of humans, as the first quote by Lori Bettison-Varga displays a keenness for the engagement of museum professionals with the public. Promoting interaction between ‘behind-the-scenes’ professionals and the public eradicates the elitism and exclusion that were once part of museum culture.

Eventually, museums should be able to inspire people to interact even if they aren’t self-identifying ‘people-persons.’ This circles back to Nina Simon’s hunger for places that allow people to interact with people that are not like them.

Marae

Marae (meeting grounds) are one of the Māori cultural components that can be drawn from to improve museum spaces in presenting Māori culture. The central values that are emphasized on marae are not only conducive to presenting Māori matter, but in holistic and social learning in general. Marae are rooted in community and deeply value historical information and context, mainly in the form of *whakapapa* (genealogy). Māori trace their ancestry to divine beings, gods in male and female forms, which is a reason genealogy is important.

Marae are central to Māori life and community. A *marae* is a fenced-in complex of buildings belonging to an *iwi* (tribe), *hapū* (subtribe), or *whānau* (family). The main building on the *marae* is *te wharehau* (a meeting house). *Te wharehau* is structured like

the human body. For example, the *heke* (rafters) support the building like the ribs of the body, the *tahuhu* (ridge pole) which runs down the length of the building, represents the spine. *Poupou* (carved figures) cover the walls, representing the spiritual connection between the group and their ancestors, adorned with important emblems associated with the respective ancestor. *Te whareniui* is the center of everything -- discussion, mourning, and celebration, which is why it has been referred to as the beating heart of Māori culture. It is the space with the greatest amount of *mana* (power, spirit), a space with heightened dignity and the setting for the ultimate expressions of Māori customs.



Figure 4. Te Whareniui at Ohinemutu Marae, Rotorua.



Figure 5. Te Herenga Waka Marae. Kelburn, Wellington.

In 1963, the first festival of Māori Arts was held at Turangawaewae Marae in the Waikato Region. It was positively reflected upon as the setting of a marae made the significance of the art easily apparent. Using *marae* as places to display Māori art and objects is certainly powerful, but not always the choice or an option for artists and curators. This has led to the adoption of the practice of constructing *whare* (houses) in galleries, a way of bringing *marae* utopia into gallery dystopia.⁵¹ Marae are inherently spiritual spaces, which reinforce a group's unity in a shared space. In contrast, galleries have a history of being quiet spaces, though filled with groups of people.

Recreating or simulating *whare* has become a method used by artists and curators to provide better context for Māori objects and art in galleries through the construction of contemporary culture conditions. Since the 1980s, Māori architecture for

⁵¹ Deirdre Brown, 'The Whare on Exhibition,' *On Display: New Essays in Cultural Studies*, (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2004).

gallery use has increased in popularity. *Kowhaiwhai* (pattern work, painted scroll ornamentation) have also been utilized in gallery spaces. *Kowhaiwhai* are often found on the rafters of *te wharenui*, as seen in Figure 5. *Kowhaiwhai* are often nature-inspired and decorative, retaining the beauty, awesomeness, and relevance of the treasures from ancestors and divine beings.⁵² They add a sense of Māori site and space.⁵³ Standard galleries and art spaces are not conducive to Māori ways of being, as they are generally sterile blank canvases. This contrasts with the Māori belief that all actions leave traces on their environments.⁵⁴

An early example of the appropriation of traditional Māori spaces/practices took place in 1979, when Selwyn Muru organized for people to sleep over at the Dowse Art Gallery in Lower Hutt for the opening of his 'Parihaka' exhibition. Communal sleeping was the traditional way of Māori life before adaptations were made based on European influence in the nineteenth century, when Māori began to adopt. Kinship groups slept in the wide-open room of *te wharepuni* (sleeping house). Communal sleeping still takes place on *marae*, as *marae* are, and have always been *tūrangawaewae* (a place to stand and belong).

⁵² *Māori Dictionary Online.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*



Figure 6. 'Parihaka' Opening, 1979.

The Role of Collections

This section examines how a museum's collection – both what is displayed and what is kept in the collections store, play a part in reinforcing a museum's mission. Museum collections are reflective of a museum's mission. Most museums have a publicized mission statement, a concise declaration of their objectives and central values. In most museums, the mission statement is formulated by a board of trustees or governing body. This allots a great deal of power to boards to influence what is "worthy" of being acquired and taken care of by a museum. Collections and acquisitions should underscore the core values and purpose of their respective institution. The symbolism in the objects of a museum, exists first and foremost through the active possession and care for those objects, independent of the symbolism in their display. For example,

because early missionaries tried to rid society of what they believed to be obscene idols, few Māori carvings from ancestral deities of the time period can be found today. Ethnographic museums are responsible for the survival of some pieces, and there are contrasting views on their role. A popular western view is that “at least” some of the art has been preserved, though a popular Māori view is that *taonga* (treasures) has been imprisoned in glass cases, severed from their history along with the living bridge between them and their ancestors.⁵⁵

The acquisition and collection of pieces in museums throughout history has been largely controlled by Westerners, as museums began as Western institutions. This has placed all of the authority and autonomy in the hands of Western leadership to decide what is ‘worth’ collecting and caring for, and what ‘deserves’ to be taken care of, which is entirely subjective. Temporary pieces come into museums through loans in varying exhibitions, but what is on display is mostly pieces from the museum's collection. When the pool of resources is limited to what has been collected by different leadership over the years, the museum’s displays are not solely the work of the current staff. Often times there are a lot of terms and conditions set by past employees, donors, and trustee members. For many private museums there is a moral conflict for museum employees that feel they need to please those that fund the museum or have longevity with the institution, even if that contradicts their own objectives. At the end of the day, museums are businesses too. Rachel Buchanan, author of *Decolonizing Archives: The Work of New Zealand’s Waitangi Tribunal* explains the role of collections and archives with insight:

⁵⁵ Gabrielle Murphy, ‘Totem and Taboo: mythology and the Māori,’ *The Lancet* (Elsevier Ltd, August 15, 1998).

Archives charm. Archives harm. Beyond their tactile, anachronistic or nostalgic appeal, archives are part of the architecture of imperialism. They are sources of narrative power, sites where stories about the bloody or bloodless beginnings of a nation are stored. The archive is also a place of discursive or epistemological violence, a place where one way of knowing the world – the spoken – was replaced with another, the written (Rachel Buchanan, 2007).

When museums care for *taonga* cross-cultural engagement takes place. Both personal and institutional relationships come into play. Conservation practices, like the role of collections, have a messy significance in the museum field.

The Role of Capitalism

Capitalism is the common thread that weaves museums and colonialism together. The practice of advertizing for a museum is a reminder that many museums are also businesses, with making money as an objective. This component is to be carefully considered. It is easy to point a finger at museums for the commodification of culture, pegging them as capitalist institutions. Such a judgement holds a degree of validity. Notwithstanding, museums get their funding from a multitude of sources. Some are state-funded, others are funded by a private organization or group of organizations, some rely on boards of donors. Whether a museum is public or private does not automatically mean they are exclusive, though it is indicative of their hierarchy, and who influences the voices in a museum. Funders are obvious to the staff of a museum; they are not something visitors always consider in looking at exhibitions. Common practice is to place the names of donors or organizations on underwhelming plaques or wall decals in the very front of the museum. Though they are not concealed, those responsible for funding are not blatantly obvious to visitors, meaning their voices are not recognizable. This does not create a productive relationship between donors and the museum, the

museum and the visitors, or any combination of the three. Bringing clarity would be mutually beneficial, presenting objectives in an open and honest manner, leaving little room for hidden agendas or representations.

Importance of Iwi Involvement

A crucial initiative in museum practices is consulting *iwi* (tribes) when collecting, displaying, and managing pieces of material culture. Doing so acknowledges the spiritual significance of Māori objects, treating them as such allows them to retain their value. Iwi consultation was used in planning for The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Exhibition, 'Te Māori' in the 1980's. The exhibition traveled to many places after starting in the United States. The suggestion to consult tribes before moving museum collections to the United States was a Pākehā suggestion, backed by Māori enthusiastically, including the Department of Māori Affairs.

Example One:

The Metropolitan Museum of Art: Historic Display: Te Māori

Māori society and culture were placed under the spotlight for international view in 1984, when the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City opened the exhibition, *Te Māori*. It three other U.S. cities: St. Louis, Chicago, and San Francisco, for two more years before the *taonga* returned to New Zealand to tour four more cities: Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin. The exhibition was rebranded upon return to New Zealand, the name changing from *Te Māori: Māori Art from New Zealand Collections* to *Te Māori: te hokinga mai* (the return home). It was important to venue organizers in New Zealand to encourage more Māori to interact with the exhibition, as

both guests and hosts. Visitors of the exhibit were welcomed by Māori elders and provided tours by *kaiārahi* (Māori hosts) who were direct descendants of the ancestors on display.⁵⁶



Figure 7. Staff at the Auckland City Art Gallery just before the opening of Te Māori.

The capabilities of *Te Māori* were not limited to the physical exhibition. Its impressions were not only on the cities that it toured in the United States and New Zealand. Its legacy and the conversations it inspired were equally, if not more influential on both personal and societal levels. The exhibition and the initiative to globalize

⁵⁶ Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 'Te Māori exhibition opens in New York,' *New Zealand History* (Online, October 3, 2019).

knowledge of Māori culture generated momentum for like causes as museum exhibitions are connected to conversations about culture on both public, scholarly, and institutional levels. The exhibition's impact was boldened by the media coverage it received, which included the opinions of museum professionals and experts in Māori and Indigenous studies.

The historical significance of the exhibition is underscored by its temporal context. Te Ara, the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, referred to the exhibition as “a milestone in the Māori cultural renaissance of the 1970's onward. During the early 1980's, a new generation of Māori leadership was using customary culture for social and political agendas.⁵⁷ The initiative to curate and display such an exhibit, especially across the globe, in the United States, was politically impactful. Putting Māori in the spotlight was seen by many as an opportunity for Māori heritage to increase *mana* (prestige) in the eyes of the global community and increase Pākehā awareness and understanding.⁵⁸ This was the first time Māori themselves were actively involved in a grand display of their culture abroad.

The exhibition was in headlines across the globe. There was an article published in the 'Talk of the Town' section of *The New Yorker* on September 24, 1984. There, Nancy Ramsey, who attended the opening of the exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art gave a first-hand account of the ceremonies that took place at dawn that day:

Kara Puketapu, a tall handsome Māori with animated dark eyes who was a principal New Zealand organizer of the exhibit told us more, 'This is the first time such a large collection has been seen all together, and since the works of art represent our ancestors, persuading the different tribes to allow the objects to

⁵⁷ Conal McCarthy, *Exhibiting Māori*.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

leave New Zealand presented some difficulty. An artist living five hundred years ago would have viewed his work as an expression of his culture, his world – as something to be shared (Nancy Ramsey, New York, September 24, 1984).

Ramsey's way of framing her anecdotes and journalistic information for the sake of readership is problematic. Before deploying Kara Puketapu's powerful words, essentializes and romanticizes him in an orientalist manner. She reduced the esteemed Secretary of the Ministry of Māori affairs by offering her notes on his subjectively attractive physical attributes, as opposed to illuminating his thoughtful ideas. Though Ramsey presented Puketapu's quote in a condemnable manner, his points have their own integrity, and incorporate the essence of the sort of conversations that *Te Māori* inspired. What reasons should cultural items leave New Zealand? How does that help Indigenous peoples reclaim their narrative? He reminded us that in this context, Māori culture is being presented and consumed as 'something to share,' rather than stolen and claimed by colonizers, presented for the own aggrandizement like a lot of non-Western objects. He also makes a point to mention that the objects come from different tribes, which is an essential note to make. Too often a pan-tribe lens is used, which essentializes Māori as a monogamous group, and erases the history of each tribe, which paints a generalized picture stripped of cultural specificity.

A *New York Times* article on the exhibition qualified New Zealand as,

a race of master builders who gave to what we now call New Zealand a dignity that has certainly not been surpassed by anything the white man brought to the area'. The works reveal a "sure sense of scale and a regard for fine workmanship that will make this show a go-to again and again (1986).

The praise for the Māori craftsmanship displayed at the exhibition was tainted by the words that followed. The comment about the dignity of Māori carved pieces and other objects is contextualized within the colonial past, as their material culture was

compared, as if side by side, to the work of colonizers. The focus there was clearly on workmanship, which is not entirely unimportant, but when put in focus, takes the attention away from the cultural components of the matter, placing it subjectively into artistic skill. A celebration of craftsmanship is a shallow understanding of what the exhibition aims to do. Such a perception is indicative of the norms that have been constructed in museum culture, and the ways in which visitors behave and understand exhibits.

Some scholars assert that all of the efforts to display Māori works – to celebrate or to elevate, etc. were moot from the genesis of the exhibition as it was a brainchild of The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Primitive Art Curator. This viewpoint certainly has a point to it as the point of Te Māori for most Māori themselves was to be placed on a global stage, for their culture to be recognized. 'Primitive Art' is an utter mislabel. The taonga on display still held their value, they were still living, and should not have been labeled 'primitive.' The term has many connotations in the western world, especially in academia, and inaccurately describes Māori as it devalues them, presenting Māori culture and capabilities as inferior to those of the West.

A noteworthy practice in planning for 'Te Māori' was the adoption of the word *taonga* (treasured possessions). The term was used in official exhibition documents, adopted by Pākehā working on its curation. Just as asking for iwi permission, using *Te Reo* words acknowledged the spiritual value of the items in the collection.

The Te Māori exhibition's return to New Zealand brought up an assortment of questions about what it means to be Pākehā. This phenomenon alone underscores the power of museums as cultural centers to inspire questioning and conversations that force us to

recognize history's complexities and contemporary relevance. The following quotes are examples of the responses generated by the exhibition:



Figure 8. Diplomat Tia Barrett of Ngāti Maniapoto touches Uenuku, a carved taonga (treasure) and tupuna (ancestor) of the Tainui tribes during Te Māori exhibition at Dominion Museum, Wellington, 1986.

Pākehā New Zealand has to be careful that its acceptance of elements of Māori culture is not too highly selective to the point where Pākehā could be accused of accepting the 'nice' things of Māori culture and damning the rest so that Māoris don't end up saying 'yeah they like our art, but they don't like our language.

For the New Zealand Pākehā to be fully identified as a New Zealander they have to accept a fair bit of Māori culture. Māori art is part of Pākehā heritage, but knowing that doesn't mean you can take it over. We don't go and bully Pākehā people as to what they should do with their art. It's yours, but it's not for you to

take from the people whose culture tie to it is different from yours (Pacific Arts Newsletter, January 1988).

Example Two

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa: Contemporary Display

As a paper that examines the place of museums in contemporary society in New Zealand, this section is necessary as it describes the significance and initiatives of the national museum. One of the most landmark of museums to display Aotearoa New Zealand based content is the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, located in the capital city Wellington. The name can be translated to “container of treasures.” Its vision is: “...to change hearts, minds, and lives. Our role is to be a forum, for the nation to present, explore, and preserve the heritage of its cultures and knowledge of the natural environment Te Papa was established with its role by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Act 1992.”⁵⁹ They state that one of their key goals is that ‘*iwi* and communities are increasingly engaged with their histories, traditions, taonga and collections, in partnership with Te Papa.”

Reviewing the history of the national museum is crucial in connecting the dots and understanding the coloniality of its roots. Though Te Papa aims to be culturally competent and inclusive today, it is not unique in having a history of colonialism. Te Papa’s predecessor was the Colonial Museum, which came to be in 1865. Its first director prioritized scientific collections, and other “curiosities.” The museum evolved through different stages, leading up to 1988, when the government established the Project Development Board to plan for a new national museum as the Dominion

⁵⁹ Te Papa, ‘Te Papa’s vision and future Te aronga whakamua a Te Papa,’ What We Do page, (Online accessed, March 2020).

Museum, the former national museum, did not reflect the community it was serving. The key objectives of The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Act of 1992 applied the concept of museums as cultural centers. They were to represent New Zealand's culturally diverse society and reach a broader audience.

Today, the museum has a number of initiatives in motion to optimize accessibility. Noteworthy qualities of Te Papa are that it is free to the public and signage and the website are in both English and *Te Reo* (language). Both of these components make the museum and its pieces more inclusive and accessible to the New Zealand public, truly making it a 'national' museum – available to all that call New Zealand home. There is also language support for nine other languages, as museums are often tourist destinations. Making their content accessible to wider audiences is integral to facilitating an inclusive space. Te Papa hosts free *wānanga* (workshops) to teach people how to preserve *iwi* photographs and documents, and *hui* (gatherings) for *iwi* to collaborate, and to share concerns and experiences about *iwi* development and care of *taonga*. These collaborative and participatory events are a means for Te Papa to recognize their responsibility, reinforce their mission as New Zealand's national museum, and reflect their values as a cultural institution.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that museums have a colonial past, which has left a thick residue in the present, museums do not need to continue to be spaces that recolonize or reinforce the colonial gaze on Māori society and culture. In order to decolonize, museums must work to mindfully mitigate the practices and structures that have long

contributed to the augmentation of unjust power dynamics. Presenting Māori matter outside of its native environment, as it is presented in museums, though not as authentic, does not mean the presentation is not potent. The most powerful tools that museums have are their visitors, though they are all too often not treated as such, or utilized at all. The most productive way for people to learn and grow as people is through interaction with other people. Museums are spaces filled with people that are strangers to each other, a characteristic that can be utilized to recognize commonalities between people while gaining understanding of and celebrating their differences. There are certainly barriers in the quest to mitigate the colonial gaze, or to even foster an open and inclusive environment in general, notwithstanding museums can be utilized to undo some of the damages that have come with their advent. For instance, capitalism has been at the root of the reinforcement and development of the colonial gaze, but that does not need to be the fate of museum culture. In the present day, equipped with the hindsight of museum history, mindful and deliberate practice can not only reverse pain and damage, but foster human flourishing, harnessed by our social quality. The next chapter examines the role of Māori as Indigenous people in the mitigation of the colonial gaze they have been subject to. What happens when Māori have agency in shaping exhibitions and displays? Are they better situated to mitigate or illuminate the colonial gaze?

CHAPTER THREE

Indigenous Mitigation of the Colonial Gaze

This chapter addresses Indigenous movements and collaborations that have contributed to the mitigation of the colonial gaze by seeking to revitalize various aspects of Māori society and culture and increase its *mana*. To understand these efforts, the chapter presents various exemplars of museum exhibitions to describe provide an understanding of Māori lead narratives in museums, how they differ from Pākehā lead narratives, and the obstacles that remain. The chapter focuses on two exhibitions: 'Here: From Kupe to Cook' at the Pātaka Gallery in Porirua, and the 'Pacific Sisters' exhibit, originally at Te Papa. These examples shed light on the potency in the work and activism of Māori and Pacific peoples, making them prime actors in the mitigation of the colonial gaze. Through their personal experiences with the ramifications of the colonial gaze – the perpetuated unjust and imbalanced power dynamics, Māori voices provide unique perspectives that have driven their navigation through the 'postcolonial' world. The unrelenting practice and transmission of culture and language are vital to the sociocultural presence of Māori. In this chapter, the importance of *Te Reo Māori* (Māori language) will be explored, explaining the language's reflexive relationship with the cultural climate in contemporary society, and the measures that must be taken to ensure the prosperity of Te Reo. The haka will also be described as a catalyst for the globalization of Māori culture and increase of the *mana* of Māori in a global context.

The purpose of this chapter is to illuminate the success of Māori customs as a means for mitigating the colonial gaze. Though the continuation of traditional practices is not an overt or deliberate tool for mitigating the colonial gaze, such continuation is

one of, if not the most, critical component. Furthermore, this chapter illuminates overt and deliberate efforts to mitigate the colonial gaze. The Pātaka and Pacific Sisters examples are included to demonstrate the success and capabilities of museums as such tools.

Māori Curated Exhibition, *Here: From Kupe to Cook*

Here: From Kupe to Cook was a recent exhibition at the Pātaka Museum just outside the capital city of Wellington in Porirua. Pātaka, the cultural heart of Porirua city, is dedicated to celebrating Māori and Pasifika, showcasing what they consider to be the best in contemporary Māori and Pacific arts, as well as contemporary New Zealand, Asian, and international arts and culture.⁶⁰ The works in the exhibit aimed to convey the 'long and varied' histories of the South Pacific voyages -- from Kupe to Cook.' This exhibition underscores the complexity and variation in the ways in which people in New Zealand think about the country's history, specifically migration narratives. Polynesians were the first to settle Aotearoa New Zealand, though when the settlement of New Zealand is referenced, the minds of many jump to the days of European settlement. The Pātaka saw the 250th anniversary of The Endeavor's landing as an opportunity to reflect upon the event and its narratives throughout history. The gallery presentations of Cook's arrival narrative received varying responses as the pieces within the exhibition differed in their presentation of the conflicting settlement narratives. The periodization of the settlement of New Zealand, whether that be by the Polynesians or the Europeans, has long been contested. Different narratives with their respective protagonists come to

⁶⁰ Pātaka Art + Museum Website, 'Our Story,' (Online accessed, March 2020).

mind when people refer to the ‘settlement of New Zealand.’ Some people immediately think that the Polynesian settlement of Aotearoa is being referenced, others think of Cook and his crew. Consequently, some pieces in the exhibition vilified Cook and his crew, while others celebrated their contributions to Aotearoa New Zealand. The exhibition puts these narratives and opinions in conversation, encouraging people to reflect upon, and sometimes reframe the narratives with which they are most familiar. In this way, the exhibition introduces the colonial gaze as an actor in major historical narratives in New Zealand. This chapter will deploy examples from across the spectrum.

The variation in the reception of this exhibit highlights the pluralism within Māori groups. There are, in fact, *iwi* (tribe) divisions on a number of matters, including this salient moment in Aotearoa’s past. Despite the fact one of the co-curators of this exhibition, Reuben Friend identifies as Māori, a number of Māori visitors have been so offended by the displays that they have been brought to tears. Alternatively, some Māori were excited by the multiplicity of perspectives on display. Not all “self-representation” is positive, nor is it universal. When a member of a group “self-represents,” they are not speaking to the experiences of all members of said group. This is where value lies in the questions posed by Ronaldo Vázquez Melken in the second opening quote of this chapter. Advertisements market the exhibition as provoking and facilitating a reinterpretation of Polynesian migration and European settlement. The power and authority in this case rests in the hands of the curators and the gallery, in turn affecting their own relationships with the subject matter both inside and outside the gallery. The art of display is so impactful that it is necessary to trace contributors to the perches from which they sit upon, as well as questioning who the audience may be. There is a

multilateral reflexive relationship among museums, those working in museums, the visitors, and the exhibitions. The emotional responses were an inevitable product of the exhibition, which seeks to challenge long-standing narratives of the Polynesian settlement of Aotearoa.

Example One:

George Semu's *The Raft of Tagata Pasifika*, depicted below, is an icon of the exhibition. The piece is an adaptation of an nineteenth-century European painting by Louis John Steele and Charles F. Goldie's *The Arrival of Māoris in New Zealand*, 1898 which was influenced by Théodore Géricault's *The Raft of the Medusa*, 1804-5.

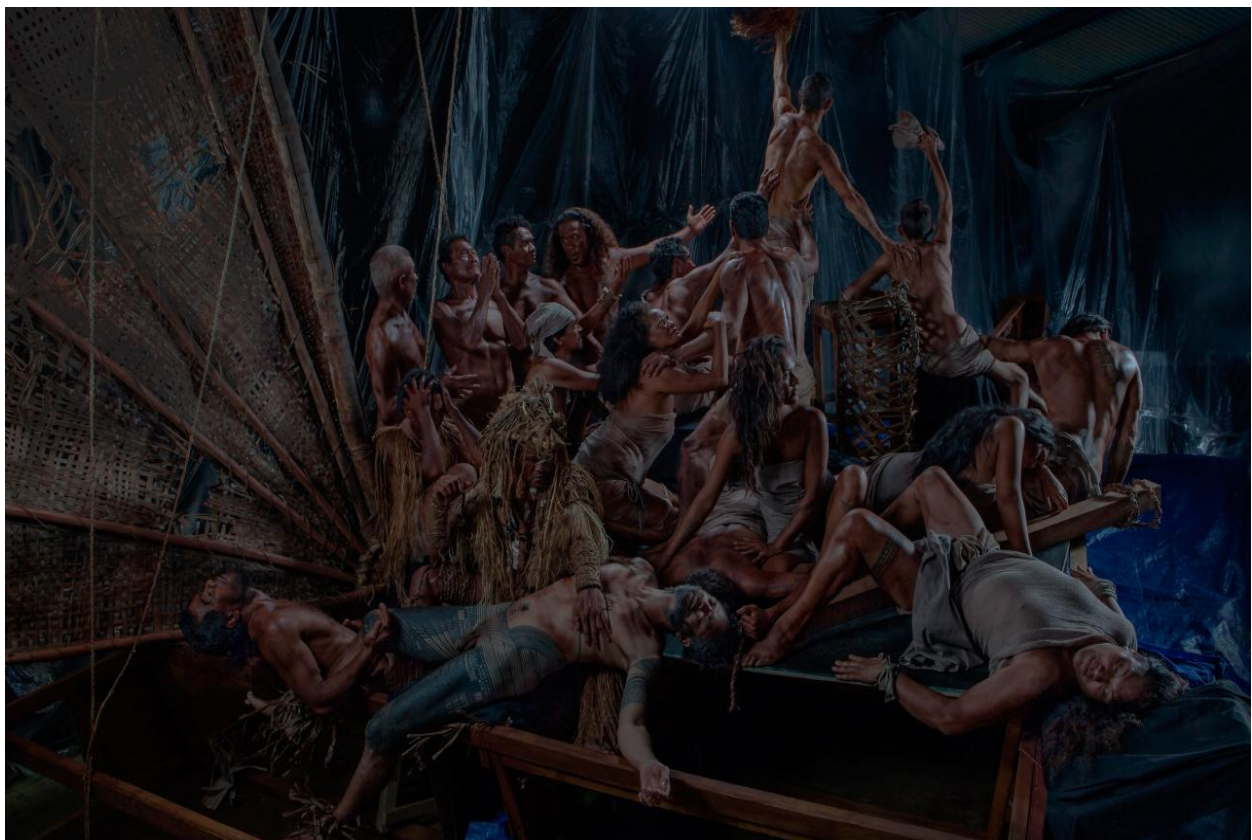


Figure 9. *The Raft of Tagata Pasifika*. George Semu. 2014-16.

In this piece, Semu challenges Steele and Goldie's 1898 dramatization of the Pacific sea voyage by depicting an alternative view of Māori history:



Figure 10. Louis John Steele, Charles F. Goldie. *The Arrival of Māoris in New Zealand*. 1898.

The 1898 painting, in turn, was based on *Raft of the Medusa* by Théodore Géricault, evidently composed using nineteenth century European conventions for depicting prodigious sea voyages.



Figure 11. *The Raft of Medusa* Théodore Géricault 1805.

The Raft of Medusa is condemned by many for the over-dramatization of the voyage, the details of which we know little about today. Māori are proud of the sea voyages of their ancestors, and their abilities as seafarers. In their painting *The Arrival of the Māoris in New Zealand*, Steele and Goldie display the narrative in a romanticized, extreme manner, depicting the Polynesians in agony. Many are of the opinion that the painting is a disservice to the seafaring prowess of the Polynesians, and many Māori are deeply offended. According to artist George Semu, maker of *The Raft of the Tangata Pasifika*, Goldie and Steel's piece is a

fictitious representation of migration. Within the painting there was so much drama, misery, and pain. It showed these people on the verge of death, starving and desperate. For many Māori people it is profoundly disturbing. What is suggested is that Māori people accidentally discovered New Zealand and it was by chance that they landed here. So many Māori take this as a painting designed to upset the claim to New Zealand and as encouragement for the settlers who

arrived in New Zealand because it is suggested to them [European settlers] that the Māori are immigrants too; therefore, the settlers have a claim. So it's very political and complex. For me not being Māori, I came to understand this, but at the time, I just saw the drama, I just saw the beauty of the misery and suffering. So this [the artwork] was a wonderful opportunity, and I proposed to do this painting because I loved it (George Semu, 2019).

Semu's honesty in this statement reveals the dynamism in peoples experiences with New Zealand's national history, and its settlement narratives specifically. He mentions the fact that art is generally attractive when it is dramatic, suggesting in this way that art is a myth. His personal misconception is what led him to create a piece that presents what he believes to be a more historically accurate depiction of, employing more likeness in the human subjects. With his adaptation (Figure 9) George Semu is challenging the earlier piece by Steele and Goldie, calling its veracity into question, and guiding viewers to what he believes is a more truthful depiction. In an interview, Semu was asked if he intentionally chose well-known works as a way to get closer to real people, the real stories beyond generally accepted filters, "I love the drama in these works [Géricault and Steele & Goldie]. They're iconic and it's like we've been looking at variations of the same paintings in the same visual language for 2000 years. But then I'll hijack it to decolonize and recolonize it." Semu's image was a staged scene with human actors, captured through photography. This medium added a level of realness which is unachievable through painting, no matter how 'accurate.'

Not all of the artwork in the exhibition was clearly pro or anti colonizer. The memorialization and trivialization of their contributions to New Zealand fell on a spectrum, depicted through multiple medias in the show. This exhibition was successful in reflecting the pluralism in the public views on Aotearoa New Zealand's settlement

narratives, as there is not a singular nor two contrasting viewpoints. The pieces included in the show were made by artists from a range of backgrounds, which reflect the historiography of settlement narratives and demographics of popular knowledge and culture.

Example Two:

Tawhai Richard exemplifies an artist that presents multiple viewpoints within a single artistic work. In his painted sculpture, *Cook Discovers Aotearoa 1769* (Figure 12) Richard seeks to bring contrasting viewpoints into conversation, much like the exhibition does.



Figure 12. *Cook Discovers Aotearoa 1769* Tawhai Rickard 2019.

He does not celebrate Cook as a 'discoverer' as many do, but as an officer of the Crown. As in the exhibition explains:

When Captain James Cook arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand on the Endeavour in 1769, he and his crew were under strict orders to establish friendly relations with any inhabitants they met. First encounters with Māori in Turanganui-a-Kiwa were however marred by incidents of violence. Cook's crew intruded into protected territories and were repelled by Māori forces, leading to gunshots and the death of rangatira such as Te Mārō, Te Rākau and others. In his painted sculptures, Tawhai Rickard seeks to reconcile the two sides of this history. Referencing an 18th century figurative style of painting derived from Te Whānau a Hinetāpora, a meeting house just east of Ruatōria, Rickard's artwork retrospectively considers the circumstances surrounding these interactions. His works do not shy away from controversy, but neither do they vilify Cook as a person of malicious intent. In this sculpture Rickard presents the HMB Endeavour, the ship that Cook sailed on his first voyage to the Pacific. Rickard portrays Cook, not as a 'Founding Father' of Aotearoa New Zealand, but as a military officer acting under orders from the British Crown.

Example Three:

In her works previewed in the exhibition, Jo Torr pays homage to Sydney Parkinson, the botanical illustrator of the New Zealand Company. Figure 13a and Figure 13b, *Pinxit Waistcoat* and *Pinxit Coat* are embroidered versions of Parkinson's drawings of kowhai flowers and leaves, which were collected in the seventeenth century at Tolaga Bay, near the landing site of the Endeavor.



Figure 13a. *Pinxit Coat*. 2006.



Figure 13b. *Pinxit Waistcoat*. 2006.

The embroidered work on eighteenth-century waistcoat panels are part of what Torr titled, *Pinxit Waistcoat* meaning ‘he painted it’ in Latin. These pieces are an obvious celebration of the work of Sydney Parkinson and Joseph Banks, and their scientific contributions made possible by the New Zealand Company. This particular memorialization of such historical figures does not recognize the violence that ensued during this time, nor does it reference the advent of the glorification of Western science in relationship with Aotearoa New Zealand. Torr’s work seemingly falls on the celebratory end within the spectrum of colonial settlement narratives.

Example Four:

Megan Jenkinson’s *The Florentina Pectora (The Flowering Heart)* represents the more gray-area in the middle of the spectrum in which both Māori and the colonizers are

celebrated for their contributions toward developing New Zealand. In her assemblage, Jenkinson highlights the scientific lens through which Aotearoa New Zealand can be viewed, as it was initially when it was picked-apart by European eyes⁶¹ – in accordance with the colonial gaze.



Figure 14. *The Florentina Pectora (The Flowering Heart)* Megan Jenkinson 1987.

This relationship is being communicated through the deliberate use of a glass case, which references the common artistic and scientific Western practice of placing objects behind and under glass. This practice is incompatible with Māori and other non-Western

⁶¹ Here: *From Kupe to Cook Exhibition Catalog*, Porirua: Pātaka Museum, 2019.

ways of interacting with natural objects. The piece illuminates the complex nature through which the colonizers connected with natural objects, an approach unknown to Aotearoa New Zealand until their landing. Through this piece, Jenkinson is deliberately situating her art in a glass box to emphasize the isolating and impersonal qualities that such a presentation brings.

The *Here: from Kupe to Cook* exhibition demonstrates the ability of museums as physical spaces to place ideologies in conversation with each other through the context of an exhibition. Museums are generally organized in a manner in which 'like' things are placed next to each other, which this exhibition does in an innovative way. The pieces are not alike in the sense that they are communicating the same message, though they all cover the same topic. It supports this thesis in supporting the idea that museums should be productive and thought-provoking spaces, made possible through careful curation of context.

Pacific Sisters, Activist Art Collective

Pacific Sisters is an art collective based in Auckland, who have been celebrated with a retrospective exhibition made possible by Te Papa. This example differs from the previous example as it is not simply a temporary exhibit, but an acting group. The radical Sisters challenge traditional modern notions of Aotearoa. They founded their union in the shared experience of feeling unwanted and inadequate in contemporary, urban society, and work collaboratively with Pacific designers, models, artists, and musicians. The Sisters have paved the way for Pacific artists across Aotearoa. Cultural critics claim, "the Pacific Sisters used fashion as a battlefield to assert, question and

tear down ideas, it is a succinct way to intertwine many of the key ideologies of the collective to make for cohesive viewing.”⁶² Cohesion is a core value in the work of the Sisters. The collective palpably demonstrates that what it means to be Māori, to be Indigenous, to be Pasifika, etc. is vastly complex in contemporary society as notions of ‘Indigenous’ and ‘colonial’ cultural elements have mixed post-European contact. One cannot simply sever what is ‘colonial,’ from what is ‘Indigenous.’ As time has passed, and Māori and Pākehā have mixed as groups and adopted culture and ideas from each other, the lines have become blurred. ‘Decolonization,’ does not mean the erasure of all things that can be categorized under the trope of ‘colonial’ as it is not synonymous with ‘European.’ Labeling cultural elements as such perpetuates power imbalances by allowing Europeans claim over aspects of wider culture. Rather, ‘decolonization’ means eliminating the dominance of colonial power. The main object of attack in Māori ‘decolonization’ strategies is the current and past inequitable power dynamics that subjugate Indigenous peoples such as the Māori. In New Zealand today, this means that no person or cultural group should enjoy more social, political, or economic autonomy or superiority over any other. Their commitment to challenging the socially constructed and colonial fixed notions of identity is inspiring and daunting at the same time. The radical nature by which they operate is indicative of the bold boundaries that have been drawn for Pacific people throughout history. Their contemporary boldness is a product of their historic repression. Mya Cole, a journalist that has written on the work of Pacific Sisters expresses her personal appreciation for their groundbreaking efforts in

⁶² Kate Powell, “Tough Crowd: Pacific Sisters at Auckland Art Gallery,” The Big Idea, March 4, 2019, <https://www.thebigidea.nz/stories/tough-crowd-pacific-sisters-at-auckland-art-gallery>).

the following way: “Moana Oceania was – and still is – suffering the effects of colonization, and we, the children of Moana still struggle to see ourselves as back in the media. The birth of Pacific Sisters was a blessing for myself, and for futures generations of artists who hail from the Pacific.”⁶³

New Zealand-born women constitute Pacific Sisters. They have a clear objective of inclusion and assert both Pacific Islander and Pākehā identities. Their aim is not to choose a side nor an identity, but to celebrate what it means to be Pacific – however one might define that on a personal level, in contemporary urban society. According to Rosanna Raymond, the Sisters “confuse a lot of people because we are mixed. We’re not a Māori group or a Samoan group, we’re multicultural. Some have a problem with that. It’s a generation thing too, a clash of eyes: old eyes, young eyes.” The group works to create a platform for Pacific Island talent by organizing shows, productions, and performances celebrating Pacific artists of all kinds. The collective’s awareness of the braided nature of art, culture, and identity is apparent in their support and contributions to other underrepresented groups. Auckland has a robust drag culture, which the Sisters actively support. They often feature Mika, a Māori drag star and collaborated on his cabaret. This collaboration is fitting as both challenge notions of identity – the Sisters play with notions of cultural identity, Mika and other drag queens play with notions of sexual identity. It is clear that the Sisters, as radical and fluid activists, are not out to solve a singular societal problem, as ethnicity and race are not the only aspects of identity.

⁶³ Mya Cole, ‘How the Protest Art of the Pacific Sisters Forged a Space in a City of Outsiders,’ *Vice Art*, (Online, February 21, 2019).

The Pacific Sisters are fashion activists, their main media is wearable pieces.

Figure 15 is an example of one of their pieces, made from videotape.



Figure 15. *Tāulaolevai Keeper of the water (Tuna)* at Pacific Sisters at Auckland Art Gallery (Auckland: Juliet Levesque, April 24, 2019).

This piece is indicative of Pacific adaptation to historical circumstances. There was a time when the natural fibers used to make traditional clothing were not allowed. Sister Rosanna Raymond explained in a documentary that they used what was at hand instead. In her case, this meant videotape from her 'wasband's' film company. The choice to use the found videotape not only illuminates Raymond's resourcefulness, but also brings new meaning to weaving *whakapapa* into clothing as videotape holds its own lived history in its physical makeup. The choice to use recycled materials is

indicative of a mindfulness for the environmental impact of materialism, which challenges ideologies established by the colonizers as they brought mercantilism to Aotearoa.

Sister Rosanna Raymond's experiences in the fashion world were simultaneous experiences with racism and marginalization, from which she developed what she describes as "a healthy disrespect for fashion magazines. Working as a model and later stylist, producer and performer, she felt as though she was "the token brown person." She addresses this issue in her work in Pacific Sisters as she found it problematic that "only the alternative magazines, such as Planet Magazine and Stamp Magazine, would ever dream of using brown faces in fashion shoots." This led to the production of Style Pasifika, a festival to empower New Zealand-born Pacific Islanders, through which Raymond aimed to mainstream photos representing the people she saw in her community.



Figure 16. Clinton Povey and Nephi Tupaea, 1992.

Figures 16 and 17, shot by Vivienne Haldane, styled by the Pacific Sisters are examples of the sort of images that were long excluded by the fashion world. The images are featured in Te Papa's show celebrating the work of Pacific Sisters, which has recently toured New Zealand. The exhibition, which also showed at the Auckland Art Gallery, was a retrospective of the collective's work, which reinvigorated the public. Nina Tonga, Curator of Pacific Art at Te Papa curated the show and has been

recognized by the Sisters as an instrumental part of the show as she too was equipped with a female and Pacific lens through which to plan the exhibition.⁶⁴

When it is mentioned that The Met's *Te Māori* was the brainchild of the Curator of Primitive art, claims are quickly made that the entire exhibition was wrong from the start, and his involvement as a 'Primitive art' expert is inappropriate. In accordance with these standards, the involvement of Nina Tonga in the Pacific Sisters exhibition, as both an individual and Curator of Pacific Art was not just suited but emblematic. In summary, exhibitions, their effectiveness and legacies, are not entirely dependent on the curator-in-charge, though their involvement and influence are inseparable components as their identities and experiences influence the exhibition's objectives.

⁶⁴ Ginny Fisher, 'Shining a Light on the Pacific Sisters' Artistic Legacy,' *Viva*, (Online, March 7, 2018).



Figure 17.

Imagery such as that depicted in Figure 17, aims to revive what it means to be a Pacific woman in New Zealand, challenging the ideals imposed upon them by Western society. Raymond explains, “The Pacific female body had been framed by Western ideals. We had been disempowered politically and culturally by the classic Victorian framework: the woman stays at home and looks after the man. We had been written out; the Pacific women we knew had disappeared and become dancing girls in grass skirts, selling holidays to tourists.”

The breadth of mediums that the Pacific Sisters use make their art more relatable, practical, and personal. The common thread in their videos, performances,

and clothing is the human aspect. Their art is being made to be worn by humans or performed by humans, Pasifika to be precise. The cultural value and corresponding transmittable and relatable characteristics come from the human quality of their work. This quality, the living aspect of their work, aligns with the traditional ways through which Māori passed down information – through oral tradition and customs. The Pacific Sister’s approach, which involves ‘accessification,’ a self-generated term they coin in which they take a more-is-more approach to the aesthetics of identity, is a brilliant development in the opposition of hegemony and colonialism.⁶⁵

Preserving and Transmitting Traditional Culture: The *Haka*

The *haka* (ceremonial dance), considered to be a cultural *toanga* has the propensity to be a socially unifying tool. Māori have practiced the *haka*, known as a “war challenge” or “war cry” since before New Zealand’s colonization by the British. It is an experience that encompasses all of the senses. Traditionally, it was performed by men before going to war. The aggressive facial expressions, made with *mana*, are meant to intimidate. The cry is meant to lift one’s own morale through creatively sharing life stories with the self-expression and pure emotion (Tamaki Māori Village, 2018). It remains generally unchanged as an integral part of the lives of the Māori, a crucial component to maintaining cultural knowledge and history. The *haka* is a prime example of the oral and performance-based way of Māori information transmission. Information is transmitted interpersonally and generationally through storytelling in song and dance. *Hakas* are used to tell stories, that are passed down from generation to generation.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

The *haka* is extraordinarily dynamic and inclusive. The website of the Tamaki Māori village states, “We’re a very welcoming and inclusive culture. We love sharing our heritage and encourage visitors to participate in our culture, like learning the haka. However, you must always respect it. Try to learn the words and understand what they mean, why this haka is important.” The inclusive nature of the haka and the general Māori culture is what makes the haka so instrumental to the improvement of Māori-Pākehā relationships. A major issue in most societies in which there is oppression or fear of other groups is that there is a lack of interaction between groups. The haka provides a means for rich cultural display.

Historically, Christian missionaries discouraged the *haka*, and tried to replace it with ‘godly’ hymns, vastly different from the haka, constructed of scales, melodies, and harmonies.⁶⁶ Their aim to for Māori to assimilate is clear, likely stemming from the fear brought about by the colonial practice of othering. It comes as no surprise that highly expressive, loud, unified groups of the Māori threatened colonizers. Perhaps the fate of the Māori would have been different had the European missionaries tried to understand the haka.

Today, Māori men and women perform the *haka* at birthdays, weddings, funerals, and other major celebrations. It is used as a way to symbolize tribal identity. There are many different kinds of the haka. For example, the All Blacks, New Zealand’s beloved rugby team, performs the ka mate haka, which is the most well-known type. It was originally a ceremonial haka about the triumph of life over death. Wayne Shelford,

⁶⁶ Paul Whitinui, ‘Indigenous-based inclusive pedagogy,’ (2010).

coach of the All Blacks, is responsible for the popularization of the haka in the international athletic arena.



Figure 18. All Blacks Performing the Haka.

The team has been performing the haka at all of their matches since the start of his leadership. He brought the tradition to the team when he took over in the mid-1980's, and it has been an essential of the team, and one of the most loved sporting traditions in the world ever since (Tamaki Māori Village, 2018). Recently, a moving video⁶⁷ of a haka performance at a wedding has gone viral, which has also contributed to the global interest in the tradition and inspired more posts of similar fashion. An additional component that made the video interesting was the fact that the wedding was a union of a Māori woman and a Pākehā man. This made the video even more powerful as both Māori and Pākehā took part in the performance. The seriousness and emotion in the

⁶⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhhedH6wK6I>

crowd is another powerful aspect of the video. The haka requires facial expressions with wide eyes and tongues out, which is generally a 'funny' thing in Western culture, but everyone in the room was intently and respectfully watching, some, including the bride and groom, were crying. Performances such as the haka, emotionally charged and emotion-provoking facilitates human connectivity in a space that is unmatched.

In recent years, the haka has become especially popular with Māori youth. Performers compete in competitions on local and national levels, using lyrics to address social and political problems relevant to them. Hakas are designed to rally people to address and call out injustices.

In February of 2018, the haka was performed on its biggest platform to date. Māori Television broadcasted further than ever before, presenting an unblocked internet broadcast of the National Kapa Haka Festival, Te Matatini. The prestigious Māori performing arts event was available to United States and Australian audiences. The three day event of 1,800 elite competitors with 35,000 in attendance was on its largest stage, for 11 hours each day.⁶⁸ This goes to show the fact that elements of traditional Māori culture are still alive and well today, changing with the times, but holding their core values-- on a stage for the world to see.

Educators consider the haka to be a culturally responsive activity. The haka has a place in the mainstream school system, taught and practiced by students of all ages. It provides the opportunity for Māori students to engage in learning and exploring their

⁶⁸ PRNewswire, 'Māori Television Brings National Kapa Haka Festival to the United States of America,' (Online, January 30, 2017).

own language, culture, and customs,⁶⁹ and an opportunity for Pākehā to engage with the Indigenous culture of the country they live in. With 54,000 Māori students in mainstream secondary schools, it is imperative to recognize cultural tradition. Those sympathetic toward the Māori students in schools have been searching for ways to improve their education. The *haka* has proven to be one of the most successful ways of improving the participation levels of Māori students. In an interview about the pedagogical usage of the haka, a Māori parent said, “promoting cultural inclusiveness in our schools should not be at expense of denying Māori their *tinō rangatiratanga* (rights to self-determine) but instead should ultimately enrich the learning experience.”⁷⁰ This exhibits the contemporary value of a centuries-old tradition. There are many components of *haka* that are optimal to the enhancement of learning. There is a lot of creative and educational value in physical activity, self-expression, and team building. The element of teacher praise, paired with parent approval, fosters the growth of pride and respect that students have for themselves and their peers. In the year 2000, The Ministry of Education stated that “schools and teachers who are more receptive to engaging with culture as well as building better relationships with their Māori communities, *iwi*, *hapū* (sub-tribe), *whānau* (family, kin) ...are more likely to enhance greater levels of all-round student success of their Māori students.”

To promote *kapa haka* as a pedagogical tool for creating culturally safe and sensitive environments, the government created the National Certificate in Educational Achievement, which can be obtained through credits earned through performances. This certificate is significant as it affirms the government’s commitment to the success of Māori students through the use of biculturalism. It proves that they acknowledge the fact that culture is an element imperative for

⁶⁹ Paul Whitinui, ‘Indigenous-based inclusive pedagogy: The art of Kapa Haka to improve educational outcomes for Māori students in mainstream secondary schools in Aotearoa, New Zealand,’ *International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning*, (Online, December 17, 2014).

⁷⁰ Ibid.

the success of many students. The reasons for this are tri fold, the first being that schools and educators are more likely to show greater appreciation if the kapa haka is included as a legitimate subject, not just a supplement to conventional curriculum. The second, that there is considerable evidence that a general increased sense of happiness is present in students enrolled in schools that provide a place, time, and space for their practices. The final reason being that with the practice of the haka, students are less likely to have significant or chronic learning and behavioral capabilities (Whitinui, 2010).

The centrality of traditional cultural practices such as the haka should not be lost as it continues to prove has valuable and instrumental to human flourishing on personal and societal levels.

Te Reo Māori

This section evaluates the current status of *Te Reo* Māori, the Māori language in present-day New Zealand, and emphasizes its importance in the vitality of Māori culture moving into the future. Like the haka, *Te Reo* may serve as both an inadvertent and deliberate tool for decolonization. Experts on education, development, and culture emphasize the potency of language as a catalyst for culture. Today, governmental ministries advocate for the protection of *Te Reo* Māori as they have neglected the language in the past. New Zealand's current Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern says her daughter will learn both *Te Reo* and English, justifying her assertion by posing the following: "It is an official language, so why should we bat an eyelid at its universal availability and its much more common use?" The preservation of *Te Reo* as an integral component of Māori culture is paramount in decolonizing contemporary New Zealand. Though government policy does not overtly assert *Te Reo* as a means for 'decolonization' the language's ability to retain it's rightful place in greater New Zealand society is a clear objective, which contributes the greater cause of mitigating the colonial

gaze. English is not an official language of New Zealand despite the fact that it is the most common. However, *Te Reo Māori* is one of New Zealand's official languages and must be handled as such by the government and other influential institutions.

Attention to the revitalization of *Te Reo Māori* continues to increase and has been since the late twentieth-century. Educators, politicians, and cultural experts alike are pushing for the revitalization. A multitude of strategies have contributed to the revival effort, though progress is still to be made as many challenges remain. Most scholarship on the revitalization of *Te Reo* discusses the role of the educational system, what is learned at home, the relevance and value of cultural contributions, and structural strengths and weaknesses. The general public is seemingly optimistic about the progress that has been made, but scholars are critical of this optimism, as statistics expose the truth of the matter — *Te Reo Māori* is still endangered. This section will explore some of the scholarship and policies in place relating to the revitalization of *Te Reo Māori*, focusing on the current methods used, means for assessing the vitality of the language, and the suggestions made to strengthen the revival.

Te Reo Māori remains quite vulnerable today. The fate of the language relies on many factors, all of which have the respect of Māori culture at their root. It is essential that not only the language is accepted, but the culture of the Māori people — past and present, as well. The ways in which people view and interact with Māori people and culture, whether that be Māori themselves or non-Māori, are influenced by institutional factors. Government policies must be supportive of a revival, just as greater society needs to be. The classic pattern of language decline, which has occurred worldwide,

takes effect in a matter of three generations.⁷¹ Though Te Reo is still technically endangered, and many experts are critical of optimism surrounding language revitalization, it is clear that there is increasing attention to the effort towards it. As long as commitments continue to develop, there is hope for Te Reo Māori, despite the challenges that remain. The greatest assets to the revitalization can be found in human-relatedness, including both Māori and Pākehā.

The Role of the Educational System

The majority of scholarship and general writings on the revitalization of Te Reo Māori discuss the enormous capability that the New Zealand school system has to contribute to the revival of the language.

In *Te Reo Māori: The Past 20 Years and Moving Forward*, Tamati Reedy presents childhood and adolescent education as vital to the revitalization efforts, but mentions a critical threat; the reliance on preschool and formal school teachers can be problematic. This is an important challenge to note, as most sources simply praise the education system.⁷² School should not be the only place where children are picking up Te Reo Māori and developing their skills.

The education system, in order to optimize its capabilities, should take a holistic approach, aligning with Māori values. Reedy encourages a holistic approach with cultural ethos, incorporating three basic principles in learning: empowerment, learning

⁷¹ Tamati Reedy, 'Te Reo Māori: The Past 20 Years and Looking Forward,' *Ocean Linguistics*, (University of Hawai'i Press, June 2000).

⁷² Ibid.

through interaction, and learning through community.⁷³ Not only does such an approach incorporate and enhance Māori cultural values, but is optimal in foundational learning.

Revitalization Starts at Home

Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora, The Ministry of Social Development, provides census statistics on Māori language speakers. The 2016 Social Report, *Te pūrongo oranga tangata*, divides Māori into eight age categories, as well as by gender. These categories are useful for projecting the potential fate of Te Reo, and recognizing where the problems may lay. A major takeaway from the survey is that there is a gender gap in Te Reo Māori proficiency, dividing households.

Winifred Bauer discusses the gender discrepancy in her study, *Is The Health of Te Reo Māori Improving?* in which she focuses on three areas: children's use, gender differences in speakers, and proficiency on national and regional scales. In Māori culture, women are the primary caretakers for children, which makes them the primary language transmitters. This has become an obstacle in families where the husbands/fathers do not use Te Reo at home.⁷⁴ A critical concern posed by Tamati Reedy is that there is danger in cases where children are developing their language skills in an impaired environment.⁷⁵ In such cases, the language is not enhanced, rather more vulnerable.

Te Reo Mauriora: Te Arotakenga o te Rāngai Reo Māori me te Rautaki Reo Māori includes a framework that assess the degrees of endangerment of

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Winifred Bauer, 'Is the Health of Te Reo Māori Improving?' *Reo, Te*, (Online, 2008), 33-73.

⁷⁵ Tamati Reedy, 'Te Reo Māori, (2000).

intergenerational language transmission, highlighting the importance of the transmission of language within families; this is perhaps the most useful part of this source. The chart came from UNESCO 2009, and is made up of six degrees of endangerment: safe, vulnerable, definitely endangered, severely endangered, critically endangered, and extinct. Looking at the spectrum, *Te Reo* would be considered 'safe,' if the language was spoken by all generations, meaning the intergenerational transmission would remain uninterrupted. On the other end, 'extinct' would mean there were no speakers left, the stage right before that, 'critically endangered,' would be when the youngest speakers are grandparents and older, speaking the language partially and infrequently.⁷⁶ Fortunately, *Te Reo Māori* is not at the 'critically endangered,' phase yet. However, the reo is far from safe, falling somewhere between 'definitely endangered' and 'severely endangered.'⁷⁷

Cultural Climate

Social cohesion has been an integral part of Māori culture for hundreds of years. A fitting methodology can be applied to the revitalization of the language. To harness the strength that comes from *Te Reo* speaking households, *Te Reo Mauriora: Review of the Māori Language Sector and Māori language strategy* urges Māori speaking families to come together to raise the quality of the language. The Māori Language Commission

⁷⁶ Te Paepae Motuhake, New Zealand Ministry of Māori Development, *Te reo mauriora: te arotakenga o te rāngai reo Māori me to rautaki reo Māori*, (Wellington: Te Puni Kōkiri, 2011).

⁷⁷ Ibid: 17.

chairperson, Rawinia Higgins, emphasizes the pull of the public, encouraging New Zealanders to respond to the Minister's call for consultation and share their views.⁷⁸

Research shows that Māori who live in places with a higher population density of Māori residents are generally able to hold an everyday conversation in Te Reo. Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora's site provides a supporting statistic from 2013: the regions with the highest proportions of people with conversational Māori skills were Gisborne at 30.4%, Bay of Plenty at 28.6% and Northland at 26.2%. The website is useful, as it explains the key statistics and their relevance to the revitalization of *Te Reo Māori*. This specific portion of the website focuses on cultural identity. The statistics are quite telling, but outdated. The use of updated statistics, from more recent years especially paired with those five years and older could be more propitious in evaluating the progress of revitalization.

Te Māngai Pāho's government website includes the ZePA model: zero-passive-active as a potential way to strengthen the position of *Te Reo* in society. The point of the model is not to go directly from being a 'zero,' meaning a total non-speaker to 'active,' meaning a strong/fluent user. The model aims to get zero users to become passive users, which generates an increased awareness, influencing the move from passive to active. This model is contingent on the inclination of users to move from each 'zone.' The site also reflects upon recent research on the revival of *Te Reo*, stressing the importance and influence of the attitudes attributed to *Te Reo* by society. Te Māngai

⁷⁸ Te Māngai Pāho, Māori Language Commission, 'Te Pūtahi Rangahau' (Online accessed, 2018). <https://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/en/services/research-centre/>

Pāho claims that, “language values are an inherent factor of language choice amongst bilingual Māori communities.”⁷⁹

Julia De Bres stresses magnitude of the role that non-Māori speakers in society hold in her paper, *Promoting the Māori language to non-Māori: evaluating the New Zealand government’s approach*. The piece examines the official policies and initiatives that have been undertaken by the Ministry of Māori Development and the Māori Language Commission, offering points for improvement. De Bres argues that, “the attitudes and behaviors of majority language speakers play a significant role in the health of minority languages,” explaining that they contribute to the deterioration of a language, often resisting the subsequent efforts to revive it.⁸⁰ De Bres strengthens her argument by including sympathizing arguments from other scholars, like that of Stephen May in his piece, *Accommodating and resisting minority language policy: The case of Wales* for the *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. It is imperative to note that the article focuses on non-Māori New Zealanders, rather than non-Māori speakers. This distinction is critical, but not often made.⁸¹

Structural Strengths and Weaknesses

The revitalization of *Te Reo* cannot come without a strong Māori cultural foundation and respect for it, heavily influenced by institutional factors. The current Māori Language Strategy recognizes this reality, that the fate of *Te Reo* has had great

⁷⁹ Te Māngai Pāho, ‘Language Revitalisation,’ *Te Māngai Pāho Position*,’ (Online accessed, 2018). <https://www.tmp.govt.nz/language-revitalisation>

⁸⁰ De Bres, (Online, 201), 361.

⁸¹ Stephen May, ‘Accommodating and Resisting Minority Language Policy: The Case of Wales,’ *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, (Online, March 26, 2010).

impact on the cultural climate in Aotearoa. In order to revitalize, the language must be valued.

At the Museums Aotearoa Conference 2019, Ngarino Ellis spoke about the decolonization of museums. Museums are a hub for the representation of cultures and peoples, a place where people expect to see the truth. Unfortunately, in a lot of cases, colonial language and representations of Māori people and history are still presented. Ellis urges the importance of decolonizing museums, claiming, “we cannot decolonize museums until we decolonize ourselves.”⁸² Places like museums and other sites that present the Māori culture contribute a vast amount to the way in which people think about, and unconsciously place value on Māori culture. It is crucial that the presentation honors and celebrates the culture, educating people in a way that leads to the fostering of environments in which elements of Māori culture — *Te Reo*, can flourish.

In accordance with the ideology Ngarino Ellis discussed at this year’s Museums Aotearoa conference, Tamati Reedy expresses the toxicity of hostile attitudes held by early colonists, explaining that they had, and still have, debilitating effects. Historically, the colonial attitudes of Pākehā, non-Māori, took shape in the institutional repression of the language. For example, the punishment of Māori in early years for using *Te Reo* in school.⁸³ Institutionalized oppression was also seen in more recent years, as seen in in the mid-to-late twentieth-century, when the New Zealand government put policies in

⁸² Ngarino Ellis, ‘Decolonising Museums,’ *Museums Aotearoa 2019*, (Te Papa, Wellington: May 24, 2019).

⁸³ Tamati Reedy, ‘Te Reo Māori,’ (2000).

place during Māori migrations to urban areas, moving them into Pākehā-dominant communities, attempting to disperse them and break their social/cultural cohesion.⁸⁴

Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo Māori (The Māori Language Commission) points to the fact that the 1987 Māori Language Act gives the right to use *Te Reo Māori* as an official language, but not a commitment to language revitalization. Language initiatives need to increase the value and status of language over time. The New Zealand Government's expectations for the state sector have an emphasis on innovation that could generate better outcomes at lower costs over time. Government policies and initiatives are in need of updates, with a greater commitment to the quality of programming. Te Māngai Pāho suggests building the capacity and capabilities for the broadcasting sector, capitalizing on the power of technology, and securing more leverage from government funding.⁸⁵

Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo Māori's website posted a brief article in 2018, *A Working Partnership for Māori Language Revitalization*. The piece welcomed the first Crown Māori Language Strategy plan following the Māori Language Act of 2016, under which "The Crown expresses its commitment to work in partnership with iwi and Māori to continue actively to protect and promote this taonga, the Māori language, for future generations."⁸⁶ The website commends the commitments made to setting goals, means of achieving them, and the different responsibilities of government agencies, also emphasizing the need for public feedback for the Crown. This would be more

⁸⁴ Julia de Bres, 'Promoting the Māori language to non-Māori: evaluating the New Zealand government's approach,' *Lang Policy*, (Online, 2011).

⁸⁵ Te Māngai Pāho, 'Funding innovative Māori language content,' (Online, 2015).

⁸⁶ Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori Māori Language Commission, 'A working partnership for Māori Language Revitalisation, *Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa*, (Online, 2018).

informative had the site explained what said goals, means and responsibilities might look like.

Richard A. Benton offers suggestions in his piece, *Perfecting the partnership: revitalizing the Māori language in New Zealand education and society 1987–2014*.

Benton notes that an increased presence in *Te Reo Māori* following the institution of 'Māori Language Day' in 1973.⁸⁷ The annual day of celebration eventually turned into Māori Language Week, which has since enjoyed mass media coverage. The media is another platform for which *Te Reo* can be spread. Bilingual greetings on television and radio normalize the use of *Te Reo* in everyday life.

Conclusion

Māori artwork, Māori-curated exhibitions, the revitalization of *Te Reo*, and the globalization of Māori customs such as the haka are all means for creating understanding of and familiarity with Māori culture in the context of greater New Zealand society and the contemporary globalized world. The colonial gaze is rooted in a lack of understanding and misunderstanding, paired with an ideology that essentializes Māori people, justifying oppression. These elements have led to misrepresentation and the perpetuation of injustice. Making space for Māori and their culture allows an increased level of interaction between Māori and non-Māori. Since European contact, these spaces have existed in select pockets, limiting a natural and rightful germination of Māori and Pacific cultures in the contemporary. Encouraging the use of *Te Reo* in

⁸⁷ Richard A. Benton, 'Perfecting the Partnership: Revitalising the Māori Language in New Zealand Education and Society 1987–2014,' *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 28, no. 2 (April 2015), 99-112.

schools and creating platforms for Māori artists are the sorts of strategies of decolonization that should have begun centuries ago, though we have only seen such in recent decades. This chapter has proven that these objectives are crucial and have been efficacious in improving the place of Māori in society and mitigating the colonial gaze. However, more measures can be adopted in the future. Until the opportunities and experiences of Māori are equal with those of Pākehā or any other New Zealander, there is work to be done. The question then becomes: is equality possible in inherently white-supremacist racial structure?

CONCLUSION

This thesis has explicated the historical origins from which the colonial gaze developed in Aotearoa New Zealand. It examined how historically the museum served as a catalyst for the colonial gaze and explored some of the ways in which contemporary museums can endeavor to mitigate the colonial gaze. Prominent components of traditional Māori culture have been discussed as valuable to contemporary society, as both inadvertent and deliberate tools for decolonization. This thesis demonstrates that my main interest in the status of Aotearoa New Zealand is that of its cultural climate.

In recounting the historical origins of the colonial gaze and situating this paper within the contemporary context of the 250th anniversary of the landing of The Endeavour, I emphasize that necessary steps still must be taken to further decolonize Aotearoa New Zealand in the future. The turbulence of this anniversary alone is proof that changes are still necessary to diminish the pain of the past that has continued into the present. Museums have proven to be powerful tools as both reinforcers and eradicators of the colonial gaze, as their pasts have been exclusive and isolating, but more social and accessible in the present.

It is impossible to erase colonialism from Aotearoa New Zealand's past as its ravages have been braided into society since European contact. The purpose of decolonizing does not mean to remove the colonial power, it is to the balance of power that came with imperialism. Contemporary New Zealand society needs not be further plagued by colonialism and unjust inequality. To achieve an equitable society, institutions that were once responsible for augmenting the colonial gaze, including the

government, museums, and the educational system, must take responsibility in the contemporary, and serve as a means for mitigating the colonial gaze. How this can be achieved is not black and white, the grays are to be carefully negotiated. As we have seen in this study, museum exhibitions like *Here: From Kupe to Cook* can be used to physically situate contrasting historical narratives in conversation with each other through artwork. Work to mitigate the colonial gaze might often mean creating space for thoughtful conversation. For example, in teaching the history of New Zealand, introducing key characters in the colonial narratives such as James Cook and Sydney Parkinson, there needs to be a carefulness in choosing the adjectives and language used to describe them and their impacts. A great deal is lost when figures are labeled as villains or heroes. The value in learning historical specificity and the complexities of their legacies does not have full effect when their personas are reduced to such categorization. We must ask and describe exactly why they were 'good,' or 'bad.'

This combination of historical review with contemporary assessment contributes to the larger discussion of how an equitable, productive society can be fortified in contemporary society in Aotearoa New Zealand. All in all, the progress made by greater society in New Zealand to create space for Māori in the land in which they were once the flourishing majority has improved immensely. Museums have adopted more culturally competent practices, schools are encouraging and integrating *Te Reo Māori* and Māori customs, and there are more dialogues about the complicated colonial past. However, the cultural landscape continues to be dominated by what can only be labeled as white culture, meaning white supremacy remains. Urban spaces cater to the cultural norms and desires of the white majority. As the world has become more globalized,

white-driven capitalism has been central to development in places like Aotearoa New Zealand, that were not always 'white.' What exactly would an equitable society look like? Does it mean a peaceful coexistence and collaboration between Māori and Pākehā? Could there be a true 'happy-medium,' and would that be just? Does it mean that Māori regain majority status? In the case of the latter, the danger lays in creating a new dominant group, meaning a shift in power dynamics. This objective would be moot as the mitigation of inferior and superior assignments of power is the central objective. It is crucial to continue to facilitate and participate in conversations that generate methods to mitigate the white supremacy that produces and reproduces the colonial gaze in Aotearoa New Zealand. Though changes to legislature, school policy, and even practices of museology, have been significant and ongoing, they are not sufficient to make broad stroked institutional changes that would ensure parity between indigenous and white culture. They are merely the start, as they allow for smaller changes in the details – in language, in means of interaction, in ways of taking care of taonga. The colonial past must be dissected and carefully presented to avoid reproducing the colonial gaze in the present. History is often understood as a tool to navigate the future. The ways in which we reflect upon the past, whether that be to celebrate, vilify, or something along a spectrum, determine how the past manifests in the present and future. The past is over, but history is fresh and pliable, and should be used to ameliorate the future.

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