CHAPTER TEN

MANA WAHINE THEORY

*We need to actively honour, to celebrate the contributions, and affirm the **mana** of **Maori** women: those **tupuna wahine** who have gone before us; those **wahine toa** who give strength to our culture and people today; and those **kotiro** and **mokopuna** who are being born now, and who will be born in the future to fulfil our dreams.*[1]

Introduction

A key point made in this thesis is that colonisation has had a major impact on the position of **Māori** women. Colonial ideologies have constructed particular discourses related to **Māori** women which have contributed significantly to the denial of particular roles and status. Ideologies of race, gender and class have interacted in complex ways to corrupt many of the stories, values, beliefs and practices that are linked to **Māori** women. **Māori** women's knowledge has been marginalised and **Māori** women's roles redefined in line with colonial notions. Information related to **Māori** women has been ignored or re-written to become more conducive to colonial belief systems. These belief systems have constructed **Māori** women as 'Other'. As Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith notes;

> **Māori** women belong to the group of women in the world who have been historically constructed as 'Other' by white patriarchies and white feminisms. As women, we have been defined in terms of our differences to men. As **Māori**, we have been defined in terms of our difference to our colonisers. As both, we have been defined by our difference to **Māori** men, **Pākehā** men and **Pākehā** women. The socioeconomic class in which most **Māori** women are located makes the category of 'Other' an even more complex problematic.[2]

This is one of the reasons behind the development of **Mana Wahine** theory. Had colonisation not been our experience, or the imposition of racist, sexist, heterosexist, classist ideologies not occurred, the development of **Māori** women's theories to respond to colonial constructs may not have been necessary. However, this is not the situation. **Aotearoa** is an occupied land. Racism, sexism and classism have combined with the agendas of capitalist imperialism on our land, and **Māori** women are experiencing the brunt of those forces. Had existing feminist and class analyses been adequate in, or even open to, the incorporation of Indigenous voices we may have seen more active involvement of **Māori** women in those movements. However, that too has not been the case. These are not the sole reasons for why **Māori** have

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[1] Irwin, K., 1992(b) op.cit.:1
[2] Smith, Linda **Tuhiwai** 1992(a) op.cit.:33

sought a re-emergence of our own cultural frameworks, or for why many **Māori** women are choosing to be a part of claiming or writing our own cultural analyses. The major thrust in this movement has been in the reassertion of being **Māori**, for one, and in the validity and affirmation of **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**. The assertion of **Mana Wahine** theory is a part of that. It is necessary in that colonisation has coopted many of our people to participate in the perpetuation of unequal gender power relations. The power of colonial hegemony is not to be understated, nor is the power of cooption. I am under no doubt that much of what is expressed today as the role of **Māori** women is directly linked to notions of social control and power.

Where **Kaupapa Māori** theory must, in my view, both analyse and challenge unequal power relations that exist both between colonised and coloniser, it must also deal with these issues internally to **Māori** communities. My argument is that **Mana Wahine** theory is a **Kaupapa Māori** theoretical framework that attends to the multiple issues that are faced by **Māori** women. Much of the focus of present work by **Māori** women has been the analysis and deconstruction of colonial discourses. Through this process **Māori** women are exploding the colonial myths that have been constructed, whilst simultaneously redefining the boundaries. This is a complex process as we are constantly confronted with the need to decolonise that which we have internalised about ourselves. Increasingly **Māori** women are challenging the dominant cultural terrain. **Mana Wahine** theoretical frameworks have emerged as a means by which to describe **Māori** women's analyses, they are **Māori** women's views of the world, which are located in **Māori** women's experiences and understandings of the world.

In discussing particular elements within **Mana Wahine** theory, I want to acknowledge that those identified in this Chapter are by no means exclusive nor are they definitive. **Mana Wahine** theory as a theoretical analysis continues to be grown and nurtured by **Māori** women and therefore as is the case, at this point in time, with **Kaupapa Māori** theory there is ongoing discussion and searching being undertaken by many **Māori** women as to what may be essential elements of such a framework. The **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi** context is critical to the articulation of **Māori** women's theories in whatever form they may take. Where there are definite relativities across **iwi**, it is also the case that there are distinct differences across **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi**. For example cultural frameworks for **Ngāti Porou** are not the same as for **Te Ātiawa**. The variations in our experiences should not, in my view, deter us from seeking theories that can support the affirmation of our roles, status and positioning or that can bring a unified engagement of colonisation. This thesis is one contribution by one **wahine** from **Taranaki** to that discussion. It must also be said that the passion with which **Māori** women speak and explore **Mana Wahine** is addictive in that it is simultaneously creative, challenging, exploring, stimulating and self-affirming.

The elements identified here come from reviewing writings of **Māori** women that specifically discuss the notions of either **Mana Wahine** theory or **Māori** feminisms as theoretical frameworks or the impact of colonisation on **Māori** women. There are key writers in this field including; **Ngahuia Te Awekotuku**, Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith, Kathie Irwin, **Ripeka** Evans, Hilda Halkyard-**Harawira**, **Huia** Jahnke, **Merata Mita**, **Hine Waitere**-Ang, Annette Sykes, Tania **Rei**, **Rangimarie** Rose **Pere**, **Ani Mikaere** and **Kuni** Jenkins.[3] There are other **Māori** women who write in the area of gender issues for **Māori** from a range of theoretical perspectives. For example Patricia **Maringi** Johnson looks at issues for **Māori** women through the concept of 'difference' and Glynnis **Paraha** draws on representation theories.[4] The process of identifying elements, elements or challenges in the development of **Māori** women's theories is not new. Kathie Irwin identified ten key challenges for **Māori** women in our theoretical journey, these being;

1. To make **Maori** women, our herstories, work and contribution to this society visible.
2. To promote and lead **Maori** women's studies which monitor and analyse the role and status of **Maori** women in the **Maori** community as well as in the wider community.
3. To consolidate the complementary goals of **Maori** feminism and **Maori** development and develop new goals and strategies from this base.
4. To promote **Maori** feminisms in **Maori** society
5. To develop **kaupapa** which unify us as **Maori** under the **mana** of the Treaty of **Waitangi**
6. To develop positive alliances wherever these are useful to **Maori** women and **kaupapa Maori**; our men can do some of the work, **tauiwi** should do lots of the work; the state can pay for it all.
7. To provide leadership in the urgent work which is necessary to ensure that equity in education becomes a reality for our women as well as for other New Zealanders.
8. To develop ways of working and living which are stress-reduced so that **Maori** women, their **whanau**, **hapu** and **iwi** can foster healthy lifestyles.
9. To live instead of surviving.
10. To recognise that struggles to challenge the racism, sexism and classism of this society have a long his/herstory and that ours is but a contribution to the work our **tipuna** have already started.[5]

Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith has outlined key discourses that are a part of how **Mana Wahine** theory is articulated, these she identifies as (i) the **whānau** discourse, which recognises that central to **Māori** identity is **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi**, and that critical relationships are engaged through **whanaungatanga** and **whakapapa**; (ii) spiritual discourse, which centres the notion of **wairua** in our analysis as a means of understanding dimensions that reach beyond the material and physical; (iii) state discourse, which engages structural analysis in order to understand the role of the state and structural dimensions in **Māori** women's struggles; (iv) Indigenous women's discourse, which focuses on engaging our position in the wider international Indigenous context. Each of these discourses she notes contribute elements of how we theorise and understand our positions.[6]

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[3] All of these writers are referenced in earlier Chapters in the thesis.
[4] Johnston, P.M.G. 1998 op.cit; **Paraha**, G. 1992 op.cit.
[5] Irwin, Kathie 1990(b) 'Challenges to **Māori** Feminsts' in *Broadsheet Magazine*, #182 October 1990, Broadsheet Collective, Auckland
[6] Smith, L.T. 1992(a) op.cit:pp 33-51

Highlighting these writings serves as an indication that there are elements that appear throughout **Māori** women's literature that may be considered key elements for a **Mana Wahine** theoretical framework. As I have said, and it warrants repetition, these are not exclusive nor are they definitive. It is my belief that the theoretical discussion requires rigorous debate and reflection. Similar to **Kaupapa Māori** theory, **Mana Wahine** is theory based upon **mātauranga Māori**. The elements discussed in this chapter provide a basis for the ongoing development of **Mana Wahine** theory. They provide a foundation that is both based within **mātauranga Māori** and also which challenge the imposition of colonial patriarchal structures. Those elements are: **Mana Wahine**; **te reo me ōna tikanga**, **whakapapa**; **whānau**; recognising diverse realities; **wairua**; **te tīriti o Waitangi**; decolonisation; **mātauranga wahine** and reclaiming cultural space. As noted previously, and at risk of belabouring the point, these elements are not exclusive or definitive. They are, however, clearly elements that have been articulated as critical in the development of **Māori** women's theories.

Mana Wahine theory is driven by a need to re-engage **Māori** women's knowledge and understandings and in doing so affirm a wider **Kaupapa Māori** drive that is currently being expressed in **Aotearoa**. It is also a theoretical framework that enables **Māori** women to engage critically with how we see ourselves and how we consider our position in a colonised society. Recognising **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi** identities, and our experiences in a colonised state, is critical in any **Māori** theoretical discussion. That is why this discussion is described as an opening, it is not to present a generic theory for all **Māori** women. The intention of this thesis is to affirm the validity of **Mana Wahine** theory as a **Kaupapa Māori** theoretical framework and in doing so to bring to the fore ways in which some **Māori women** are talking and writing about that project. What is exciting is seeing the increasing possibilities for analysis. Before looking any further I need to signal the many ways in which **Māori** women name their theorising. **Mana Wahine**, **Kaupapa Wāhine**, **Māori** Feminism are all concepts drawn on by **Māori** women. The naming of the analysis is an important part of the theorising process.

Mana Wahine

There are two key components of the term '**Mana Wahine**' these being; the concepts '**Mana**' and '**Wahine**'. **Rangimarie Turuki Pere** maintains that **mana** is fundamentally beyond translation. It is multi-dimensional and relates to notions that she describes as psychic influence, control, prestige, power, vested and acquired authority and influence, being influential or binding over others, and that quality of the person that others know she or he has![7]

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[7] **Pere, Rangimarie Turuki** 1991 *Te Wheke: A Celebration of Infinite Wisdom*, **Ao Ako** Global Learning New Zealand Ltd. Gisborne

The multi-dimensional nature is also highlighted by **Manuka Henare**[8]. According to **Manuka** in order to understand **Māori** worldviews there must be an understanding of **mana** and its related concepts. As with **Rangimarie Pere**'s description, **Manuka** highlights that **mana** can not be translated as a singular English concept. **Mana Māori** is noted as being *"**Māori** wellbeing and integrity, and emphasises the wholeness of social relationships, it expresses continuity through time and space"*. **Mana** is also referred to as *"generative power"; "linked to powers of the spiritual ancestors"* and implies *"purity as a potency"*.[9] **Mana, Henare** writes, is connected to every form of activity within **Māori** society and is generated through collective relationships.

> **Mana** is a quality which cannot be generated for oneself; neither can it be possessed for one-self, rather **mana** is generated by others and is bestowed upon both individuals and groups. In the **Māori** world, virtually every activity, ceremonial or otherwise, has a link with the maintenance of and enhancement of **mana**. It is central to the integrity of the person and the group.[10]

Māori Marsden also notes the social relations that are central to **mana**, noting that **mana** is a 'divine authority' that is bestowed upon a person to fulfil particular functions. It is bestowed by the people and enhances a person's prestige to undertake obligations in social and political matters.[11] The layers and interactions between individuals and groups, and the relationship of those to practices is also highlighted by **Hine-Tu-Whiria-O-Te-Rangi Waitere-Ang.**[12] **Hine** provides an overview of a range of recent writings on the term '**mana**' and her writing echoes the assertions that **mana** is integral to all aspects of **Māori** society. **Hine** identifies **mana** as an integral component in the relationships between people and all elements of cosmology, spiritual, human and physical being. **Mana** , she writes derives from our cosmological narratives and moves beyond human interaction to incorporate all forms of relationships. In the context of discussing **Māori** women's theories, Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith notes that **mana** is a

> concept related to notions of power, strength, status, and collective acknowledgement of merit.[13]

The concept '**wahine**' is translated in general terms as meaning 'woman'. Where this is obviously correct as a direct translation it is also limited in regard to wider **Māori** interrelationships. Conceptually we can see **wahine** as being the intersection of the two words; **wā** and **hine**. **Wā** relates to notions of time and space, **hine** relates to a female essence. The term **wahine** designates a certain time and space for **Māori** women but is by no means a universal term like the term woman in English. There are many times and spaces that **Māori** women move through in our lives, **wahine** is one of those. There are others. There are varying terms that relate to times in our lives and relationships. From birth we begin a journey through

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[8] **Henare, Manuka** 1988 ***Ngā Tikanga me ngā Ritenga o te ao Māori**: Standards and Foundations of **Māori** Sociey*, Report of The Royal Commission on Social Policy, Volume III Part One, Government Printer, Wellington
[9] ibid.:16
[10] ibid.:18
[11] Marsden, **Māori** 1988 *The Natural World and Natural Resources: **Māori** Value Systems and Perspectives* :18
[12] **Waitere-Ang, Hine-Tu-Whiria-O-Te-Rangi** Jane 1999 ***Te Kete**, The Briefcase, **Te Tuara**: The Balancing Act – **Māori** Women in the Primary Sector*, Unpublished M.Ed (Administration) thesis, Massey University, Palmerston North
[13] Smith, L.T. 1992 (b) op.cit.

those many spaces. As such the term **wahine** should not be seen as a dualism with the term **tāne**, as we see in the constructed binaries of female and male that exist in the West and which are defined in biological terms.

To acknowledge the many ways in which **Māori** talk about various stages of life is to recognise the complex ways that our people have always viewed roles and relationships. The terms **kōtiro**, **hine**, **tamawahine**, **tuakana**, **teina**, **tamāhine**, **tuahine**, **wahine**, **whaea**, **ruahine**, **kuia**, **kaumatua** all relate to differing stages of life and to the various relationships that exist.[14] Some relate specifically to female essences others, others relate to the inter-relationships between people within **whānau**. Similarly there are a range of terms that relate to various stages for **Māori** men; **tamatāne**, **tāne**, **tūngāne**, **tūakana**, **teina**, **matua**, **koroua**, **koroheke**, **kaumatua**. Again, these are just some examples there are many more that define relationships for **Māori**. Equally some are related specifically to various stages of life and others to roles and relationships. The point I am making here is that there is not, as we are often presented with, a simplistic dualistic or oppositional relationship between **Māori** women and **Māori** men but there are varying ways in which roles and relationships are negotiated. This means that analysis that relates to **Māori** women can not be simplistic, but needs to recognise that relationships within **Māori** society are multiple.

The term **Mana Wahine** is used in this thesis as an umbrella term under which **Māori** women's theories can be located. I agree with Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith in her assertion that **Mana Wahine** is an appropriate notion as any form of **Māori** feminism draws from **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**[15]. As **Ngahuia Te Awekotuku** explains **Mana Wahine** is not reactionary, it is not a response or reaction to male violence against us but it is a process whereby **Māori** women are able to be pro-active in our determining our future. It is also a process of rediscovering the strength of **Māori** relationships.[16] **Mana Wahine** is a framework that enables us to engage in the rediscovery and pro-active work that **Ngahuia** contends is necessary for **Māori**. **Mana Wahine** refers to **Māori** women's analyses that encompass the complex realities of **Māori** women's lives. It is defined within cultural terms and in a context that affirms fundamental **Māori** values and the ways in which they are negotiated. As such **Mana Wahine** brings to the fore a need for analysis that will reclaim **Māori** worldviews in terms of gender and gender relationships. As Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith articulately writes

> It is a strong cultural concept which situates **Maori** women in relation to each other and upholds their **mana** as women of particular genealogical groupings. It also situates **Maori** women in relation to the outside world and reaffirms their **mana** as **Maori**, indigenous women. **Mana Wahine Maori** is the preferred **Maori** label for what counts as **Maori** feminism. It is a term which

[14] **Nepe**, T.M. 1991 op.cit.
[15] ibid.:58
[16] **Te Awekotuku**, N., 1991 op.cit

addresses both the issues of race and gender as well as locates the struggle for **Maori** women within two distinct societies[17].

The reclamation of **Māori** women's knowledge is critical to **Mana Wahine**. This is discussed in depth in the following chapter however it is necessary for me to note at this point that in terms of **whakapapa** our women have always held key, central positions in Māori society, within their own **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi**. The term mana wahine asserts such a view. It affirms the **mana** of our **tūpuna wāhine**. **Ani Mikaere**, Annette Sykes, **Aroha** Yates-Smith, and **Rangimarie** Rose **Pere** have provided us with information related to a vast number of **atua wāhine** and **tūpuna wāhine**.[18] When the stories of these women are brought together we begin to get a greater picture of the roles and status of **Māori** women. When we read the works consecutively then the examples that each writer provides is no longer seen in isolation. It is no longer the stories of a few women, but it becomes the stories of hundreds. That is an incredible affirmation of **Māori** women, and is also a powerful challenge to dominant beliefs. That alone is reason enough for **Māori** women to continue with the development of our own theoretical developments.

Te reo Māori me ōna Tikanga

As I have outlined in the chapter five regarding **Kaupapa Māori** theory, **te reo Māori me ōna Tikanga** is central to strong **Māori** theoretical analysis. This is the same in terms of **Mana Wahine**. Within **te reo Māori** are indicators to the positioning and status of **Māori** women. The non-gendered nature of pronouns is one indicator. This is increasingly written about by **Māori** women as a means of viewing **Māori** women in a context where the discourses were not necessarily gender-specific. There are many examples of this. The term **'ia'** for example relates to her, him, she or he. **'Tōna'** may be her or his. **'Mōna'** can refer to being for her or for him. The gender is determined by having the knowledge of exactly who is being spoken about in the given context. The role of the English language in the maintenance and reproduction of particular gender ideas has been highlighted in work by Dale Spender. She notes that the use of male symbols and pronouns as generic references to all people renders women invisible.[19] With English being the language of our colonisers we can expect that such ideologies will impact upon how **Māori** as colonised peoples view ourselves. As Diane Mara and I have noted;

> The dominance of English in this country, coupled with the marginalisation of **Te Reo Māori** and Pacific languages, has contributed significantly to the imposition of dominant beliefs and practices pertaining to **Māori** and Pacific Islands women. One means of imposing dominant gender expectations on indigenous people operates through the undermining of existing gender norms. For this to be successful there must be either an undermining of the indigenous language or the imposing of dominant discourses on the indigenous language through processes such as interpretation or translations.[20]

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[17] ibid.:62
[18] **Mikaere,** A. 1996 op.cit.; Sykes, A., 'Constitutional Reform and **Mana Wahine'** in **Pihama**, L. (ed) 2000 ***Te Pua**, Special Issue: Indigenous Women and Representation.* **Te Puawaitanga**, University of Auckland, Auckland pp63-70; Yates-Smith, A., 1998 op.cit.; **Pere**, R.R. 1982 op.cit.
[19] **Pihama**, L. & Mara, D. 1994 op.cit
[20] ibid:217

The key point we were making is that language plays a major role in the transmission of belief systems and therefore we must have a critical understanding of the ways in which the coloniser's language impacts on wider values, beliefs and understandings. Translation has been particularly problematic. In the Introduction to **Ngā Moteatea** Part 1, **Pei Te Hurinui** Jones wrote;

> The **Māori** language in poetical compositions admits of a brevity which cannot always be imitated successfully in English. There are idioms of the language for which there are no parallel in the English, and it is in this regard a translator often encounters the chief difficulty, or in those turns of expression which do not occur in English grammar, but which are proper to the **Māori**.[21]

Rangimarie Rose **Pere** also raises the difficulty in translation between **Māori** and English. She notes that much of the literal translation that has been undertaken does not convey the depth of information and knowledge that exists within the accounts being interpreted.[22] The imposition of the coloniser's language on Indigenous Peoples means that this issue is one faced by many Indigenous nations. In providing an English version of the Hawaiian story of Kamapua'a, Lilikalā Kame'eleihiwa writes;

> Most English translations have failed to capture the subtlety and emotional nuances (especially sexual nuances) of the original, which were so dear to the hearts of Hawaiian audiences. [23]

What both **Rangimarie** and Lilikalā identify in their work is the idea that translation is in itself culturally bound. Literal translations that do not incorporated the depth of information and knowledge required to fully context the discussions can merely reproduce simplistic interpretations that can deny the complexities of actions and relationships. In terms of the above statement from Lilikalā cultural ideas of acceptability, of either the translator or the perceived audience, may also play a role in the non-translation of sexual nuances. This is also the case in regard to some translations of **Māori** material. For example in George Greys English version of the attempt by **Maui** to secure immortality by reversing the birthing process and entering the vagina of **Hinenuitepō**, the word 'vagina' does not appear anywhere in the story.[24]

The interpretation and translation of **te reo Māori** is therefore a powerful point of analysis that **Māori** women who engage theories of **Mana Wahine** can include. Another critical aspect is that of exploring **te reo Māori** for those indicators of how our **tūpuna Wahine** positioned themselves within **te ao Māori** and how **tikanga Māori** was constructed. This is something that requires long term and depth analysis and is an aspect of **Mana Wahine** that I see that many **Māori** people will contribute to over the next few years. In the previous chapter I gave an example of an instance where **Māori** women had to struggle to gain space to **poroporoake** a **Māori** woman who has been central in the struggle for **tino**

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[21] **Ngata**, A. 1928 *Ngā Mōteatea, Part 1*, **Māori** Purposes Fund Board, A.H. & A.W. Reed Wellington pg xxi
[22] **Pere**, R. 1982 op.cit:18
[23] Lilikalā Kame'eleihiwa 1996 *A Legendary Traditikons of Kamapua'a: The Hawaiian Pig-God* Bishop Museum Press, Honolulu: ix
[24] Grey, G. 1922 *Polynesian Mythology and Ancient Traditional History of the New Zealanders*, George Routledge and Sons Ltd., New York

rangatiratanga. Where I do not assume this to be the norm across all **iwi** I have seen it enough times to know that it is not an uncommon occurrence and as such argue that we need to get away from a romanticising of roles and **tikanga** and wake up to the need to open the debate to how speaking and speaking rights are constructed, where certain constructions of **tikanga** are appropriate and where they are not appropriate. It is my contention that there are increasing examples of **tikanga Māori** being used to justify the denial of **Māori** women's voices and participation in key fora. This for me is not acceptable. This does not mean that I wish to undermine **tikanga** or **kawa**, such an assertion is simplistic. It does however indicate a need for more reflection on how and when certain forms of **tikanga** are asserted as process. **Ani Mikaere** alerts us to this in her discussion of the colonisation of **tikanga** and the impact of colonisation in the redefining of **Māori** women's role in **Te Ao Māori**.[25]

As is highlighted in chapter seven, both concepts of **tapu** and **noa** are often redefined in gendered terms. **Tapu** is defined by many as being related to men, that men are **tapu** and therefore sacred chiefly. Many authors maintain women are **noa**, which is in turn regarded as common and profane.[26] These definitions serve to maintain a belief in the subservience of **Māori** women. **Tuakana Nepe** argued that concepts such as **tapu**, **wairua** and **mauri** must be viewed as interconnected. She writes;

> **Mauri** is the doctrine which attributes a living inner soul - a **wairua**, to natural phenomena, to animate, and inanimate objects... as the third connection, the aspect of **tapu** declares that all of the above are endowed with a sacredness bestowed by the heavenly powers of **Io Matua Kore**. Together **mauri**, **wairua** and **tapu** are interwoven to shape **Maori** animism.[27]

What this means is that all things have **mauri**, **wairua** and **tapu**, and that each of these things are interconnected in ways that makes the notion presented by Best and others that **Māori** women do not have **tapu** a farcical one. It is a belief than can be maintained only through a manipulation of **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**. The manipulation and denial of **te reo Māori** has had an enormous impact on **Māori** people in regard to the reproduction of **Māori** knowledge. For **Māori** women this is further exacerbated by the additional oppressive attitude towards women's knowledge that was inherent in the thinking of our colonisers. Where **Māori** knowledge was invalidated and selected aspects only recorded **Māori** women's knowledge was made invisible.[28]

The position of **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga** as central to **Mana Wahine** needs therefore to be linked to elements as such decolonisation in order for **Māori** women to ascertain what within **tikanga** has been changed as a consequence of the internalisation of colonial ideologies. This is a key point made by **Ani Mikaere**, that colonisation has brought about an imbalance within **Māori** society which in turn has been

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[25] **Mikaere, A.**, 1995 op.cit.
[26] These issues have been covered in some depth in Chapter Eight
[27] **Nepe**, T.M, 1991 op.cit.: pp32-33
[28] Smith. L. T. 1992(a) op.cit.

internalised by many as the 'truth'.[29] This is another colonial disturbance that hits right to the heart of who we are as **Māori** women. It is the planned and conscious disruption of **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**. **Tikanga Maori** has been put out of balance, or as **Ani** argues we all live in a 'colonised reality' with **Māori** women being the receiving end of changes that repositioned us as lesser or inferior to all things **Pākehā** and to **Māori** men.[30] The disruption is summarised by **Ani** as follows;

> Prior to colonisation, the status of **Māori** women was determined by the imperative to maintain the integrity of the group. In order for the **whānau, hapū** and **iwi** to survive and flourish the principle of balance, which included balance between male and female, had to be maintained at all times. The forces of colonisation threw **Māori** into a state of perilous imbalance: land loss through confiscations and the workings of the Native Land Court wreaked havoc on the relationship between people and their natural environment; forcible individualisation of land title through the Native Land Court also upset the balance between members of **whānau, hapū** and **iwi**; introduced diseases and the introduction of Christianity damaged irrevocably the connection between people and their **atua**; and the patriarchal assumptions underlying the common law and Christian teachings destroyed the equilibrium between male and female.[31]

It is both the imbalance and the equilibrium that **Mana Wahine** seeks to address. Whilst **Te reo Māori me ōna tikanga** are often manipulated against the interests of **Māori** women, they also hold a key to challenging the imbalances. Within **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga** are indicators that mitigate against the colonial hegemony of unequal gender relations. Terms such as **rangatira, āriki, atua, tāngata, tōhunga** are not gender specific as some authors indicate, but are applicable to both **Māori** women and **Māori** men.[32] **Te reo Māori** offers us insights into societal relations and in doing so proffers possibilities for change. Another area where possibilities are evident is in the area of **whakapapa** where **Māori** women feature within their own **whānau, hapū** and **iwi** as key figures, that direct challenges the colonial notion that **rangatira** are only male.

Whakapapa

The two formations of **whakapapa** and **whānau** provide us with many examples of the roles and status of **Māori** women. Where these constructions have been discussed in some depth in the **Kaupapa Māori** theory chapter, I wish here to bring to the discussion issues pertaining specifically to the positioning of **Māori** women. As noted in Chapter five, **Whakapapa** is a key element within **Kaupapa Māori** theory. This is also the case in terms of **Mana Wahine**. **Māori** relationships can be defined through **whakapapa** and this in turn relays the complexities of **Māori** women's experiences. As **Māori** women we have multiple ways in which our positions, roles and obligations can be viewed. This is evident within **whakapapa** as we are positioned, and position ourselves, as **whaea, tuakana, teina** and other roles.

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[29] **Mikaere**, A. 1995 op.cit.
[30] ibid.
[31] **Mikaere**, A. 1995 op.cit.:iv
[32] Yates-Smith, A. 1998 op.cit; **Mikaere**, A., 1995 op.cit; Irwin, K. 1992(b)

Whakapapa also enables us to critique colonial ideologies that locate **Māori** women as inferior and subordinate to men.

As **whakapapa** commences with **ngā atua**.[33] So do does the discussion of **Mana Wahine** theory and **whakapapa**. **Aroha** Yates-Smith research regarding **atua wahine** calls into question the ethnographers obsession with **Māori** male figures as the primary figures in **Māori** society. **Aroha** brings together evidence from **karakia**, **waiata**, **kōrero**, **mōteatea** and a range of oral accounts from tribal authorities to highlight the presence of **atua wāhine** as critical in understanding **Māori** worldviews. One aim for the research, she writes is as follows;

> Suggestions will be proferred for ways in which the balance maybe restored between the feminine and the masculine, at all levels of **Māori** society, spiritual, physical, and mental.[34]

For **Aroha**, re-establishing a balance in regard to visibility of **atua wāhine** is central to her research. This is central in terms of locating **whakapapa** within **Mana Wahine** theory, in that it recognises that there are distortions that currently exist which must be engaged. The engagement with those distortion can, and is, be undertaken through a process of recognising **whakapapa** that affirms the place of **Māori** women. There has been a tendency by those the have documented **whakapapa** in publications to utilise the anthropological form of genealogical tables. The linear structure of such tables is inadequate in dealing with the multi-layered relations that is **whakapapa**. All too often those genealogical tables contributed to the invisiblisation of **Māori** women. **Aroha** argues that the relative dearth of material directly related to **Māori** women renders invisible the role of the feminine. She states that what exists appears at best to be piecemeal and has on the whole been interpreted by **Pākehā** men, thereby being relocated within colonial notions.

There is a dire need for indepth discussion of the roles of our **tūpuna wāhine** to be shared more openly and publicly, in the same way that the stories of many of our **tūpuna tāne** are presented to the world of light. This thesis is a part of a wider discussion that is taking place. The study by **Apirana Mahuika** regarding **Ngāti Porou** women is one example of how this can be undertaken. In his thesis **Api Mahuika** examines the leadership role of women in **Ngāti Porou**, with the discussion being contexted within three general social organisation of **whānau hapū** and **iwi**.[35] He highlights that in terms of **whakapapa** standard definitions used by anthropologists have been male centred and that has been generally accepted as the explanation for the social organisation of **Māori** communities, however this is challenged in the case of **Ngāti Porou**. What he argues is that in the case of **Ngāti Porou** factors determining leadership

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[33] **Ngā atua** refers to the goddesses and gods.
[34] Yates-Smith, A.G. 1998 op.cit.:ii-iii
[35] **Mahuika Apirana Tuahae**, 1973 *Nga Wahine Kai-hautu o Ngati Porou: Female Leaders of Ngati Porou.* Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, University of Sydney, Sydney

apply equally to female and male, the rule of primogeniture in determining seniority both within **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi**, applies regardless of sex. He notes;

> In **Ngati Porou**, however, primogeniture is the absolute determinant of seniority, regardless of the sex of the first-born child. In other words, the longer the unbroken line one can trace through first-born children, male or female, the greater one's seniority in society. Primogeniture, and therefore one's seniority in society are both factors in deciding who should be the leader of a tribe or sub-tribe. Leadership may be defined as control over people or **mana tangata**. It involved the right to direct and control people's lives in terms of the culture and the right to make political decisions on their behalf. The ability to unite the group and to protect it against other individuals or groups were also important manifestations of leadership.[36]

The discussion provided by **Apirana Mahuika** indicates that within **Ngāti Porou** the status of **Māori** women as **rangatira** is clearly established within **whakapapa**. **Whakapapa** is a key process through which we define our relationships as **Māori**. The gendering of those relationships has tended to locate **Māori** women as inferior. The anthropological addiction with determining whether societies are matrilineal or patrilineal has meant that often complex relationships and societal relations have been simplified in order to fit within anthropological definitions. Those definitions are then universalised to all **Māori** people, and in many cases become accepted as common-sense belief. The works of a number of **Māori** scholars reflects this addiction. **Te Rangihiroa** in 'The Coming of the **Māori**' provides us with a storehouse of knowledge, however much of his writing in regard to **Māori** social relations is based on vast generalisations. For example in regard to **whakapapa**, **Te Rangihiroa** notes that **whakapapa** is passed from old men to young men.[37] As **Apirana Mahuika** has clearly expressed in his research regarding **Ngāti Porou** such a process does not reflect the experiences and histories of all **hapū** and **iwi** across **Aotearoa**. Raymond Firth gives conflicting discussion in noting that the in **whakapapa**, **āriki** are, he states,

> A high-born chief, a descendant of first-born children in a continuous elder line, or to adopt Best's definition "a first born male or female of a leading family of a tribe". The **rangatira** were the "gentlemen", junior relatives of the **ariki**.[38]

What Firth does is directly contradict himself through identifying **ariki** as both female and male and following that statement with the assertion that **rangatira** are male. The contradictions can also be viewed in other writings.[39] J.M. McEwen in his extensive discussion titled '**Rangitane**: A Tribal History' brings to the fore a range of **kōrero**, **waiata** and **whakapapa** of the **Rangitane** people. It is a depth presentation of **whakapapa** bringing together material from a range of sources. The **kōrero** and **waiata** highlight without doubt the active role of **Rangitane** women in many areas, the **waiata** have endless examples of the role of their **tūpuna wāhine**. However, McEwen in his conclusion writes;

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[36] **Mahuika**, A., ibid:pp16-17

[37] **Te Rangi Hiroa** (Sir Peter Buck) 1987 *The Coming of The **Māori***, Whitcoulls Ltd.,. **Māori** Purposes Fund Board, Wellington

[38] Firth, R., 1972 *Economics of the New Zealand **Māori***, A.R. Shearer, Government Printer, Wellington:106

[39] refer back to Chapter Seven for this discussion.

> There is a great deal of ignorance among the modern generation and many people seem to believe that the senior line is that which descends form the first-born child to the first-born and so on. It is well to remember that rank came through sons rather than daughters and that the **mana** of the senior line could be lost by slavery, defeats in war and so on.[40]

What is evident is that even within documentation where **Māori** women appear to have significant place in **iwi kōrero** and **waiata** there remains a need to assert the notion of the rank or status of **Māori** women as lesser. These types of contradictory or conflicting statements are not uncommon. In his discussion with Anne Salmond, Eruera Stirling states also that the **tāhuhu** or main line of descent comes through the male line. However, this is followed by a reference to **Māori** women who are in the senior line. He states;

> When you look at the **whakapapa** of the kings of England it sometimes comes down to a woman, and the same thing happens on the East Coast. Quite a few of the meeting houses and sub-tribes are named after senior women and sometimes the main line of descent lands on a woman – **Materoa** Reedy, **Rutu Tawhiorangi** and **Heni Houkamau** were all women who came on the senior line in my young days. It can cause a lot of trouble, though, because the people don't like womenfolk to take over the area. If you look at the **Pakeha** world and the **Māori** world, you will see the same things coming out.[41]

In the second part of this quote **Eruera** Stirling brings forward an issue that is fundamental to the discussion of **Māori** women and **whakapapa**, that is the level of acceptance or non-acceptance of the senior position of **Māori** women within **whakapapa** within **Māori** society since colonisation. This then is not so much an issue of **tikanga** but an issue of interpretation and acceptability within current accepted norms and beliefs. Another clear contradiction to the assertion that **Māori** women do not carry senior lines can also be seen in the position of **Te Arikinui Te Atairangi Kāhu** who heads the **Kingitanga** movement, a position that is clearly determined by **whakapapa**. In the publication '**Ngā Iwi oTainui** there are endless examples of **wahine** holding critical positions within **whakapapa** and therefore within their **iwi**.[42] From the very early **korero** regarding **Tainui waka** the role and status of **Māori** women is evident, as has been noted by **Pei Te Hurinui** Jones and Bruce Biggs, the following extract gives some indication of this;

> **Ka rite te koorero a nga iwi o Hoturoa kia hangaa he waka, ha haere a Whakaotirangi, teetahi o ngā wahine a Hoturoa, ki tana matua, ki a Memeha-o-te-rangi, kia hoomai a Puranga, he mauri no te whare o Uenuku. Ka rite te raa hei timataranga i te waka, ka haere a Memeha-o-te-rangi ki te tiki i te tino tohunga, i a Raka-taaura, hei taarai i te waka. Ko te tohungatanga mo te mahi waka i heke iho i a Rata, tama a Wahie-roa, aa, no teeraa tohungatanga a Raka-taaura. E toru nga toki i haria mai e Raka'; ko Hahau-te-poo, te toki turaki, ko Paopao-te-rangi, te toki waawaahi, ko Manu-tawhio-rangi, te toki taarai. Teeraa teetehi nehenehe i runga o Maunga-roa, i Hawaiki, i tanumia teetehi tamaiti whakatahe ki reira. Ko te raakau i tohungia ai kia tuaina ko te raakau i tupu ake i runga i te waahi i tanumia ai taua tamaiti whakatahe. I mua i te haerenga o Raka' me ana hoa ki te tua i te**

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[40] McEwen, J.C., 1986 ***Rangitāne**: A Tribal History*, Heinemann Reed, Auckland:234
[41] Stirling, E. & Salmond, A., 1980 *Eruera: The Teachings of a **Māori** Elder*, Oxford University Press, Auckland:32
[42] Jones, P.H. & Biggs, B. 1995 ***Nga Iwi o Tainui**: The Traditional History of the **Tainui** People: **Nga Koorero tuku iho a nga Tupuna***, Auckland University Press, Auckland

raakau, ka ui atu ia ki teetehi kuia ko Maahu-rangi (ki eetehi ko Maru-a-nuku) te ingoa, he tohunga, 'Me peewhea te hanga o te waka?' Ka utua mai e Maahu-rangi, 'Me titiro e koe ki te aranga mai o te marama hoou. Kia ara a mua, kia ara a muri." Ko te haerenga o Raka' maa ki te tua i te raakau. Ka hinga te raakau ka hoki mai ki te kaainga, kua poo hoki.

When **Hoturoa's** people decided to make a canoe, **Whakaotirangi**, one of **Hoturoa's** wives, went to her father, **Memeha-o-te-rangi**, to get **Puranga**, a talisman from **Uenuku's** house. When the time came to begin building the canoe, **Memeha-o-te-rangi** went to fetch the best expert, **Raka-taaura**, to build it. The knowledge of boat-building descended from **Rata**, son of **Wahie-roa**, and **Raka-taaura** was from that school of knowledge. He brought three adzes: Chop-the-night-world was the felling adze, Shatter-the-heavens was the splitting adze, and the shaping adze was Bird-encircling-the sky. There was a Long-mountail in Hawaiiki a forest where a certain aborted foetus was buried. The tree selected to be felled grew over the spot where the child lay buried. Before **Raka'** and his companion went to fell the tree he said to a wise old woman named **Maahu-rangi** (**Maru-a-nuku** to some), 'How should the canoe be built?' **Maahu-rangi** replied, 'Look at the horns of the new moon, raised in front and back. Let the bow be raised. Let the stern be raised'. **Raka'** and his friends went to chop down the tree, and when it fell they returned home, for it was night.[43]

The **kōrero** continues to describe the return of **Raka-taaua** to the site the following day only to find the tree had been raised again. This happened for three nights, and on the following day he returned to **Maahu-rangi** to consult and was provided with the knowledge and **karakia** that would enable them to fell the tree and commence the carving of the **waka Tainui**. **Te Miringa Hohaia** writes of the critical role of **Te Ao Mārama** in **Taranaki,** in the establishment of **wānanga** in **Taranaki** and who named many significant sites in the area.[44] The naming of the **whenua** reflects **tūpuna wāhine** and **tūpuna tāne**, their deeds and events in their lives.

These examples provide an indication that **Māori** women across **whānau, hapū** and **iwi** have always held central roles in all parts of **Māori** society. Just through the sharing of these few examples we get a sense of the status with which **Māori** women were held when operating within our own cultural frameworks. These challenge the historical sources that located our **tūpuna Wahine** as 'inferior' to **Māori** men. What is most exciting is the knowledge that there are many more stories that are waiting to be told and upon their telling we will become more insightful into the roles and status of **Māori** women. Given these **kōrero** we have to ask ourselves then why the myth of the inferiority of **Māori** women persists when there is such indisputable evidence to the contrary. This is further reason for the development of an analytical means by which we can engage the underpinning reasons for the maintenance of colonial patriarchal supremacy. What is provided here are only brief examples as 'proof' that **Māori** women do not fit this generic colonial representation of being 'inferior' 'lesser' beings. However, I agree with **Ani Mikaere** in her assertion that it is ultimately,

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[43] ibid:pp18-19
[44] **Hohaia**, T.M., 2001 op.cit.

... for each **iwi** to examine the impact of colonisation on its **tikanga** and accordingly, on its women.[45]

Whānau

Whānau is also critical to **Mana Wahine**. The importance of **whānau** in **Māori** women's analysis goes beyond the concepts inherent within **whanaungatanga** that I outlined in chapter five. Concepts of **tuakana, teina, tungāne, tuahine, whaea, matua** and others that outline positioning within **whānau** provide a framework of relationships. The **whānau** is a critical building block for **Māori** society. When we see **whānau** as key in **Māori** societal constructions then we can comprehend more fully the attack on **whānau** that occurred with colonisation. It has become increasingly commonplace that whānau has been regarded in the same light as family. In my Masters research I noted that within the Parents As First Teachers programme the terms family and **whānau** were regularly juxtaposed and considered in the same way.[46] This can also be seen in a range of other education programmes that are targeted at **Māori** and Pacific peoples.[47] The juxtaposition of **whānau** to family is particularly dangerous for **Māori** women. The dominant representation of family in **Aotearoa** is considered to be the nuclear family, this ideology persists irrespective of the fact that there are many family types. That dominant representation reinforces the gendered notions that are inherent to the nuclear family structure. This is not to say that all people adhere to such notions but it is a reminder that the nuclear family is in many ways the antithesis to **whānau**.[48]

Whānau serves a range of roles within a **Mana Wahine** analysis. There is also a range of ways in which **Māori** women speak about **whānau** in terms of an element within **Mana Wahine**. Linda notes that **Mana Wahine** is a dynamic that operates within **whānau** and is struggled for and contested.[49] Given the ongoing perpetuation of notions of **Māori** women's inferior position in **whakapapa** it is not unexpected that there may be some need to struggle and contest our position within **whānau**. At its worst the implications of such discourses lend themselves to the potential for abuse, both for **Māori** women and children. At a minimum such contestation may be at the point of gaining voice or having input in terms of decision-making within **whānau**, and further in terms of **hapū** and **iwi**. My own experience tells me that for many **Māori** women gaining voice in **hapū** and **iwi** fora can be difficult. This is not to say that all **Māori** women experience this, however I have found myself in numerous **hui** and meetings where the

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[45] **Mikaere**, A., 1995 op.cit.:7
[46] **Pihama**, L., 1993 op.cit.
[47] Family Start is another educational programme that targets **Māori** and Pacific families, and which is framed by deficit theories.
[48] A critique of the role of the colonial nuclear family in processes of domestication can be found in Chapter six.
[49] Smith. L.T. 1992(a) op.cit

struggle for space for **Māori** women's voices is evident. This may also be seen as a reflection of conservative discourses that locate women as inferior.[50]

The place of **whānau** is spoken about by **Māori** women writing in the field of **Mana Wahine**. Kathie Irwin talks about the influences of the women in her **whanau** on her own life and choices.[51] **Rangimarie** Rose **Pere** also shares her experiences within her **whanau** and the role of **whanau** members in her life and learning. **Rangimarie** locates **whakapapa** and **whanaungatanga** as crucial elements in her upbringing, noting that **whānau** shared responsibilities.[52] In her discussions of **whānau**, **Rangimarie** establishes the kinds of relationships that existed within her own **whānau** and doing so reminds us of the possibilities of relationships where each participant plays a role in the wellbeing of the whole **whānau**. **Mana Wahine** theory in challenging the imposition of the colonial patriarchal heterosexual nuclear families upon **Māori** communities is also able to point to the dysfunctions that are a part of that structure. The nuclear family isolates **Māori** people from a full participation in **whānau** and **whanaungatanga** through a process of dislocation. **Māori** women are on the whole those who carry the load of keeping the home, in the domestication of **Māori** women's labour came an isolation away from **whānau**, those who are most able to provide support. Reconnection with **whānau** is a part of a process of reconnection with **whakapapa**. This does not mean that abusive family relations are acceptable, on the contrary abusive family relations are antithetical to **Kaupapa Māori** and it has been in the past the **whānau** that has dealt publicly with transgressions. This is more difficult to do in a context where confidentiality can often prevent **whānau** in the wider circle of knowing about issues and also where colonial hegemonic ideas that it is acceptable to abuse other members of your **whānau** have become internalised by **Māori** people.[53]

Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith in exploring the complexities of relationships in the establishment of a **marae** at an all girls school, highlights the difficulties in negotiating **Māori** culturally relationships in a dominant **Pākehā** context.[54] In an earlier article Linda states that both **whakapapa** and **whanaungatanga** contribute to the defining of **Māori** women's relationships within **Māori** women's projects.[55] **Mana Wahine** analysis brings to the discussion of **whānau** both an analysis of how relationships between **Māori** women and **Māori** men are constructed and played out, and also a focus on the construction of relationships between **Māori** women ourselves. What is important in a discussion of **whānau** in **Mana Wahine** theory is a critical analysis of the fragmentation of **whānau** and the internalisation of gender

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[50] Refer to Chapter six for further discussion in regard to colonial gender discourses.
[51] Irwin, K., 1993 op.cit
[52] Pere, R. 1988 op.cit.
[53] Anne Salmond indicates that early settlers and missionaries were surprised at **Māori** indulgence of children. Salmond, A. 1991 op.cit.
[54] Smith, L.T. 1993 op.cit.
[55] Smith, L.T. 1992(a) op.cit.

roles within what is now being reconstituted as **whānau**. **Whānau** must be a social system that supports **Māori** women and not one that reflects the colonisers ideal of the woman locked in the home.

Much of the excitement in the possibility of **Mana Wahine** theory is located in the diversity and relationships that we have as **Māori**. Both **whakapapa** and **whānau** indicate diversity. There are also other forms of diversity that exist beyond the frameworks of **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi** including the diversity in terms of class positioning, the diversity in terms of urban and rural dwelling and the diversity in terms of sexuality to give some examples. This again reaffirms the notion that **Mana Wahine** theory must be expansive in its ability to engage with the many diverse realities our women experience. However, in order to affirm the many positions from which we can theorise and understand the world we must both recognise the diverse realities and also challenge some of the colonial ideologies that continue to deny the voices of **Māori** women.

Recognising Diverse Realities

I recently spent time with a **Māori** woman who had returned to Auckland after living a number of years in her own **iwi** area. She spoke of the differences between being in an urban setting from living with her own people. Those differences are a part of the diversity of what it means to be **Māori**. They are a part of our experiences as a colonised people who have a history of forced migration to the cities. We can not go beyond those diversities when seeking to develop critical understandings of our current positionings. The diversities that are a part of **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi** are such that I would never assume that all **Māori** women have similar understandings in terms of any of the issues raised in this thesis. This point is an important one as it is as important to recognise our differences as it is our similarities.[56] As Kathie Irwin writes;

> In our work with **Māori** women we need to recognize that they, like any other community of women, are not a homogenous group. A number of other factors influence **Māori** women's development: tribal affiliation, social class, sexual preference, knowledge of traditional **Māori tikanga**, knowledge of the **Māori** language, rural or urban location, identification on the political spectrum from radical to traditional, place in the family, the level of formal schooling and educational attainments to name but a few.[57]

The notion of difference drawn on here is not one that necessarily fits with the growing Western literature on difference that locates hierarchies of dominance at the centre of analysis. Difference for **Māori** does not have to be constructed within the oppositional dualisms that we are presented within in conflict driven sensationalist media. Nor does it have to be located within the Western constructions of self that are premised on the notion of the autonomous white individual. Patricia Johnston has skilfully argued that constructions of difference for **Māori** as been defined within dominant hierarchies. She notes that

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[56] Smith. L.T. 1992(a) op.cit

difference was a notion used to *"support the positions of **Māori** into localities of inferiority"*.[58] Such an idea of difference, when applied to **Māori**, has had particularly restrictive effects on **Māori**. In the article 'The Marginalisation of **Māori** Women', co-authored by Patricia and myself, we noted the following;

> The differences between **Māori** and **Pākehā** have been exacerbated by the fact that **Pākehā** have control over the context in which changes can take place for **Māori**. Difference is defined for **Māori**, not in terms of unequal power-relations, or unequal social, economic and political positions, but in terms for **Māori** which emphasise only language and culture. What has come to 'count' as 'difference' are those differences which distinguished **Māori** from **Pākehā**; that is, physical characteristics, the language and the culture.[59]

This form of difference is referred to by Michele Wallace as 'the difference that doesn't make a difference'.[60] Moving away from imposed dominant definitions of difference, Patricia argues that what counts as difference for **Māori** must be what **Māori** defines. This is expanded upon in her doctoral thesis where Patricia argues more fully that it is for **Māori** to define what constitutes difference for us and that such a process of definition occurs within a context of recognising the power relationships that have been constructed through colonisation. As such she is arguing for **Māori** to reconstruct the ways in which theoretical concepts are defined. Trinh T. Minh-ha states the challenge in any process of renaming is that of recreating without 're-circulating domination'.[61] This is a challenge for **Mana Wahine**, to recreate, to reclaim in ways that are open to the multiple experiences of colonial oppression.

Patricia argues that reconstructing the theoretical ground for **Māori** in such a way then allows us to relocate notions of difference and diversity more closely to **Kaupapa Māori** frameworks. For example notions of difference can be, and are, mediated through **whanaungatanga** and **whakapapa**. The complexities of relationships that are a part of **whakapapa** and which are lived realities within **whanaungatanga** provide us with constructions of difference that are not reliant on oppositional dualisms but are a part of a relational notions. Shifting the theoretical ground in such a way allows more scope for the development of further critical reflection in terms of dominant representations of **Māori** women.

If we move the dominant Western hierarchical construction of difference to a place of doubt, where we question its fundamental validity within a **Māori** context then there is created space for further questioning of some of the explanations, understandings and representations pertaining to **Māori** that have been founded upon those premises. In other words all representations are, in such a space, contestable. To remove the basic foundation of dominant explanations then necessarily requires a rebuilding of

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[57] Irwin, K. 199(b):3

[58] Johnston, Patricia & **Pihama**, Leonie (1994) 'The Marginalisation of **Māori** Women' in *Hecate: Special Aotearoa/ New Zealand Issue*, An Interdisciplinary Journal of Women's Liberation, Volume 20, no. 2, Hecate Press, Brisbane: 83

[59] ibid.:85

[60] Michele Wallace made this statement during a meeting with **Māori** women in New York, 2000

[61] Trinh T. Minh-ha 1991 'Cotton and Iron' in *When the Moon Waxes Red - Representation, Gender and Cultural Politics*, Routledge: London :15

thought, theorising and understandings. This is not only in regards to what may be considered obvious dominant representations but reaches into a space of ourselves having to re-examine and analyse the potential effect of such dominant thinking on how we, as **Māori**, theorise and practice **te reo Māori me ona tikanga**.

Let me return for a moment to the early discussion of the need to recognise the differences and diversity within **Māori** communities. The theoretical need to reposition difference for **Māori** does not mean developing a culturalist framework that denies power relations. Rather it argues that as **Māori** we need to reposition the idea of difference within our own understandings if we are to move beyond the colonial ideas that mean our differences are necessarily conflicting or in opposition. This is essential in all discussions regarding our people, precisely because power relationships do exist internally for **Māori**. There are not only **whānau**, **hapū**, **iwi** and urban differences but there also exist class, gender and sexual orientation differences. Each of these things is mediated by existing power relationships and therefore are experienced in many ways by **Māori** people dependent on their social, political and economic context.

In a **Kaupapa Māori** framework we are seeking transformation in terms of these inequalities through a process of mediating the power relationships through culturally defined paradigms. An example often articulated by Graham **Hingangaroa** Smith is that of drawing on **whanaungatanga** as an intervention in terms of economic circumstance. Graham has on many occasions given the example of **Kura Kaupapa Māori whānau** providing support for those **whānau** who work late or are unable to drop off or collect their children from **kura** because of work commitments. This he states is mediated through **whanaungatanga**, with other **whānau** members taking responsibility for all children within the **kura**.[62]

These kinds of reflections are necessary if we are to examine in a critical way the impact of colonial, capitalist, patriarchal dominance on the ways in which we organise ourselves culturally. I don't expect this to be readily accepted by many within **Māori** circles, primarily because this thesis challenges some basic misrepresentations that will consequently provide challenge to some of our taken-for-granted beliefs. Where the diversity of **Māori** experiences do not all appear within this thesis an analysis of the ways in which colonial ideologies have the been constructed are laid out as an offering for those who wish to draw on this discussion to investigate their own realities. This aligns with the belief that it is for us as **Māori** to bring forward challenge, to issues that face us, through our own forms of analysis. As I have highlighted in earlier discussions of **Kaupapa Māori** theory such analyses bring with them an ability to move beyond simple notions of patriarchy to engage the more complex ways in which dominance, colonial imperialism, capitalism, racism and patriarchy combine. Where there are consistent reminders to us that there are **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi** that do not adhere to generic constructions of what it means to be

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[62] Smith, G.H. 1997 op.cit.

Māori, there remains very little public recognition of that. There are also other **groups** that are denied space and voice as a consequence of colonial discourses. One group is that of **Māori** lesbians, who struggle to be recognised within their own **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi** in a context where sexuality is often kept silent.

In her doctoral thesis Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith brings forth a discussion regarding the positioning of **Māori** lesbian feminists within the context of **Māori** women's groups. According to Linda, **Māori** lesbian feminists offer critique of both **Māori** and **Pakeha** societies. This is without doubt the case in the writings of **Ngahuia Te Awekotuku** who has been at the forefront of asserting the need for **Māori** to not only accept but to 'see' that a range of sexualities exist and have always existed for **Māori**[63]. The construction of sexuality is strongly influenced by historical, social and political ideologies. As I discussed in the overview on race, gender and class there has been an active categorisation of social hierarchies that have impacted on how sexuality is perceived and deemed appropriate. Evelynn M. Hammonds notes that race was instrumental in the defining of black women's sexuality, she writes;

> The Hottentot female most vividly represented in the iconography was Sarah Bartmann, known as the 'Hottentot Venus'. This southern African black woman was crudely exhibited and objectified by European audiences and scientific experts because of what they regarded as unusual aspects of her physiognomy - her genitalia and buttocks... The 'primitive' genitalia of these women were defined by European commentators as the sign of their 'primitive' sexual appetites. Thus, the black female became the antithesis of European sexual mores and beauty was relegated to the lowest position on the scale of human development.[64]

She also notes that such images served to support the assumptions underpinning slavery. Within slavery the image of the sexualised black woman also served in justification for the oppressive treatment of black women who were enslaved in the white supremacist capitalist structure of slavery. Sexual abuse and rape of black women by white men was a regular occurrence and black men were lynched to ensure racial and sexual control was maintained. There is a growing literature by Black women writers revealing the abhorrent nature of slavery.[65] Evelynn Hammonds argues that there has been a range of responses to the stereotyping for black women's sexuality, from a 'Politics of Silence' as a means of proving the stereotypes wrong, to direct defiance and exploitation of the stereotypes.[66] However, she argues that black women did not gain control over their own sexuality and that there continues to be a silence about sexuality, which seems to fall between the spaces of race and gender. A silence that needs to be broken. Part of breaking the silence is developing analyses that are able to engage the many ways black women express their sexuality, including moving beyond heterosexuality as an assumed norm. She writes;

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[63] **Te Awekotuku**, N. 1991 op.cit.

[64] Hammonds, Evelyn M., 1997 'Toward a Genealogy of Black Female Sexuality: The Problematic of Silence' in Alexander, M. Jacqui and Mohanty, Chandra Talpade (eds) *Feminst Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures*, Routledge, New York & London:172

[65] hooks, b. 1981 *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*, South End Press. Boston. This publication provides a powerful overview of issues and literature.

> Developing a complex analysis of black female sexuality is critical to this project. Black feminist theorizing about black female sexuality has, with a few exceptions (Cheryl Clarke, Jewelle Gomez, Barbara Smith and Audre Lorde), been focused relentlessly on heterosexuality. This historical narrative that dominantes discussions of black female sexuality does not address even the possibility of a black lesbian sexuality or of a lesbian or queer subject.[67]

As is the case with black lesbian sexuality, there is very limited literature available to **Māori** lesbians. **Ngahuia Te Awekotuku** is the most outspoken and widely published **Māori** lesbian writer who is willing to deal with issues of sexuality and the implications of assumed heterosexuality in **Māori** communities.[68] This is, in my view, can be a difficult position to take as a 'minority' within an oppressed community. However, in my experience it is also a powerful place to be in that as a political **Māori** woman academic I find my understandings and expectations of theoretical need is expansive. What I want to see in **Māori** women's theories is the possibility to bring change in all forms of oppressive behaviours and structures. To focus on one issue is never enough. It is not acceptable to me that we develop analyses that are limited in their approach to sexuality. Just as it is not good enough to be framed by Western theories that deny our cultural being, it is not good enough to be framed by **Māori** theories that deny our gender and sexuality. It has taken me over twenty years to come to a point where I am totally comfortable being a **Māori** lesbian and I will no longer accept that notion that to be lesbian is not relevant to **Māori** issues. Sexuality pervades all things we do. **Te Puawai Tapu**, a **Māori** organisation working in the area of sexual and reproductive health defines sexuality as follows;

> The acceptance of ourselves as sexual beings, our feelings about being male and female, the way we express our sexual feelings and the way in which we communicate these feelings to others. It can be expressed through the various stages of the life cycle. Self-control, self-determination, and self worth are critical dimensions of human sexuality. Sexuality is culturally defined and therefore influenced by family, peers, religion, economics, education, media, law and science.[69]

There is no doubt from such a definition that sexuality is an important part of who we are as **Māori** women. It is argued that any theory of **Mana Wahine** needs to be inclusive of all forms of sexuality and not be restricted to some colonial agenda that reduces **Māori** sexuality to an acceptable heterosexuality. There is a danger that in dealing with the many issues that face us as **Māori** that there is an almost safe space constructed within the notion of heterosexuality through which **Māori** women can find themselves affirmed as 'normal'. In attempting to bring to the fore the issues of sexuality in both **Kaupapa Māori** and **Mana Wahine** theories I have been conscious to present homophobia as a key area where analysis that is required. For example in engaging the notion of diversity Diane Mara and I outlined the following point;

> The gender power relations that exist within society must therefore be seen in their complexities. **Maori** women and **Maori** men may experience gender relations quite differently from their

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[66] Hammonds, E.M., 1997 op.cit.
[67] ibid:180
[68] **Te Awekotuku**, N. 1991 op.cit.
[69] **Te Puāwai Tapu** n/d *Definitions of Sexuality*, Unpublished Workshop Resource, **Te Puāwai Tapu**, Wellington

> Pacifica or **Pakeha** counterparts in the light of their positioning as the indigenous people of **Aotearoa** and the social dynamics that come with being members of that group. Pacifica women and Pacifica men may experience gender relations differently from **Pakeha** due to their subordinate ethnic status in society. Lesbian women and gay men may experience gender relations differently from heterosexual women and men due to the ways in which sexuality is perceived within a given society. Furthermore, working class women and men may experience gender relations quite differently from their middle-class counterparts in light of their economic subordination.[70]

What I found most interesting is that with **Māori** tutorials it was often the line regarding sexuality that was seen as most controversial. On the other hand as a **Māori** lesbian lecturer I was cognisant of the fact that there is always some movement in lecture when I use lesbian or gay examples or comment on homophobia. There are two kinds of movement that are most visible, that which indicates uncomfortability and that which indicates a sense of having just been affirmed. Just as it is affirming for **Māori** to have **mātauranga Māori** affirmed it is also affirming for gay and lesbian students to hear examples or comments that acknowledge their existence. For **Māori** lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transexuals it is critical that our analyses are inclusive of their realities. What I have seen in the past few years as an academic is that any critical reflection by **Māori** academics that acknowledges the existence of **Māori** lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transexuals supports the development of visibility within our own communities. Such diversity serves as a reminder of the need to work for the validity of gender analyses within our own movements which includes an analysis of imposed heterosexuality. Writers such as Cheryl Clarke, Audre Lorde, **Ngahuia Te Awekotuku**, Gloria Anzuldua, Cherrie Moraga[71] are explicit in their analysis of imposed heterosexuality. For each of these writers sexuality and an analysis of the heterosexist construction of society is necessary if we are to more fully understand the complexities of domination.

There are few writings in **Aotearoa** that discuss in depth issues of sexuality and **Māori**, or more specifically the positioning of gay and lesbian **Māori** within **whānau**, **hapū**, **iwi** and **Māori** movements. My experience has been one that to be **Māori** is often viewed as 'more' important than any other form of identification. This assumes that we are able to leave parts of ourselves at the gate, as was the expectation of the colonial education system in terms of **te reo Māori**. This is not the case. I have been on protests where to assert being lesbian is viewed as detracting from the 'real' issues. This is such a myopic way of viewing the world. Sexuality is an inherent part of our being.[72] What we have however is a history of distortions in regard to the construction of sexuality in **Aotearoa**. Anne Salmonds' documentation of

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[70] **Pihama**, L. & Mara, D. 1994 op.cit.:pp217-218

[71] Clarke, C. 1983 op.cit.; Lorde, A., 1984 op.cit., 1996 op.cit; **Te Awekotuku**, N.1991 op.cit., Moraga, C. & Anzuldua, G.(eds), 1983 op.cit.

[72] A **Māori** organisation working in the area of sexual and reproductive health, **Te Puāwai Tapu**, define sexuality as encompassing six key components, these being; human development; personal skills; relationships; sexual behaviour; society and culture; sexual health. **Te Puāwai Tapu**, 2000 ***Te Puāwai Tapu** Annual Report*, Wellington: 15 It is my view that the recognition of components such as culture and society, and relationships in particular

early interactions between European and **Māori** was fraught with misunderstandings and cultural judgements. She writes that interactions were read and then documented from the view of the arrivals, the cultural outsiders.[73] Stephan Eldred-Griggs also highlights that colonisation reconstructed **Māori** sexuality through the assertion of colonial sexual mores. In regard to homosexuality, he notes sexual unions between people of the same sex was widely tolerated with attitudes being so relaxed that missionaries claimed homosexuality was unknown in **Māori** society. However Eldred-Griggs states that missionary Richard Davis observed that homosexual relationships were a familiar part of **Māori** life.[74] Furthermore, he identified the drive by missionaries to redefine **Māori** sexuality in line with colonial and Victorian notions of gender, race and class.[75]

Many of those notions remain the basis for how **Māori** are seen and represented. As I noted in chapter two representation is framed in cultural, political and social relations. This remains apparent in more recent forms of representation. For example filmmaking in this country provides some indication of the extent to which colonial beliefs about **Māori** women remain entrenched. In discussing the feature film 'The Piano' I have written;

> **Maori** women receive all the subtle, and not so subtle, messages about the place of our **tupuna whaea**. With all the sexual innuendo that occurred in the film, it was **Maori** women who were located in the role of the 'sexual servants', with the exclusion of an offer from the 'camp' **Maori** man in the tree, who was constructed as being 'more like a woman', whilst the other male characters who, as opposed to offering sexual favours to Baines, spend their time being irrational and typically warlike.

The two constructions of the 'erotic native' and the 'domestic native' are without doubt the basis for much of the representation of **Māori** women in The Piano. Both representations are located firmly in colonial gendered heterosexual notions of womanhood.[76] The sources of such representations have been outlined in chapters six and seven, however it is worth reiterating that the historical sources of documentation in regard to sexuality have been particularly detrimental for **Māori** not only in terms of how we are represented to the world but also in terms of how we 'see' ourselves. One way of bringing change in terms of such representations is to forge ahead with ways of seeing ourselves that are based not in colonial impositions but within **kaupapa Māori**. That is a role for both **Kaupapa Māori** and **Mana Wahine**

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highlights that sexuality is a part of how we are and conceive of ourselves. Such a view opens the possibility to critique colonial constructions of sexuality.

[73] Salmond. A., 1991 op.cit.

[74] Eldred-Griggs, S., 1984 op.cit.:47

[75] ibid

[76] I have written regarding filmic representation of **Māori** women in the following articles; **Pihama**, L. 1994 'Are Films Dangerous: A **Maori** Woman's Perspective on ' The Piano' in *Hecate*: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Women's Liberation, Hecate Press, English Department, University of Queensland, Brisbane and **Pihama**. L. 2000 'Ebony and Ivory: Constructions of **Māori** in The Piano' in Margolis, Harriet 2000 (ed) *Jane Campion's The Piano*, Cambridge University Press, New York

theories. What **Mana Wahine** theory provides to such a process is a dedicated focus that is through the lens of **Māori** women.

It is my argument that **Mana Wahine** theory must be flexible enough to provide for the complexities of our present situation, and inclusive of the diversity that exists around us. It is argued that one way of doing that is founding the theory in **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**. **Mana Wahine**, like **Kaupapa Māori** theory, has at its centre the validity of **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**. The approach however is one that affirms **Mana Wahine** throughout and which challenges malecentric translations and interpretations which position **Māori** women as inferior when we know that this is clearly not the case.

Wairua

Wairua is an important element to all things **Māori**. This is made explicit in **Mana Wahine** theorising. Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith contends that **Māori** women's realities are linked to spiritual notions as these can not be denied or disconnected from physical realities. **Wairua kōrero** is evident in all elements of both **Kaupapa Māori** and **Mana Wahine**. It validates our essential connection through **whakapapa**, with the **whenua**, **moana**, **rangi**, and all the **atua** that surround and protect us and all our relations. How we talk about the social constructiveness of events, positions and realities must also include a discussion of the spiritual elements that are a part of those things. This is where the argument within critical theory that all things are socially constructed falls short in that it does not provide for **wairua**. **Wairua** is talked about by **Rangimarie** Rose **Pere** as follows:

> Literally translated, "**wairua**" denotes **wai** (water), **rua** (two), a word that can depict spirituality. The **Māori** saw the physical realm as being immersed and integrated with the spiritual realm. Every act, natural, and other influences were considered to have both physical and spiritual implications. A powerful belief in supernatural forces governed and influenced the way one interacted with other people and related to the environment. spirituality was seen as a dimension internalized within a person from conception – the seed of human life emanated from Io, the supreme supernatural influence.[77]

One of the critical responses to Western feminism has been the lack of spiritualism within radical feminist analysis. Cherryl **Waerea-i-te-rangi** Smith and **Mereana Taki** state that Western feminisms are spirituality 'impoverished',[78] arguing that the secular nature of Western feminism can work to deny **Māori** women's spirituality. Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith notes that feminist discussions of schooling do not include any discussion of spirituality. Spirituality, she notes has been marginalised to the realms of critique of church schooling. In this sense spirituality has been relegated to the domain of religion. This

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[77] Pere, R. 1988 op.cit:pp13-14

[78] Smith, C.W. & **Taki**, M., 1994 '**Hoihoi Wahine Pākehā**' in ***Te Pua 2***, **Te Puawaitanga**, University of Auckland, Auckland pp.38-42

denies a crucial aspect of **Māori** women's theorising.[79] In outlining **Māori** women's discourses in **Mana Wahine** theory Linda argues that **Māori** women have a clear spiritual project that is to do with bringing forward not only discussions of **wairua**, but the wider discussion of **Māori** knowledge. In regard to the project ahead of **Māori** women, she writes;

> As the human manifestation of the female elements, women have been engaged in a monumental and historic-mythological spiritual struggle, a struggle marked by significant events: the wrenching apart of **Papatunanuku** from **Ranginui**; the turning over of **Papatuanuku** so that her sights and thoughts would look forever downwards; the creation of **Hine Ahu One**; the transformation of **Hine Titama** in **Hine Nui Te Po**; the deeds of **Maui** against his grandmothers. This spiritual struggle continues to be fought in our role as mediators of **tapu**. Women have the power to make things **noa**, to intervene in the states of **tapu**-ness. This role of women tends to be conceptualised as an indication of the passive role of women, but the freedom that is contained within this role suggests that it is extremely active and dynamic. The power to make things noa contains within it the power over day -to-day life, over food, over commerce... The spiritual discouse incorporates more than the dimension of **wairua**. It is a struggle over world-view, over **Maori** knowledge, over history and over the various realms in which we function as humans.[80]

What Linda is highlighting here is the fact that ensuring **wairua** is a part of **Mana Wahine** is a part of a wider movement that is the reclaiming of **Māori** women's spiritual stories and place within **Māori** knowledge. For **Māori** women this is also the issue of the role **atua wāhine**. This has been researched in depth by **Aroha** Yates-Smith who contends that early ethnographic and anthropological documentation have served to diminish the existence and roles of **atua wāhine**.[81] **Aroha** provides evidence of the existence of a vast number of **atua wāhine**, and indicates their roles within **Te Ao Māori**. Her doctoral thesis brings to **Māori** people much evidence of the instrumental roles **Māori** women play within **Māori** society. Furthermore, she deconstructs the colonial anthropological obsession of imposing colonial notions on the roles and position of **wāhine Māori**.

Recognition of **wairua** within **Mana Wahine** is also about the reassertion of the place of **atua wāhine** and the stories that give us more indication as to the roles of **Māori** women within **whānau**, **hapū**, **iwi**, **Māori**. **Aroha** has laid down significant groundwork for other **Māori** women to continue with, the possibilities are endless in the affirmation of **atua wāhine**. Toni-Kristen Liddell shows the possibilities in her Masters thesis dedicated to **Mahuika**, the holder and guardian of fire. She provides an overview of literature that discusses the role of **Mahuika** as the holder of fire and incorporates into the research a discussion of the various types of fire that **Mahuika** protected. In her research there is a clear affirmation of the importance of knowledge of **atua wahine**. The spiritual source of the power of **Mahuika** is located with **Io** and **Papatūānuku**, further enhancing the importance of a discussion of **wairua**. Toni writes;

> As a female aspect of **Io**, **Papatuanuku** represents the divine female. As **Io's** female self, the Earth mother symbolises the power of the sacred that resides with the feminine element and it is through **Papatuanuku** therefore that women in general, and **Mahuika** in particular, may lay claim to their

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[79] Smith, L. T. 1992(a) op.cit.:pp42-43
[80] ibid.
[81] Yates-Smith, A., 1998 op.cit.

> female divinity, for she is the very source of **mana wahine** and the embodiment of female **tapu** and sanctity.[82]

In returning to Linda's contention that the visibility of **wairua** is a part of a wider agenda to affirm **Māori** knowledge it can also be noted that such actions also directly challenge colonial notions that have marginalised and denied the power of **Māori** women and in particular the source of that power as it is expressed in the deeds and actions of **atua wāhine**. **Mana Wahine** theory seeks to bring forward the stories and identities of our **tūpuna wāhine** as a way of gauging the many and varied roles **Māori** women carry within **Te Ao Māori**. This is evident in current debates regarding **Māori** women's engagement with **Te Tiriti o Waitangi** and Treaty Settlement Processes.

Te Tiriti O Waitangi

The basis of discussion by **Māori** women regarding **Te Tiriti o Waitangi** reflects that which has been outlined in Chapter five. However, there is a distinct **Māori** women's challenge that has been laid to the ways in which **Māori** women are positioned in relation to **Te Tiriti**. It has been clearly evidenced that **Māori** women were signatories to **Te Tiriti**. [83] It has also been clearly argued that **Māori** women were actively marginalised by missionaries that carried **Te Tiriti** around the country. [84] **Mira** Szarsy writes of the need for increased **Māori** women's involvement in key decision-making regarding **Te Tiriti**.[85] Annette Sykes notes that at a 1984 national **hui** at **Tūrangawaewae** it was resolved to ensure **Māori** women's involvement in decision making for **Māori** people, endorsing the following remit:

> That because **Maori** women constitute over 50 percent of the **tangata whenua** there must be equal representation in all areas of decision making in the future.[86]

Annette argues that **Māori** women have been at the forefront of actions across the country, however the essence of 1984 remit has never been actioned. The role of **Māori** women leaders is well documented. Kath Irwin writes that **Maori** women throughout our history have been innovators and leaders, however our stories have been made invisible and kept out of the records.[87] **Ngahuia Te Awekotuku** also argues that **Māori** women have always been the leaders and doers, and they remain so across a range of issues.[88] **Ngahuia** cites two particular examples, (i) **Te Puea Herangi** and **Te Atairangikahu** as **Māori** women leaders in **Waikato**, who have actively worked for the betterment of their people and (ii) the group of five **Māori** women and one young **Māori** man that restored the **waka taua 'Te Winika'** and the shifts that

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[82] Liddell, T.K. 2000:59
[83] Simpson, M. 1990 op.cit
[84] Orange, C., 1987 op.cit.; **Rei**, T.,1993 op.cit.
[85] Szarsy, M. 1995 'Seek The Seeds for the Greatest Good of All People' in in Irwin, K., Ramsden, I. & **Kahukiwa**, R. (eds), 1995 ***Toi Wāhine**: The Worlds of **Māori** Women*, Penguin Books, Auckland pp131-136
[86] Sykes, A., 2000 op.cit.:63
[87] Irwin, K. 1992(b) op.cit.:1
[88] **Te Awekotuku**, N. 1991 op.cit.

this **mahi** brought in regard to some of the thoughts of the **Maori** men that felt threatened by the work being done by a group of predominantly women. **Ngahuia** writes that there was a process by which

> this project gently but irrevocably changed many of the restrictions regarding work of this nature.[89]

By the end of the project there was strong support by those that had initially objected. The marginalisation of **Māori** women's roles in regard to **Te Tiriti** has been due to the wider denial of **Māori** women's roles. Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith writes that **Māori** women in leadership roles have often been presented as the exception to the rule.[90] Annette Sykes has actively challenged this in regard to the Treaty Settlement Processes, arguing that **Māori** women and **rangatahi** must be included in all processes.[91] As a result of the marginalisation of **Māori** women a **Mana Wahine** claim has been taken before the **Waitangi** Tribunal. The claim asserts that current processes have denied **Māori** women's involvement in Treaty processes, and that this is in itself a breach of **Te Tiriti o Waitangi**.[92] The issues regarding **Māori** women's involvement in both process and decision making in the area of **Te Tiriti o Waitangi** is one that denies **Māori** women's **tino rangatiratanga** and is based upon the falsities of colonial ideologies of gender. In order to engage these issues we need to look to critique and active working toward decolonisation.

Decolonisation

Colonisation has been promoted as key in terms of shifts and changes in the status of **Māori** women. Pākehā men brought their own gender/race/class notions in regard to **Māori** women and we saw the imposition of **Pākehā** worldviews that operated heavily within notions of colonial dualisms. These dualisms operated in a number of ways eg. heathen-civilised etc., men as 'free' women as 'chattels' etc. These dualisms and **Pākehā** notions and epistemologies have pervaded society and colonisation via hegemony, ideologies, colonial violence both physical and symbolic, each of which have impacted externally and internally upon the individual and collective **iwi** societies. A key is decolonisation in a way that does not fragment us further but strengthens. I have written elsewhere that the notion of decolonisation assumes an internalisation of colonial ideologies. It also assumes that there is an agreed need for an awareness and critical analysis of both the processes and the outcomes of colonisation. That is without doubt the case in terms of the need to decolonise the multiple layers of oppression that have been imposed in **Aotearoa**. In discussing the notion of decolonisation I have written of the need to ensure that the varied experiences of **Māori** women are engaged. That included the following statement:

> The processes of decolonisation are not universal. Where there are clearly commonalities there are also specifics that need to be identified as a part of an overall decolonisation agenda. Our colonial

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[89] ibid:13
[90] Smith. L.T. 1992(a)
[91] Pihama, L. (audio visual) 1996 op.cit.
[92] **Mana Wahine** Treaty Claim 1994, unpublished documents, New Zealand

> experience has been one of denial. Denial of our **reo**, denial of our **tikanga**, denial of our **whenua**, denial of our **taonga**, denial of our **whakapapa**. Colonial forces have attempted to deny us all of those things that contribute to our notions of who we are and where we fit in the world. The ways in which these attempts were made varied dependent on context and location, as such the effects have been diverse and multi-layered. Decolonisation then includes a peeling back of the layers. Layer by layer. Constantly reflecting on what we find.[93]

All **Māori** women that write in regard to **Mana Wahine** theory identify an analysis of colonisation as important to understanding our present places and making change. As noted in the **Kaupapa Māori** theory chapter decolonisation is a process of challenging dominant hegemonies about **Māori**. **Te Kawehau** Hoskins warns against a decolonisation project that is located in colonial binaries of mind and body, but rather she asserts that colonisation has been internalised on multiple levels and therefore processes of decolonisation must be able to engage all senses.[94] **Tariana Turia**, a current associate Minister of **Māori** Affairs also highlighted the complexities of colonisation.[95] In a speech to the New Zealand Psychological Society Conference, 2000, **Tariana** stated,

> I know the psychological consequences of the internalisation of negative images is for people to take for themselves the illusion of the oppressors power while they are in a situation of helplessness and despair, a despair leading to self hatred and for many, suicide.[96]

In a **Mana Wahine** analysis decolonisation asserts the need to ensure that the positioning of **Māori** women is actively considered. This is particularly necessary giving the positioning of **Māori** women as 'Other' not only in regard to **Pākehā** but also in relation to **Māori** men.[97] Patricia **Maringi** Johnston argues that the notion of difference has been coopted in to a notion of the 'inferior Other' via discourses of racism, sexism and colonialism. **Māori** women she states have been viewed as an 'inferior Other' to both our colonisers and **Māori** men. Current theorising of difference also maintains this position. **Mana Wahine** inverts that and locates **Māori** women in the centre by placing our own experiences and theories of the world at the centre of analysis.[98]

Cheryl **Waerea-i-te-Rangi** Smith argues that women's involvement in decolonisation projects is crucial.[99] She argues that women bring to the debate issues of gender and family relations, alongside wider social issues. It is key to the decolonisation agenda that these issues are included in the deconstruction and reconstruction our stories. It is a process of reclaiming **Māori** women's stories and re-identifying **Māori** women's positions historically. To look carefully at how stories/history/world views are constructed and

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[93] **Pihama**, L. (ed) 1994(b) ***Te Pua***, Volume 3 Number 2 The Journal of **Puawaitanga, Te Whare Waananga o Tamaki Makaurau**, Auckland
[94] Hoskins, T.K. 2001 op.cit.
[95] **Turia, Tariana** 2000 Speech Notes, *Speech to NZ Psychological Society Conference* 2000, 29 August **Waikato** University, Hamilton
[96] ibid:1
[97] Smith, L.T. 1992(a) op.cit.
[98] Johnston, P.M.G. 1998 op.cit.

how we are placed within those constructions. In the article 'Reflection on the Status of **Māori** Women', **Kuni** Jenkins gives a good example of this process providing a range of examples which reveal a need for **Māori** women to tell our stories from our own place. **Kuni** notes;

> **Maori** women in their mythology occupy an important role. While biologically the **Maori** male occupies a position of great physical strength from which to oppress the female, women assume the balance of power in the psychological dominance they achieve through the knowledge they have of the universe. They have the power to control its forces. They enter freely the spirit world and return to their earthly natures with few restrictions or demeanours. They have the power to permit access to forbidden domains such as the underworld or the heavenly portals to those males wishing to travel. They not only controlled the power, they also had the control of resources.[100]

Deconstruction is not solely an exercise of dissecting for the sake of pulling something apart, but is about revealing assumptions underpinning particular beliefs, exposing 'mythologies' and seeking to invert negatives to positives. The term deconstruction is used extensively by a range of postmodern theorists, it is however not a new concept. The ways in which **Māori** women appear to engage the notion of deconstruction is not as a process of dissection in order to see the parts, but is a process of viewing the whole in order to see how each of the parts interrelated with each other. In terms of **Kaupapa Māori** this process is not unlike the relationships that are inherent within **whakapapa** relations, it is assumed that everything is interrelated and therefore it is necessary to look to the whole to see the parts not vice versa. This is not new for **Māori**, nor is the need to understand and challenge colonial understandings and constructions.

Indigenous Peoples for generations have been challenging the West's assumption of its own superiority. An assumed Western superiority is the basis for its assertion of its knowledge as 'the' knowledge. This has been challenged actively by **whānau**, **hapū**, **iwi, Māori** since colonisation. Where **Pākehā** technology was clearly viewed by our people as useful tools to be utilised this did not in fact mean that all things **Pākehā** were therefore superior. What is often missed in the equation is the ongoing use by **Pākehā** of **Māori** knowledge. Also, what is presented here as a process of deconstruction is based not within an idea of taking apart the whole, but rather is a process of looking at the whole in order to distinguish the relationships that are in operation. This is in line with concepts of **whakapapa**, **whānau**, and the ways in which all things are interrelated. Furthermore, the need to engage theory and practice requires a political form of deconstruction that works alongside ideas of reclamation and reconstruction. For too long have our people been dissected and fragmented, this can not continue.

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[99] Smith, C.W. 1994 ***Kimihia Te Maramatanga**: Colonisation and Iwi Development*, Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, University of Auckland, Auckland

[100] Jenkins, K. 1992 op.cit.:38

Mātauranga Wahine: Reclaiming Māori women's knowledges

Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith argues that **Māori** women have been ignored not only in records related to events after colonisation but also in records of events prior to colonisation.[101] What was history is now related as 'mythology' and **Māori** women have been placed on the fringes of "male adventures". This brings to the fore again the writing out of **Māori** women in our histories and the need for conscious repositioning. This is also argued by **Kuni** Jenkins who in exploring the ways in which **atua wāhine** are represented in stories about **Maui** states there is a need to look critically at the position of **Māori** women and how we have been presented in **Māori** stories is more to do with missionary beliefs that **Māori** women's realities.

In a process of reclaiming **Mana Wahine** within **Māori** stories we provide the possibilities for seeing the world in ways that a particularly **Māori**. This requires a constant awareness of how colonial ideologies are insidiously internalised into our belief systems. The point is we have to culturally, politically and socially 'on guard' in what is essentially a struggle for beliefs. There is no doubt in my mind that challenging the hegemony of colonial assumptions, beliefs and expectations is a battle, it is a battle of minds, of knowledge, of ideas, of culture, of **reo**, of **tikanga**. Reclaiming the position of **Mana Wahine** within our **kōrero**, **pūrakau**, **pakiwaitara** is an essential part of that struggle. What is exciting and incredibly satisfying about that struggle is the potential for change in terms of the position of **Māori** women given a societal acceptance of the role and status of **Māori** women on this, our land.

Within **Māori** stories of creation **Māori** women and **Māori** men appear equally knowledgeable and central. The writing out or marginalisation of **Māori** women's roles has been common practice however because these have become dominant representations does not make them 'authentic'.[102] An example can be seen in the representation of the coming of fire to the world. The story of how fire came to be permanently available to people provides many examples of male-centric constructions of **Māori** story-telling. It is a part of what is often termed the '**Maui** stories'. In these stories **Maui** appears consistently as the protaganist, however there is strong debate, primarily derived from **Māori** women that it is in fact the women in the stories who should be located as the key figures. In the story of fire Antony Alpers[103] writes that 'one day' **Maui** *"felt like putting out all the fires in the world"* so during the night he worked to extinguish all fire in order to see what would happen. The following morning **Maui** called that he was hungry and at this point the community became aware of their plight. **Maui's** mother, **Taranga**, and other elders of the community ordered that their 'servants' go to **Mahuika**, the goddess of fire, and ask for her to give some to the world. However, because of their fear of **Mahuika** they refused, at which point **Maui** offered to seek fire. **Taranga** advised **Maui** of how to approach **Mahuika** and to be respectful in his approach. **Maui** did not heed this advise and in his approach to **Mahuika** he took on the role of

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[101] Smith, L.T. 1992(a) op.cit.
[102] Yates-Smith, A., 1998 op.cit.

'trickster' for which he is commonly renowned. Finally, explaining to **Mahuika** their predicament Maui was given the nail of koiti that he may take back as fire. **Maui** went some way and then extinguished the fire before returning to **Mahuika** stating *"The light you gave me has gone out. Would you give me another."*[104] This continued until all but one nail remained and **Mahuika** angered at **Maui's** actions threw the last nail at his feet creating a major blaze. Facing death **Maui** called to his ancestors to send rain to put out the fires. According to Alpers, **Mahuika** herself nearly perished in the rains and was through this deprived of her powers. Fire however was saved for the world as the final sparks flew from her topknot to be stored within trees such as the **rata**, **kaikōmako**, **hinau**, **kahikatea**, **rimu** and others. On return to the **kainga Maui** was reprimanded for his actions and warned of future dangers, however this again went unheeded and was to have major implications for **Maui** later.

Alpers retelling of this story is derived from that of George Grey as told in the book 'Polynesian Mythology & Ancient Traditional History Of The New Zealanders' first published in 1855, in which Grey describes **Maui** as the 'hero'.[105] The story as told by Alpers takes the same line as those given by Grey, and also resembles that of Elsdon Best,[106] however in the Grey rendition **Mahuika** deliberately places fire into the trees, whereas for both Best and Alpers this was more by accident than by any plan on the part of **Mahuika**. Best offers us other possibilities in the story in recognising the personification of fire as the 'fire children' who were the descendants of a union between **Mahuika** and **Auahi-Tūroa**.[107] Furthermore, he notes that the 'fire children' fled to the guardianship of **Hinekaikomako**, and sought shelter with her. **Hinekaikōmako** is the guardian of the **kaikōmako** tree. In neither the Grey or the Alpers version are we presented with visual representations of the story. This comes later with works such as those of Peter Gossage. Gossage has published a number of books centred upon **Maui** for children. The visual images of **Māori** women throughout the series is disturbing. Key female figures in **Māori** stories appear in these texts and the visual representation position **Māori** women as ugly, hideous, and unsightly figures.[108]

In '**Wahine Toa**'[109] Robyn **Kahukiwa** and Patricia Grace provide one of the few examples of **Mahuika** as a knowledgeable, intelligent ancestress. Where in previous versions **Mahuika** is constructed as naïve in her continual passing of fire to **Maui**, however **'Wahine Toa'** highlights the notions of sharing

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[103] Alpers, Anthony 1964 ***Māori*** *Myths and Legends* Longman Paul, Auckland
[104] ibid:60
[105] Grey, G. 1855 op.cit.
[106] Best, Elsdon (1924) *The **Māori** As He Was: A Brief Account of **Māori** Life as it was in Pre-European Days.*, Dominion Museum, Wellington
[107] **Auahi-Turoa** is also referred to as the personification of comets.
[108] Gossage, P., 1980 *How **Maui** Found His Father and the Magic Jawbone*, Ashton Scholarship, Auckland Similar statements can be made in terms of the illustrations in Slane, C. & Sullivan, R., 1996 ***Maui** Legends of the Outcast*, Godwit Publishing, Auckland
[109] **Kahukiwa**, R. & Grace, P. 1984 op.cit.

resources and **whanaungatanga**, in the written text the following view of the relationship of **Maui** to **Mahuika** is presented;

> **Maui** returned again and again, and each time, because he was a relative of mine, and because of a promise I had made to the people of the earth, I gave him fire.[110]

Equally, the narrative locates **Mahuika** as consciously choosing to place fire in the guardianship of selected trees, and thereby holding control over her decisions as to where to place fire for the wellbeing of future generations.

> It was rain, the drenching rain, that saved **Maui** - and almost destroyed me. Fire was almost lost to the world. But as the flood waters rose about me I sent the last seeks of fire into the earthly trees - the **kaikomako**. **Mahoe**, **totara**, **patete** and **pukatea** - and asked these trees to be the guardians of fire forever.[111]

The complexities of the telling of these stories exist not only in regard to how those involved are presented as either naïve or knowledgeable, as acting accidentally or with intention, but also to the notion of how the sex of those involved is identified. This is evident with the early writings of missionary Richard Taylor[112] who notes that **Mauika** is identifed in some traditions as the grandfather and in others as female. Taylor however choses to re-tell the story with **Mauika** as male. References to **Mahuika** as both female and male is also highlighted in the writings of **Mohi Ruatapu**[113]. In 1871 **Mohi Ruatapu** notes;

> **Haere ana a Maui ki tona tipuna, ki a Mahuika. Te taenga atu, ka ki atu, 'E Koro, He tiki ahi mai au'** [114]

His discussion in 1875 however locates **Mahuika** as female.

> **Na, katahi ia ka haere. Ka tae ki te kainga o te ruahine nei, o Mahuika, e moe ana.**[115]

Anaru Reedy engages with this shift by stating that the **tōhunga** probably learnt traditions that referred to **Mahuika** as being female and male, and therefore merely moves from one to another freely. Such reasoning seems to appropriate in a context defined through **te reo Māori me ōna tīkanga** and the writings of **Mohi Ruatapu** affirm **Mahuika** as both female and male. This differs significantly from the works of Alpers, Grey and Gossage whose versions were fundamentally misogynist and based within their beliefs and constructions of **Māori** stories through colonial distortions.

As noted earlier in this chapter an encouraging development in the reclaiming of **Māori** women's roles in such stories has been undertaken by Toni-Kristin Liddell in her thesis dedicated to the stories of **Mahuika**

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[110] ibid:46
[111] ibid:46
[112] Taylor, R. (1870) ***Te Ika a Maui**: New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, H. Ireson Jones, Wanganui
[113] Reedy, **Anaru** (1993) ***Nga Korero a Mohi Ruatapu Tohunga Rongonui o Ngati Porou**: The Writings of **Mohi Ruatapu***, Canterbury University Press, Christchurch
[114] ibid:21
[115] ibid:81

and her central role in the guardianship of **ahi**, in its many forms.[116] Toni-Kristin highlights the multiple forms and roles of **ahi** within **Māori** society and in doing so emphasises the critical importance of **Mahuika** to **Māori** society. In her research it is clear that **Mahuika** is not a female appendage in the **'Maui** stories', but as with the representation by Robyn **Kahukiwa** and Patricia Grace, she has vital roles and responsibilities as an **atua** of fire.[117] Where Toni-Kristin does at times treat the writings of Elsdon Best unproblematically[118], she has in her thesis shown the potential for the development of literature that is focused on the specific detail related to a particular **atua wahine**. It is my view that each of the hundreds of **atua wāhine** that are a part of **Māori** epistemologies deserve the form of engagement in order for us to more fully comprehend the potential that exists for **Māori** women, and therefore **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi**, within **mātauranga Māori**.

As I have noted throughout this thesis, the research of **Ani Mikaere** in her critique of the colonisation of **tikanga** and its impact on **Māori** women is invaluable. **Ani** simulatenously provides critique of colonial fragmentation of **tikanga Māori** and proffers possibilities in re-reading **tikanga** from a **Mana Wahine** base. In doing so **Ani** outlines diverse **hapū** and **iwi kōrero** that offers a view of the roles and status of **Māori** women that flies in the face of colonial gendered constructions. In the Introduction to her thesis **Ani** notes her desire that the research will contribute in 'some small way' to the development of **Māori** women's theories there is no doubt that she has succeeded in that desire and it is my view that in her contribution **Ani** has levered open the colonial box and showed the distortions that are inherent in the boxing of **Māori** women's positions in imposed race, gender and class constructions, and in doing so she gifts to us the potential for re-examining what is presented as **tikanga**. In presenting a critical analysis of documentation related to **Māori** women **Ani** has revealed the contradictions that are inherent in assertions made from a colonised state. This too reaffirms the need for conscious developments of decolonisation in **Aotearoa**. In recognising the impact of colonisation in any act of reclaiming **Māori** womens knowledge **Ani** writes;

> It is my belief that, in consciously re-examining from a **Māori** perspective material that has been so misrepresented, we may begin to rescue **matauranga Māori** from the state of limbo to which it has been relegated by colonisation. An important part of this exercise is the raising of the image and status of **Māori** women from the state of submergence that, it will be argued, is the result of colonisation.[119]

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[116] Liddell, Toni-Kristin 1999 ***Mahuika: He Ahi Komau*** *- The Post-Colonial Invisibilisation of* ***Mana Wahine*** *in* ***Māori*** *Mythology*, Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, University of Auckland, Auckland

[117] **Kahukiwa**, R. & Grace. P., 1984 op.cit.

[118] In her research Toni-Kristin appears to accept some of Bests contentions that locate **Māori** women as passive receptacles, and although challenging the wider gender subordination that Best contents is the place of **Māori** women, she includes notions such as women as 'sinful' and tends to idealise a notion of heterosexual 'romantic love' in her discussion of the union of **Mahuika** and **Auahituroa**. ibid

[119] ibid:5

Aroha Yates-Smith writes that the process of reclaiming our stories is central to gaining a deeper understanding of **mātauranga Māori**.[120] **Aroha** writes that reclaiming the stories of **atua wāhine** is a ways of correct an imposed imbalance, of re-establishing a balance by bringing to forward the images of **atua wāhine** who have been 'dismembered' through colonisation, and placing the stories and images of **atua wāhine** back where they rightly belong, in the consciousness and knowledge of **Māori** people. Aroha expresses her desire in this process with clarity;

> The cultural renaissance among **Maori** calls for a recovery of spiritual knowledge to provide a strong base for those wishing to discover their past, hence the need for the dissemination of such information, despite the past practice of restricting esoteric lore to a few. In addition to safeguarding our **Maori** language, we must also nurture our spirits, the Earth Mother and all the other aspects of the natural world upon which we human beings are dependent, re-establishing a balance at a personal, cultural and environmental level. Thus the need for information about **Maori** goddesses can be clearly identified.[121]

Aroha indicates in this statement the need to provide information to our people, and in particular to our women so that we are able to see more clearly the importance of **Māori** women within **Māori** society. Reclaiming **Māori** women's stories is a way of speaking back to processes of silencing and marginalisation. The silencing of **Māori** women's voices has meant the silencing of our theories, world views.[122] It has meant that **Māori** women's stories are able to then be defined as 'myths', and therefore some figment of the cultural imagination. The marginalisation of **Mana Wahine** has meant that **Māori** women are constantly having to try and 'find' ourselves within the texts of the dominant group. The need to reclaim **Māori** women's stories is couched in an understanding that they can help inform us of **Māori** women's positions in the various **whānau**, **hapū**, **iwi**, **Māori** structures. This is not solely a historical phenomenon but is ongoing. Also it not only relates to our understandings within **Te Ao Māori** but also in the shaping of our theoretical frameworks. **Māori** women's voices remain silenced in the theoretical terrain. This may be seen in the current surge of postmodernism and postcolonialism. We are told that it is postmodern/postcolonial theorising that are extending theoretical boundaries and that have opened the debate surrounding notions of 'difference', the 'other' and 'identity'.[123] Such assertions themselves continue to invisibilise the contributions made by Indigenous Peoples in the process of critiquing dominant discourses. The reclaiming of **Māori** women's stories is an act of bringing our voices more fully forward in a society that continues to deny us. This also applies to the reclamation of cultural space.

Reclaiming Cultural Space

A key element in the articulation of **Mana Wahine** theory is the reclamation by **Māori** women of cultural space. This sections looks specifically at the examples of **Māori** cultural institutions such as the **marae**

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[120] The critique of ethnography has been noted in Chapter seven.
[121] Yates-Smith, A., 1998 op.cit.: pp4-5
[122] Irwin, K. 1993 op.cit.

and **tangihanga** that have become seen as bastions of **Māori** expression. They are often constructed as being the final holding ground of **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**. Within a context of colonisation and the imposition of assimilatory policies I too see the importance and value of holding to such institutions as a means by which to maintain and reproduce our **taonga**. Such cultural institutions are however serving to also produce and reproduce disturbing examples of colonial discourse.

The marginalisation of **Māori** women is of critical concern. One example of such marginalisation was evident on the final day of the **tangi** for **Māori** Land activist Eva Rickard.[124] For many **Māori**, **tangihanga** is one of the few **Māori** cultural institutions that is viewed as maintaining some form of cultural authenticity. It is an institution that, despite a history of colonisation, we have been able to maintain some control over. It has ensured that our relationship to our **tūpuna** and to the process of departure from the world of the living to the world of the ancestors is maintained. Through the **tangihanga** we have held an ability to mourn openly and to process the loss of those close to us in a relatively healthy way. In seeing **tangihanga** as a part of an overall process of mourning, both individual and collective, it becomes evident that the need for that process to be inclusive of all groups of mourners is critical. As a part of the bigger picture of cultural revival and reclamation we need to be clear about the **kaupapa** underpinning our institutions. It has become all too common that what is defined as **tikanga** and **kawa** has been prioritised over **kaupapa**. This is not to say that these can be separated, clearly they can not. What is raised here is the idea of flexibility and a need for deep philosophical discussions about our cultural institutions and a questioning as to where we are as **Māori** and where we wish to be, these are not necessarily the same things.

There is a fear of change that is understandable for our people. Change in the past 160 years has tended to be about assimilation, it has been imposed externally rather than coming from internal processes for **Māori** by **Māori**. A fear now of our own is equally understandable. For many years **Māori** individuals, and less frequently groups, have participated in Crown processes that have alienated many **Māori** from land, fish, forestries etc.[125] It is often through these processes that the complexities of colonisation, and in

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[123] Refer Chapter nine for discussion of the notion of 'difference'. See also Johnston, P.M.G. 1998 op.cit.

[124] Politically and culturally Eva Rickard was a woman who was known of by many beyond her own circle of **whānau** and friends. Her mahi was known, respected and admired by many, it was watched, denied and rejected by others. Irrespective of ones positioning on the debates related to land issues or **tino rangatiratanga**, Eva was known. There is no doubt that Eva Rickard stood for justice for all **Māori**, not for an elite few, or for those who are able to access the power structures of the Crown, but for all **Māori**. It was a clear agenda, epitomised with the naming of **Whaingaroa** as an Independent State. The well being of **Māori** people was embodied in the alcohol and drug free designation that she held firmly to. The support for those who choose to participate in radical change was visible at the various **hui** and celebrations called by Eva and in her constant participation in a wide range of hui nationally at the side of those so often referred to as '**Māori** Radicals'. What was equally critical was the positioning of **Māori** women and her call that **Māori** women be more fully acknowledged in their contribution to the overall movement for change.

[125] **Pihama**, L. (Director) 1995 *The Fiscal Envelope: A Generation Cap*, **Moko** Productions & Sykes, Annette Auckland, New Zealand

particular the impact of a Western capitalist system become most evident. Fear of change is not only about distrust. Fear of change is about power and how power is manifested. Critical radical change is about transformation, it is about revealing injustices and seeking to transform them. Some call it emancipation, some call it revolution, some call it freedom, and some call it survival. The labels all lead to the same objective, the ability for cultural survival, expression, affirmation and practice. It is to live more fully. One writer, the late Paulo Freire, talks about this as being 'more fully human', to move out from those relations that dehumanise certain groups people through the denial of their fundamental human rights[126]. For oppressed groups to become more fully human we are participating in the emancipation of all, through challenging structures of injustice. This is an important point, as we are at a point in our history where many colonial structures and power relationships have been entrenched within our communities and have influenced many of our own structures. Critical radical change therefore necessitates a willingness to engage both with imported oppressive structures whilst also reflecting upon our own structures and institutions. What that means is that we need to be open to the questions and challenges of those within our communities that have the least access to those spaces where voices can be heard and where decisions are made.

The fear of losing privilege is a fear of the individual, of the ego, and as such has no place in the overall collective struggle, yet it is increasingly evident in this country. It is particularly evident in terms of **Māori** men. Fears of institutional change, within **Māori** cultural institutions, if based upon an assumed loss of privilege are equally un-useful. This is also particularly evident in terms of **Māori** men. What is frequently denied is the fact that **Māori** women are constantly placed in a position whereby we have to subsume our needs because of those fears. The fact that **Māori** women, on the final day of Eva Rickard's **tangihanga**, were positioned in a way that forced a radical intervention is an indication that we must reflect critically on how we, as **Māori**, are defining what constitutes appropriate **tikanga** and **kawa** for our cultural institutions. As Annette Sykes stated on the day, this is not about trampling the **mana** of **Māori** men, it is not about positioning **Māori** women over and above **Māori** men. It is about ensuring **Māori** women have the space to **mihi**, to **poroporoake**, those who are important to us. That is a cultural right. It is a right to participate in continuing the processes of mourning and farewell that has been handed down by our **tūpuna**. To believe that creating spaces for **Māori** women to speak is to trample the **mana** of **Māori** men, is to deny that to silence **Māori** women is to silence generations of our **tūpuna whaea**. How many **Māori** men would silence their mothers?, their nannies?, few if any would take that on, why then are **Māori** men able to silence other **Māori** men's mothers and nannies? Given that it is **Māori** women who birth and nurture and give voice to their **Māori** sons, this process of silencing is particularly ironic.

[126] Freire, P. 1972 op.cit.

Issues of speaking rights are complex. They can also be identified as having specific manifestations with different **hapū**, **iwi** and in urban settings. We have often been presented with generic, universal explanations in regard to ritual roles and responsibilities, the most dominant being the flawed belief that 'no **Māori** women speak on the **marae**'. This is a belief that is promulgated against the interests of **Māori** women. Of course **Māori** women speak on the **marae**, in many varied and complex ways. Furthermore, there is no singular universal experience. In espousing the notion that 'no **Māori** women speak on the **marae** there is a buying in to the colonial notions that all **Māori** are the same. At best that is culturally and academically naïve. Kathie Irwin raised this issue in her article regarding the development and expression of **Māori** feminism. Kathie argues that there is a fundamental flaw in the terrain that is considered to be 'the' speaking space. Fundamentally, she argues that the marae is an entire institution that includes all elements that are a part of the whole cultural space. The formalised 'speaking' space that is often referred to is the **marae atea**. The **marae atea** is considered by some **hapū** and **iwi** groups as the terrain of **Tūmatauenga**, a god of war, and therefore the domain of men. This, however, it is stressed is not the argument of all **iwi**. **Ngāti Porou**, **Ngāti Kahungunu**, **Te Whānau ā Apanui** are **iwi** that have a history of **Māori** women speaking on the **marae ātea** as a part of the formal ritual of **pōwhiri**.[127] In **Taranaki pōwhiri** is generally held inside the **wharenui** rather than outside on the **marae ātea**.

Ani Mikaere notes that the structures of the **pōwhiri** were such that **Māori** women in the roles of **kaikaranga** and **kaiwaiata** were considered to have equal standing in the process.[128] **Rangimarie** Rose **Pere** gives illustration to the differing expectations of **hapū** and **iwi** in her discussion of **Tuhoe Potiki** and **Ngai-Tahu-Matua** of **Ngāti Kahungunu**. **Rangimarie** notes that **Tuhoe Potiki** women are not expected to **whaikōrero** however there must be a **karanga**, the 'first voice' heard from a woman for the occasion to commence. She further notes that for **Ngai-Tahu-Matua** it is the **tuakana** that is expected to respond in **whaikōrero**, and if the **tuakana** is a woman then she is expected to fill that role.[129] It is clear that the complexities and multiplicities of **tikanga** must be considered in any discussion of what constitutes speaking and who speaks in formal **Māori** proceedings. There are other complexities that also need to be engaged in regard to this discussion. Kathie Irwin has raised the issue of 'who' gets to **whaikōrero** and how that is determined. She highlights in particular the privileging of **Pākehā** male voices over those of **Māori** women.[130] If we add to this the idea that the **paepae** itself as a place for speakers is a colonial construction, then the critique becomes even more complex.[131]

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[127] **Mahuika**, A. 1973 op.cit; Pere, R.1982 op.cit.; Stirling, E., & Salmond, A. 1980 op.cit.
[128] **Mikaere**, A., 1995 op.cit.
[129] **Pere**, R. 1982 op.cit.
[130] Irwin, K. 1992(b) op.cit.
[131] Pat **Hohepa** discussed this some years ago in a class I was in. It is also refereed to in Sinclair, M. 1986 op.cit. as have being viewed as a contentious issue.

The impact of denial of **Māori** women's voices go well beyond the debate surrounding speaking rights on the **marae**. In those spaces, outside the **marae**, reflections on roles and positions have and who is able to speak also impacts on **Māori** women. Numerous examples occur daily. I have seen schools where the school hall or a classroom is turned into a quasi-marae and only boys are given rights to speak, even over their adult **Māori** women teachers. I have been to **hui** where inside the **wharenui Māori** women have had to struggle to get a voice. It is argued that these influences have a significant role to play in the under-representation of **Māori** women in decision-making processes.[132]

The debate regarding **Māori** women's speaking rights is one that has been around **Māori** circles for much longer than many of us realise. Such is the state of our historical knowledge. This needs to be explored within much wider discussions of voice and who has historically been recognised has having the right to speak in more general terms. In a video interview in 1996 Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith articulated the idea that **Pākehā** colonisers assumed the existence of the same sorts of societal arrangements for **Māori** as was a part of their own experiences, in a somewhat candid statement she noted *"there was 'take me to your leader' mentality and of course that leader was male".*[133] Those assumptions underpinned much of the historical mentality with which **Māori** women were dealing .

This thesis is not a discussion of speaking rights as an isolated part of ritual. Neither is it a critique of the construction of **pōwhiri**, that is another thesis. This significance of this discussion to the wider thesis is to highlight the insidious nature of colonial ideologies and the depth to which they have permeated **Māori** thinking and the representation of our own cultural institutions. It is offensive to me to see **Māori** men attack a **Māori** woman as she delivers her **poroporoake** to a reknowned **kuia**. It is also offensive to me to see my own people reconstruct **kawa** before my own eyes as a means of denying **Māori** women the right to farewell a **Māori** woman activist. This thesis contend that such constructions are not ours and should be challenged. The colonial reconstruction of our cultural institutions should be offensive to all **Māori** not solely **Māori** women.

Summary

Mana Wahine theory is a theoretical framework that seeks to provide an analysis that is based upon **Māori** understandings of the world. Where the previous chapter outlined relationships with Western Feminism and **Māori** men, this chapter commences with a discussion of the need to ensure the diverse realities of **Māori** women's experience is a recognised part of any **Mana Wahine** theory. This is a point that challenges **Māori** women ourselves to engage how we see and represent each other. We have diverse backgrounds and experiences and these will also encourage the development of various forms of **Māori** women's theories, just as the diverse in **Māori** communities generally are bringing forward a range of

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[132] **Pihama**. L. 1996 (Audio visual) op.cit.

Kaupapa Māori theories. It is noted that one area is that of the silencing of discourses of sexuality. **Ngā wāhine takatāpui**, **Māori** lesbians are identified as a group that is often marginalised in **Māori** women's discussions, and it is argued that in colonial notions of heterosexuality as norm as just as disturbing as other colonial impositions.

This chapter has outlined some of the key elements that are raised by **Māori** women in regard to the construction of **Mana Wahine** as a theoretical framework. The elements of **Mana Wahine**; **te reo me ōna tikanga**, **whakapapa**; **whānau**; recognising diverse realities; **wairua**; **te tīriti o Waitangi**; decolonisation; **mātauranga wahine** and reclaiming cultural space are broad, in that they are able to encapsulate a wide range of analytical issues. The key elements outlined here are a beginning, there is still much more work to be done. For example there are writers who have engaged the notion of **Māori** women's leadership. I have chosen not to look at the specifics of leadership but rather have indicated through wider discussion of **whakapapa**, **whānau** and decolonisation that **Māori** women have without doubt held key leadership roles in our **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi**. Therefore there is no question that **Māori** women are leaders in our own right. Any assertion otherwise is to deny the many stories that evidence **Māori** women as key **tūpuna** and **atua**. These elements each open a range of other **tikanga** and concepts that can then be engaged. **Māori** concepts are layered and interwoven. To discuss the notion of **whakapapa** is to open a discussion of **whenua**, **tuakana-teina-tungāne**, **mana**, **tapu**, **noa**, **atua**, **tūpuna** and many other concepts within **Te Ao Māori** that link to the way in which **whakapapa** is defined. The point is that we can as **Māori** women determine which particular cultural concepts and elements are key to the type of theoretical framework we are engaging. What is critical however to a **Mana Wahine** framework is that analysis is defined from the viewpoint of **Māori** women, and is underpinned by the fundamental belief in the notion of **Mana Wahine**.

It is argued here that **Māori** women's stories must be reclaimed as a means by which to show **Māori** people the many and varied roles our women have held. This is also the argument in regard to the reclamation of cultural spaces. Such reclamation is not to undermine the maintenance of **Māori** spaces such as the **marae**, but rather it seeks to challenge the colonial impositions that have been transported into our cultural spaces. The growing literature in this area is incredibly affirming of the thrust of this thesis, that is that **Māori** women's stories indicate to us pathways for analysis and development. The encroachment of colonial beliefs into **Māori** spaces has been rapid and therefore it is asserted that we must be conscious of the impact of those intrusions.

Where this thesis has engaged these notions primary through written literature it is noted that there are many **Māori** women artists and fiction writers that are engaged in similar acts of re-establishing balance

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[133] Smith, L.T. 1996 Interview Unedited video footage, **Moko** Productions, Auckland

through providing pathways for their own voices and the voices of our **tūpuna wāhine** and **atua wāhine**. The art of Robyn **Kahukiwa**, Jolene Douglas, **Paerau** Corneal, Gabrielle Belz, Diane Prince, **Kura Te Waru Rewiri**, June Grant and others exemplify **Mana Wahine**, as does the writing of **Roma Potiki**, Patricia Grace and Briar Grace-Smith; the poetry of Tracey **Tawhiao**, the film-making of **Merata Mita**, **Whetu Fala**, Eliza Bidois, Sharon Hawke; the **waiata** of **Whirimako** Black, **Kataraina Pipi**, **Moana Maniapoto**; **Mahinaarangi** Tocker; the weaving of Digger Te **Kanawa**, **Kahu Te Kanawa** and many other weavers across the **motu**; the **tā moko** work of Christine Harvey, the **mahi whakairo** of **Moewai** Terry, these are just some of the many **Māori** women who are active in the sharing of **Mana Wahine** through their works. They are works that have had a direct impact on how I see, feel and hear the world of **Mana Wahine**.