

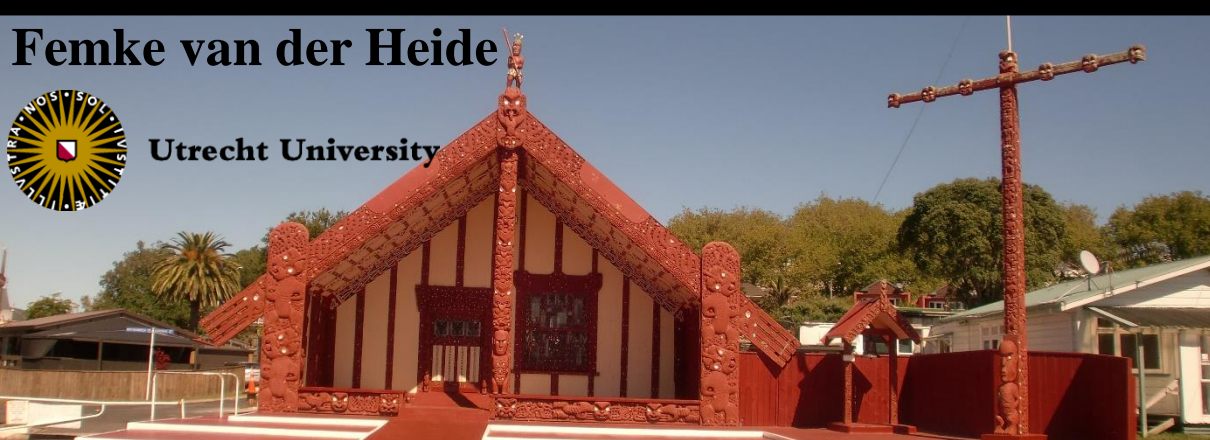
# Postcolonial Maori identities: Authenticity and Sincerity in Tourism Practices



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# Postcolonial Maori Identities:

## Authenticity and Sincerity in Tourism Practices

Bachelor thesis

Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology

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Academic year 2014-2015

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Photographs on cover, from the top down:

Overview of Ohinemutu. Taken by the author on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2015

Inside of the wharehuni at Te Katinga Marae, taken by the author on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2015

Maori performing at Whakarewarewa village. Taken by the author on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2015

Tama te Kapua wharehuni in Ohinemutu. Taken by the author on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2015



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## **Acknowledgements**

Doing my first anthropological research has been an amazing journey, with many ups and downs. I have seen so many places and I learned a lot about Maori culture, New Zealand, and anthropology. I have been overwhelmed by the help that I received from many people. I am so grateful to everyone that contributed to this project. Without your help, this thesis could not have come to its current form.

First, I would like to thank all of my informants who helped me when I was out in the field. Thank you Thomas, for supporting me throughout this process by taking me to Te Papa and showing me *kapa haka*, for sharing many interesting photos and videos with me, and for doing an interview for me on your radio show, The Torungapu Show on Te Upoko o Te Ika radio station. Thank you Pare and your husband, for welcoming me into your home, onto your *marae* and showing me around the village of Ohinemutu. I thoroughly enjoyed our dinners together. I am grateful to Josie, for allowing me to interview her and for taking me along on one of her Kia Ora guided tours of Ohinemutu. A big thanks to Maxine, Ann and Inia, for allowing me to interview you and for sharing your interesting views and information on the church, cultural performances, the museum and Maori culture with me. I am grateful to these and all the other people who helped me during my stay in New Zealand.

Many organisations have helped me in the process of doing research, so I would like to take the opportunity to thank these organisations and the people that run them. Thank you to New Zealand Maori Tourism, for enabling me to get a first grasp on Maori Tourism and for helping me find organisations in Rotorua to follow up on. A big thank you to Tamaki Maori Village, Whakarewarewa, The Living Maori Village and Mitai Maori Village, for allowing me to participate in your tours. I am grateful to the Mitai family for allowing me to interview two of their members, who shared their views and wisdom, as well as information on the organisation with me.

I would also like to mention St. Faith's Church in Ohinemutu, for I have been given the opportunity to participate in some of the Sunday morning services. I have been so warmly welcomed by the volunteers mending the door and am grateful for the talks I had with these lovely people, some of whom have given me the opportunity to interview them.

Thank you to my lovely roommates, Briar, Rachael and Stacey. Briar, thanks for welcoming me into your home. I am grateful to your family as well, as they all received me so warmly





and actively thought about ways to help me with my research. Rachael, thanks for the many dinners we shared and the wonderful afternoons we spent at the lakes. Stacey, thanks for the many laughs we had together. I am grateful that all of you took me out in and around Rotorua, showing me parts of New Zealand and sharing kiwi culture with me. I also loved our nights in watching the Bachelor. You gave me a home away from home.

I would like to thank my parents and friends, who supported me throughout the process of writing this thesis. Thank you mom, for the many Skype conversations we shared. Thanks Maud and Anne, for always being there for me, even when I was so far away. And thank you to my fellow anthropologist and friend Rozemijn, for helping me, offering your feedback and for the many conversations we shared.

Finally, I would like to thank my supervisor Fabiola Jara Gomez. Thank you for supporting me throughout this process, for being understanding and for helping me overcome some of the obstacles that have come onto my path during the process of doing this research. Your feedback and our conversations have brought me to new insights, allowing me to grow as an anthropologist and researcher. I am very grateful.

I thank all of you from the bottom of my heart,

Femke van der Heide

July 2015



## **Introduction**

Many tourists visit New Zealand every year, to view the beautiful landscapes the country has to offer and to experience Maori culture. Rotorua, a city that is located on the North Island of the country, is the vibrant centre of Maori tourism, as well as adventure tourism, attracting visitors every day of the year. The city features reconstructed pre-European Maori villages, where tourists can experience traditional Maori culture, as well as contemporary Maori villages, which tourists visit as well. For this research, I joined these tourists on their journeys, as I experienced Maori culture with them. I went beyond the tourist ventures, however, and visited Maori people at their homes, in their church and on their *marae*, which are complexes with a meeting house located on them. This thesis is the product of the ethnographic research that I conducted in the period from January to April 2015.

This research concerns how Maori identities are constructed and (re)shaped in contexts of colonialism, tourism and contemporary national relations between Maori and people of European descent, also known as *Pakeha*. It contributes to anthropological debates, particularly in the field of the anthropology of tourism, but its relevance goes beyond that particular field. The field of anthropology of tourism emerged relatively late (Wallace 2005). This has led this field to be undertheorized. It is not, however, atheoretical, as Watson and Kopachevsky (1994:644) note. This research is an expansion of available theory in the field of the anthropology of tourism, as well as a contribution to anthropological debates on Maori in New Zealand.

## *Methodology*

The aim of doing fieldwork is, according to the famous anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski, as follows: “to grasp the native’s point of view, his relation to life, to realise *his* vision of *his* world” (2012 [1922]:79). As an ethnographer, I have definitely pursued this goal. I always tried to understand my informants’ point of view. I wanted to know how they understand the world, how they live their lives and how they regard interactions with *Pakeha*. I also, however, wanted to keep the bigger picture in mind. I tried to include what I had read in my literature, as well as everything I learned during my stay in New Zealand in my thought processes.

I have applied several methodological techniques to collect my data. Perhaps the most well-known to anthropology is that of *participant observation*. Participant observation entails





participating in the daily activities, rituals, interactions and events of the research population (DeWalt & DeWalt 2011:1). I have applied this method on many occasions. Most of my general knowledge on Maori culture and of the language, I learned whilst applying this technique. I participated, for example, in guided tours at several Maori tourism ventures. Before I went on such a tour, I wrote down some main points that I wanted to pay attention to. During the tour, I took notes and some photos, as well as some videos during cultural performances. I then thoroughly wrote out the notes and I looked back at the photos that I took. Doing so helped me in taking steps forward during my research, for example in participant observation at other tours and with finding the right questions to ask during qualitative interviews. In addition to applying this technique during touristic tours, I applied it during Sunday morning services at St. Faith's Church in Ohinemutu, at a *kapa haka* festival, and at a *kapa haka* practice in an urban *marae* in Wellington.

Another technique that I applied, is that of conversing and informal interviewing. This is similar to everyday conversation. The researcher follows the informant's lead, but he or she might ask occasional questions to focus the topic, or to clarify points that he or she does not understand (DeWalt & DeWalt 2011:139). I applied this technique during daily encounters with my informants, for example when I visited St. Faith's Church in Ohinemutu during the week, to talk with the volunteers mending the doors, or when I was over for dinner at an informant's house. Moreover, I applied this technique on Facebook chat. One of my key informants, Thomas, lives in Wellington. During my stay in Rotorua, I often chatted with him on Facebook. I often used the opportunity to ask him questions about things that I had observed in the field, such as the *powhiri*, welcome, ceremony in tourist Maori Villages.

Finally, I have conducted qualitative interviews, both unstructured and semi-structured. In unstructured interviews, the researcher has a plan for the interview and he or she may have a topic list, but the researcher tries to exert as little control as possible over the interaction. Semi-structured interviews are, as the name suggests, a little more structured. The researcher works with a topic list and he or she may have some questions ready. The informant has a leading role and he or she has the chance to tell what comes to his or her mind, but the researcher makes sure that all topics are covered (DeWalt & DeWalt 2011:139). I have qualitative interviews mainly on tourism and land politics.

On several occasions, I have spent time with informants on a location that was relevant to my research. I have been guided through Te Papa, the national museum of New Zealand, through



the village of Ohinemutu and one of my informants showed me her *marae*. This technique of data collections falls into different categories. It is a bit of participant observation combined with some informal interviewing and perhaps, at times, even unstructured, or open, qualitative interviewing. I found these moments very useful for my research, because being at such a location helped my informants to tell their story with many illustrations available around us, and it helped me to ask relevant questions.

Whilst doing research, I always tried to listen to my informants as well as I could. Even though I knew what I wanted to learn, I was aware of the fact that for the most part, I did not know what information the field had to offer to me. By truly listening to my informants and by noticing the signs and clues they gave me, I was able to learn much about, for example, land politics and in particular land trustees. For me, this is the biggest challenge of anthropology. It is easy to ask the questions you already have, but new insights come from the answers that are given, without the researcher knowing the question. As a researcher I will always try to stay open for both my informants and myself.

An important part of being true and open to my informants, was to ask them if and how they wanted to be named in my research. When I asked them this question, many of my informants told me they wanted to appear under their real name. Therefore, many of the names in this research are indeed real. Naturally, people who requested otherwise, appear under a pseudonym. I have decided to only use first names for privacy reasons. I have also always asked informants' permission to record our interviews, in informal conversations I always mentioned the purpose of my stay in New Zealand, I requested permission to do my research at tourist organisations and when I participated in their programmes, I openly took notes. In my opinion, it was extremely important to tell and show people that I was doing fieldwork and writing down information I collected. I always wanted to make sure that my research was done under full consent of all parties. Many people I spoke with expressed a wish to see my results, so I have collected their E-mail addresses, and I will send it to them. Often times, it was mentioned to me that many researchers come to New Zealand, collect data, to be never heard from again. To me, this is very unethical. Therefore I will stick to my promise and send back the results, for Maori people, and in fact all people who participate in any research in any way, have the right to know what is being written about them.

Perhaps as a consequence of all the researchers that came and went without sending back any results, and because of the busy tourist season, I have experienced difficulties with getting in touch with Maori people and especially tourist organisations. At times, it felt as if I was standing still and not collecting enough data. See Appendix B for my reflection on the process of doing research. As a result of the difficulties I have experienced, I have only managed to conduct an interview with one of the three Maori tourism organisations that I have done fieldwork at, Mitai Maori Village. At my other two organisations, Tamaki Maori Village and Whakarewarewa, The Living Maori Village, I have only participated in the guided tour, and only once at every organisation. I am aware of the fact that this is not a lot, and that this research is by no means complete. It is simply based on too few experiences, too few interviews and too little data to base strong statements on. I have learned a lot in the time I have spent in New Zealand, but three months is simply too short. In addition to this, I, as an individual, have collected the data. It was my first fieldwork experience and I knew little about Maori culture before I arrived in the country.

I am aware that I must have influenced the results as a researcher, and I have attempted to make that clear throughout the document. I am inspired by postmodernists, who acknowledge that the image they present as an anthropologist will be incomplete and fragmented (Geuijen, Raven and Wolf 1995). Postmodernists strive towards making themselves, as researchers, visible in their writings. By doing so, they remind readers that the document is written by a biased individual (Barret 2009). I have made myself visible throughout the thesis, by stating that an informant explained something to me, or simply by using the word 'I'. However, this research is about Maori people, and not about me. For this reason, I have decided to write myself out some of the anecdotes or experiences I describe, such as the vignettes in the first two chapters.

Despite these shortcomings, I do believe this research is valuable. It provides readers with a new point of view on authenticity and how Maori culture is presented to tourists, as well as with information on national relations between Maori and *Pakeha*, New Zealanders of European descent. It reminds readers that globalization processes such as indigenous tourism are neutral interactions that take place between global and local forces. Such processes are not evils imposed on local actors, for these actors participate in these processes and apply them to their personal situation.



*This thesis*

In this research, some answers are given to the question how Maori identity is being constructed. It shows that identity is being constructed and (re)shaped in interactions. The research mainly focusses on tourism, but interactions between colonists and *Pakeha*, or New Zealanders of European descent, are also described.

The first chapter is a theoretical framework, in which the main anthropological debates on tourism are given. A main point is the introduction of the concept of sincerity, which will be explored and applied throughout the thesis. This concept is about interactions taking place between different actors. These interactions take place at a sincere level, with all parties participating. It allows us to understand changes that have taken place in Maori culture over the years.

The second chapter provides the reader with some context on New Zealand in general and tourism in the country.

In the third chapter, the field is mapped. A description of the organisations and villages where I have done fieldwork at is given, so the reader is aware of these and the differences between them.

The last three chapters are empirical chapters. In chapter four, concepts introduced in the first chapter, and the organisations introduced in the third chapter, will be combined. The organisations will be regarded from the concept of authenticity, after which the concept of sincerity will be applied. The chapter concludes that Maori identity is being shaped in interactions with tourists. As Maori people present their culture to tourists and sincerely interact with these international visitors, they learn about themselves. Their view on being Maori is (further) defined and their identity is being constructed.

Our forth chapter concerns national politics in New Zealand. It describes how policies went from assimilative in colonial times to bicultural from the 1980's on. Biculturalism means that two cultures co-exists, and both the European and Maori cultures are being respected. Then, two important parts of Maori identity, the language and land, will be regarded from a historical point of view, recognizing the changes that occurred as a result of changing national politics. These descriptions give insight into how Maori culture and identity have changed over the years, as a result of sincere interactions with colonists, the British Crown, the colonial government and finally the government of New Zealand.

In the sixth and last chapter, relations between Maori and *Pakeha*, New Zealanders of European descent, nowadays will be discussed. We will see that these relations have



improved, but are at times still of a difficult, and non-understanding nature. We will consider what interactions take place behind the scenes of tourism, in museums and in Ohinemutu, a Maori village that was not set up for business purposes, but is still visit by tourists. Finally, we will consider motivations for being engaged in tourism, as well as the strategic use of Maori culture in tourism.

The thesis concludes that Maori change within many interactions that take place. These changes do not, however, make them less Maori. Maori culture, like any other culture, is fluid and perceptive to change. The concept of sincerity allows us to recognize and respect those changes.

Finally, this thesis includes three appendices. I have attempted to translate or describe every Maori word that is used in the text. It may be the case, however, that I have not done so, or not done so clearly. Readers can then refer to appendix A for a glossary which includes all the Maori terms that are used in this thesis. In appendix B, I reflect on my experiences of doing research. Finally, in appendix C, I have included a summary of the thesis.



## **Chapter 1: Theoretical framework**

### *Tourism*

Our contemporary world is characterized by processes of globalization. One aspect of this globalization is the increasing mobility of the Earth's inhabitants: one can travel to the other side of the world fairly easy by taking a plane (Eriksen 2007). This increased mobility has resulted in a dramatic growth of the tourism industry, which is one of the world's largest industries, if not the largest (Smith 2005, Wallace 2005, Eriksen 2007). Many of the societies which have been well-known to anthropologists for the last century and in some cases even the centuries before that, are now also becoming known to the bigger public: the tourists (Wallace 2005).

The concept of tourism is hard to define, and it is striking that many authors who write on tourism do not give a definition of the concept. Therefore, I have taken the Oxford Dictionary as a starting point, which defines tourism as “the commercial organization and operation of holidays and visits to places of interest<sup>1</sup>”. Similarly, a tourist is defined as “a person who is travelling or visiting a place for pleasure<sup>2</sup>”. It is important to note, however, that these definitions are very narrow. They portray tourism as an industry, rather than as a concept which can be used in anthropological research. Anthropological authors underline the fact that tourism has diversified and that there is no such thing as a universal tourist, or a universal tourist experience. It is more correct to speak of a plurality of tourisms, as diverse forms of tourists and experiences exist (Eriksen 2007, Watson and Kopachevsky 1994). Watson and Kopachevsky (1994) illustrate this by showing that many conceptualizations of tourism can be found in anthropological and sociological literature. Tourism can, for example, be regarded as a search for authenticity, or as a pilgrimage, a play, a form of colonialism, a form of imperialism, a form of leisure, et cetera (Watson and Kopachevsky 1994: 644). In addition to this, it is fairly easy to distinguish several types of tourists. Some people prefer to go shopping in big cities, others travel to a hot summer destination and stay on the premises of their all-inclusive resort, and still others would do anything to not be regarded as a tourist and try to avoid touristic routes, such as backpackers. This last category can be regarded as ‘anti-

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/tourism>, last accessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 2015

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/tourist>, last accessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 2015





tourists' (Eriksen 2007:100). Anthropologists thus recognize the complexity of the concept of tourism, which explains why it is impossible to give a simple definition.

Tourism is constructed in the interaction between global and local notions and practices (Eriksen 2007, Appadurai 1996, Nash 2001). It is a process, which takes place in so-called tourism-scapes (Van der Duim et al. 2013). The term 'scape' has been coined by the famous anthropologist Arjun Appadurai. He suggests that our contemporary global cultural economy ought to be seen as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order (Appadurai 1996:50). He proposes a framework for studying the disjunctures in our contemporary world by looking at five global cultural fields: ethno-scapes, media-scapes, techno-scapes, finance-scapes and ideo-scapes. 'Scape' points to the fluid, irregular shapes of these cultural fields (Appadurai 1996:50). Tourism, too, is a function of the global cultural economy, characterized by its complexity. Tourism-scapes, then, are "actor-networks transgressing different societies and regions and connecting systems of transport, accommodation and facilities, tourism resources, environments, technologies, people, and organizations" (Van der Duim et al. 2013:7). By taking these scapes into consideration in our thinking, we recognize that tourism takes place in the complex interaction between the global and the local.

This interaction of the global with the local in tourism can be studied along different lines. On the one hand, researchers can contemplate the homogenization, industrialization and mass production in tourism. There is a global grammar of what requirements and criteria should be met in tourist destinations (Eriksen 2007). A swimming pool, for example, is a must in hot summer destinations. On the other hand, the glocal dimension of the interaction can be emphasized. Glocalization can be defined as the process in which "the pre-existing, local is fused with global influence; the particular merges with the universal to create something true to the universal grammar of global modernity, but at the same time locally embedded" (Eriksen 2007:86). Eriksen (2007) thus provides us with a term to characterize the interactions which take place in tourism-scapes as glocal.

We have thus far seen that tourism is a complex phenomenon. It has great effects on many spheres of the social lives from people from all over the world (Watson and Kopachevsky 1994). This is true for both the traveller and the host. Naturally, anthropology has sprung an interest in tourism. It is, after all, an essential fact of modernity and thus crucial to study ethnographically (Gable & Handler 2005:124). It did, however, take some time for the field of the anthropology of tourism to emerge: it has gotten its start in the 1960s and 1970s, and



has grown rapidly since the 1970s and early 1980s (Wallace 2005). Nowadays, tourism is discussed in the annual AAA (American Anthropological Association) meetings (Shepherd 2002:184), which shows that anthropologists regularly pay attention to the phenomenon.

“Taken in its broadest sense, the field [of the anthropology of tourism] deals with a transcultural, historically conditioned social process involving the generation of tourists, their processing, and the consequences of touristic actions for all involved” (Nash 2001:1169). In the field, the question of how global processes and influences interact with the local to produce tourism development is being answered (Nash 2001).

Shepherd (2002:183) notes that many researchers tend to begin with the notion of tourism as inherently bad, due to the cultural degradation it is claimed to cause. Wallace (2005:22) also notes this negative approach, and reminds us that tourism is neither inherently good nor inherently bad. Rather, it is neutral. Problems that may occur as a result of tourism, occur as a consequence of how it is employed within a specific context. Wallace’s approach matches the glocal approach Eriksen (2007) outlines, as it recognises that the local interacts with the global. To regard tourism as an inherently negative force that is imposed onto a local context, would be to ignore local agency. Therefore, in this research, tourism is regarded as a neutral concept that can have both positive and negative implications on all actors involved. How these implications evolve, is determined in the glocal interaction between the traveller and the host, which takes place in tourism landscapes.

### *Tourism in indigenous groups*

We have thus far seen that a plurality of tourisms exists (Eriksen 2007). The kind of tourism that is central to this research, is indigenous tourism. Indigenous tourism can be defined as “tourism activity in which indigenous people are directly involved either through control and/or by having their culture serve as the essence of the attraction” (Hinch and Butler 1996:3). As with tourism, a plurality of indigenous tourisms exists. One can think of cultural tourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism, gaming, resorts and other related services (Bunten 2010:285). The scope of this research is limited to indigenous tourism in which culture, in our case Maori culture, plays a key role.

When being exposed to tourism, cultural heritage has great potential for becoming a commodity. This potential can be recognized in the definition of indigenous tourism that we



have seen above: culture serves as an attraction (Hinch and Butler 1996:3). Proponents of a cultural erosion model of tourism even argue that the process of cultural commodification inevitably arises in areas where tourism flourishes (Shepherd 2002). Culture then becomes a commodified object (Ebron 1999). It can be argued that once cultural heritage is transformed into a tourist product, its cultural value is transformed into a commercial value. This process stimulates a reinvention of the past, in which tourism and cultural heritage function as a new form of cultural production that takes the past as its theme (Shepherd 2002:187-188).

Again, it is important to note that this commodification is not the consequence of a global force of tourism imposed on indigenous groups, but rather the outcome of the interaction between global and local forces. Indigenous people are active agents in the process of commodification. Bunten (2008), for example, describes the theory of self-commodification. This refers to the construction of a marketable identity product by an individual. This identity product is based on a set of beliefs and practices and is constructed in such a manner that the individual is not alienating him-or herself. Self-commodification involves any type of product performance that requires the individual to adjust his or her values and/or emotions to achieve an economic goal. Self-commodification can be seen in all kinds of contexts, such as in job interviews (Bunten 2008:381). Tourism productions are an example of self-commodification of indigenous groups. Related to the theory of self-commodification is the commodified persona. An example of a commodified persona is a tour guide, who actively shapes his presentation of self. He has a well-groomed appearance, hospitable manners, and he knows which stories to tell and what jokes to make (Bunten 2008:381).

A certain tension is inherent to indigenous tourism. On the one hand, the indigenous is portrayed as primitive, pure and living in harmony with nature. These same 'primitive' people are, on the other hand, consciously portraying themselves as described above: the theory of self-commodification applies to them. This tension is made explicit in MacGannell's concept of the ex-primitive. Ex-primitives are formerly primitive peoples who adapt to contemporary global forces by acting primitive for others. They are thus active agents, who consciously act as if they are primitive in order to achieve their goals. These goals can vary from making money, to sharing their culture, to getting support in their fight for identity rights (Taylor 2000, Bruner 2001).

By creating touristic sites, locations are changed into destinations (Logan 2009). Eriksen (2007:99) notes that tourist destinations are at least two places at one and the same time: they



are both a holiday destination and a local living place. Tourism becomes a production, in which the concept of authenticity is actively used to add value to the project (Bruner 2001, Logan 2009, Cavanaugh and Shankar 2014). The authenticity that is presented to tourists is thus often staged and can be produced in different forms, as will be further contemplated below (Bruner 2001). In the case of tourism, the 'plastic' world of the consumer is often seen as inauthentic, as opposed to the pure 'unspoiled' world of the indigenous, who lives in harmony with nature. In this search for authenticity, a distance is being created between tourist and native. The indigenous is now the pure and primitive Other, to whom a spiritual and physical authenticity is ascribed which can no longer be found in the 'materialist' West (Taylor 2000). Related to this, is the concept of 'New Age Primitivism'. This concept represents a situation in which objects come to represent an Other which is purely imaginative and no longer tied to any specific context, geographical, historical, or otherwise (Shepherd 2002:185). This situation results from, for example, tourists' purchase of souvenirs. These souvenirs lose all context when they end up on a shelf in a Western house. They represent an imagined Other, as the object becomes something 'those people over there' made and use. What the object is exactly used for, or in what contexts, often remains unknown (Shepherd 2002). Important in the context of indigenous tourism and souvenirs, is that what is shown to the tourists, is regarded as authentic. Authenticity will be further discussed below.

#### *Authenticity in indigenous tourism*

Authenticity is a widely discussed concept in anthropology and other social sciences (Taylor 2000). Many different definitions of the term exist and no definition is able to completely cover the different aspects and nuances that can be maintained within the term. In its simplest form, something that is authentic is real, original or genuine. There are, however, many different ways to measure what is 'real', 'original', 'genuine' or, ultimately, 'authentic'. Anthropologists share the view that there is not one true or authentic version or form of any culture. What can be regarded as authentic depends on the context in which it takes place: the time and space. Indeed, all cultures are real and authentic. However, by focussing on this view shared by anthropologists, we would miss the point of the discussion, which is about what tourists perceive as authentic (Bruner 2001).



Field (2009) distinguishes four kinds of authenticity, of which two will be discussed below. His article regards pottery and his distinction in authenticity is based on commodities. I argue that the two categories discussed below can be applied to tourism. Tourism is, after all, a commodity that is produced in the interaction between local and global forces in tourismscales, as we have seen above.

The first kind of authenticity Field mentions, is the *ethnographic authenticity*. The object is considered authentic when it accurately represents a bounded, named culture, cultural group, or cultural identity. The individual who made the object is irrelevant under this rubric (Field 2009:510). Applied to tourism, this would mean that the dance, village, souvenir or more broadly the entire touristic visit to a particular indigenous group would be regarded as authentic when it represents a particular group. This implicates that it is not relevant whether all the ‘performers’ of the touristic visit, or makers of the souvenirs, actually belong this particular group: the individual is irrelevant.

Field also distinguishes *authentic original high art*. In this case, the individual producer, with his or her identity and reputation, is very important. It is only the individual producer who can make a completely unique object, a masterpiece (Field 2009:511). Perhaps this can most easily be compared to famous paintings: an exact replica of Van Gogh’s *Starry Night* will not be considered authentic, as it is not the master himself who painted it. Again, this category can be applied to tourism. What is presented on the tourists’ visit will be considered as authentic if it is actually presented by the indigenous people themselves. It is only members of the group that can perform the dance or create the souvenir in an authentic way.

In the distinction between these categories, we find two different ways of defining what is authentic: it is either about the product representing a group (ethnographic), or it is about the performer himself (high art). When considering the concept further, we can distinguish more forms of authenticity.

Taylor (2000), for example, argues that what is original or authentic, is often equated with the past, or the traditional. I label this as *traditional authenticity*. Indigenous groups are often presented as frozen in time, as if nothing has changed in their primitive way of life and they are, thus, authentic. This is an essentialist view (Kottak 2011). Several reference points in time can be taken to define what is authentic. One can, for example, look at the pre-colonialization era, colonial times and postcolonial times (Taylor 2000, Bruner 2001). Each era represents different values which will be magnified in the touristic practice. Regardless of



what exact reference point is taken, one tries to reproduce something of the past, which is considered as the traditional way of life. Authentic, then, is a correct reproduction of this past.

Another category that can be distinguished, is what I call *ideal image authenticity*. In this case, one does not reproduce something of the past, but instead an ideal image of the contemporary situation is produced. In Kenya, for example, the main value in post-independence times is a unification of all different nations that live in the country. Indigenous groups will then be presented as Kenyan, rather than as for example Maasai (Bruner 2001). This image of Kenyan nationality is an ideal and does not necessarily correspond with how individual Kenyans perceive the country and their identity. It is thus an idealized image, produced by amongst others the Kenyan government, of how authenticity in Kenya should be defined.

The last category that will be distinguished, is what I call the *globalized image authenticity*. In this case, one regards something as authentic when it corresponds to their image of how it should be. Bruner (2001) explains that American tourists who have made the journey to Africa to experience African culture, actually encounter American cultural content that represents an American image of African culture (Bruner 2001:893). Consider, for example, the phrase ‘Hakuna Matata’, which is Swahili and was made famous by the movie *The Lion King*. Tourist productions then focus on repeating the phrase very often, as it has become a familiar phrase with a new meaning for the tourists (Bruner 2001). In this category, the indigenous group is thus not presented in the way they lived in the past or the way they live now, but rather in the way they are being presented in global images. We see that space, place and culture are not isomorphic, for culture crosses any type of boundary (Gupta and Ferguson 2014 [1992]). It enters a global field of interaction, where the phrase *hakuna matata* is not bounded to one culture or place, but rather is a global phenomenon.

Different kinds of authenticity imply different relations between indigenous people and tourists. In *traditional authenticity*, an imaginative Other is created: the indigenous becomes the primitive, frozen in time. This can be juxtaposed to the effect of *globalized image authenticity*, which is that the distance between host and traveller is narrowed. The spaces of the indigenous and the tourist merge, as aspects of their ways of life are merged in mutually understood globalized images. It becomes irrelevant where something originated from and a





new shared view is created. Thus, in this form of authenticity, the distance between Us and Them is narrowed (Bruner 2001).

We have thus far seen that interactions between global and local forces take place in tourismscales. In indigenous tourism, we see great potential for cultural heritage being commodified. Indigenous people do have agency in this process, as they are self-commodifying subjects that actively use their heritage in order to achieve their goals. The self-commodification that takes place, can result in different forms of authenticity. Some of these forms have been described above, but more categories can certainly be defined. The point is not, however, to define every possible category, but rather that different forms of authenticity exist. These different kinds are produced in the interaction between local and global forces.

#### *Strategic use of cultural heritage and identity politics*

In indigenous tourism, cultural heritage is strategically used to achieve different goals. A goal can be to make money, as has been described in the discussion of commodification. We do, however, often find another layer and a deeper motivation for presenting indigenous culture. Many indigenous people are engaged in identity politics, in which they defend their group identity as well as the cultural content of this identity (Eriksen 2007). In 1982, the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations (WGIP) was formed. This group meets annually and has representation from all six continents. They have formulated several documents, including the Declaration of Indigenous Rights, which support cultural diversity and indigenous empowerment. Such declarations and documents have influenced governments, NGOs and international agencies, including the World Bank, to express greater concern for indigenous peoples and to adopt policies that benefit these peoples. The term indigenous has been adopted as a self-identifying political label based on past repression, but now legitimizing a search for social, cultural and political rights (Kottak 2011:386). Many indigenous people also fight for land rights with accompanying political autonomy (Eriksen 2007:147). See, for example, the case for the Guaraní Indians in Bolivia. They have organized themselves politically and are demanding radical changes to the structured inequalities in Bolivian society (Postero 2007).

Indigenous people have been described as defending themselves and their identity against globalized external dominance (Eriksen 2007:147). Tourism can be regarded as one of those



global forces, associating indigenous peoples with a romanticized past, while marginalizing them in the present (Kottak 2011:386). Again, this would be to only consider the global in the global interaction. Indigenous people can strategically use global phenomena, like tourism, in their fight for identity rights. Juris (2008) describes how movements against corporate globalization form transnational networks and use the internet in their battle. They thus actively use certain global features, such as the internet and networks, to fight a particular consequence of globalization they are against, namely the capitalist and corporal aspect. In a similar way, indigenous people can use tourism in their fight for identity politics.

Tourism functions as a significant mediator in shaping the narratives of indigeneity (Logan 2009:406). Bunten (2010:288-289), for example, describes that indigenous tour guides had to respond to the same questions, often based on stereotypes, every day. They often felt as if they were 'selling out' culture. However, their work felt empowering most of the time. Being a tour guide gave them the opportunity to disregard incorrect stereotypes and to tell their own stories from native points of view. They had the opportunity to learn more about their own heritage and ultimately felt great pride in their indigenous identities. Tribal leaders were aware of the potential for political, financial, and cultural benefits of participation of tourism. At the same time, they are cautious and try to prevent cultural degradation (Bunten 2010:289). This shows that indigenous peoples are indeed active agents, as has been argued above.

Tourism, then, can actively be used by indigenous people in their political fight for rights and autonomy over their land. By showing tourists their culture and by carrying out their values, indigenous people create a certain awareness. Awareness is the first step in making a change, and as more tourists become convinced of the value and importance of indigenous groups every day, governments are being pushed to recognize indigenous groups. This recognition pairs with political reforms in which indigenous groups are regarded as citizens and given a voice in national politics. When looking at tourism in this way, perhaps the authenticity of the tourist experience becomes less important. Instead, it makes more sense to regard the sincerity of the practice. Sincerity offers the basis for a shift in moral perspective. In this view, the value of indigenous tourism does not lie in it being 'authentic', in whatever form, but rather in the interaction that takes place between traveller and host. Tourists and hosts are encouraged to 'meet half way' (Taylor 2000:8-9). Indigenous people are eager to show travellers their way of living and to carry out their values. They are not simply puppets of



global forces, but instead choose whether and how to engage in tourism. Authenticity exists in many shapes and forms and can be produced in various ways, but perhaps it is most important that the tourist experience is sincere.



## **Chapter 2: Context; tourism in New Zealand**

### *Maori in New Zealand*

This research took place in New Zealand. The country has a population of about 4.5 million, of which 74,6% is of European or Other descent, 'Other' includes New Zealanders. 15,6% is of Maori descent, 12,2% of Asian descent, Pacific peoples comprise 7,8% of the population and, finally, 1,2% of the population is of Middle Eastern, Latin American or African descent<sup>3</sup>. Maori arrived on the northern island in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century<sup>4</sup>. Upon arrival, they are said to have seen a long white cloud. This is why the Maori name for New Zealand is *Aotearoa*, which is commonly said to mean 'land of the long white cloud'<sup>5</sup>. The term 'Maori' emerged when the British arrived in the nineteenth century. It is used to describe a collection of different tribal people, who have come to form one group. *Pakeha* is the Maori term for Anglo-New Zealander, or for any New Zealander who is originally of European descent (Thomas & Nikora 1996).

### *Maori tourism*

I regard any touristic practice in which Maori culture is prominent as Maori tourism. It is important to note, however, that Maori are also involved in tourism that does not involve Maori culture, such as in cafés and restaurants, hotels and touristic outings such as whale watching. All these forms of tourism can be regarded as Maori tourism as well<sup>6</sup>. In the theoretical frame, we have seen that a plurality of tourisms exists. We have also observed that even within one of the many forms of tourism; indigenous tourism, different practices can be distinguished. This is true for Maori tourism as well: there is great variety in experiences of Maori culture that is available to tourists (Taylor 2000). Maori are involved in tourism in many different ways: their initiatives can be focussed on entertainment, arts and crafts, history, the display of artefacts, et cetera. Maori culture is also presented in many different forms: we find 'marae visits', museums, guided tours, 'heritage trails', 'cultural experience evenings' and many more practices (Barnett 1997:472, Taylor 2000:15).

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<sup>3</sup> New Zealand in Profile 2015, [http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-in-profile-2015.aspx](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-in-profile-2015.aspx), last accessed on 25 June 2015

<sup>4</sup> New Zealand in Profile 2015, [http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-in-profile-2015.aspx](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-in-profile-2015.aspx), last accessed on 25 June 2015

<sup>5</sup> Thomas, informal conversation, 25 January 2015

<sup>6</sup> Interview with New Zealand Maori Tourism, 30 January 2015



Maori tourism began almost as soon as the first colonizers arrived. In the 1860's and 1870's, when tourism in New Zealand was formalised, Maori were romanticized as primitives, or historical noble savages (Barnett 1997:471). Here we see the image of the exotic primitive Other, which has been discussed in the theoretical frame. Maori initially provided accommodation and tours, but this was gradually taken over by *Pakeha*, or people of European descent. As Maori tourism was taken over by *Pakeha*, Maori were not consulted as to how they wished to present their culture. Rather, they were stereotyped into guides, carvers and entertainers. There was also very little commercial benefit to Maori in these touristic practices (Barnett 1997:471). In 1886, Mount Tarawera erupted, destroying the famous Pink and White Terraces which used to be a main tourist attraction. The destruction of these terraces which were located in the Rotorua area, led to a shift of focus to the Whakarewarewa thermal valley and the village of Ohinemutu. These tourist attractions will be described below. In addition to this, in 1908 a thermal bath house was built in Rotorua, which attracted more tourists<sup>7</sup>.

In 1989, the *New Zealand Tourism 2000 conference* was held. Here, it was recognized that the bicultural uniqueness of New Zealand is one of the country's strengths: Maori culture is indigenous and unique to New Zealand. This and other strengths, like New Zealand's beautiful nature, were to be emphasized in tourism, as they have enduring appeal to visitors. This new point of view on Maori culture has led Maori to demand control over Maori tourism and the use of cultural artefacts and images in promotion (Barnett 1997:472). Maori experienced the *Pakeha* presentation of their cultural heritage as inauthentic. Tourism in itself, however, is not seen as a threat to cultural values, but rather as genuine interest. Maori wish to undermine *Pakeha* inauthentic representations of their culture and to provide their own image of Maori culture (Taylor 2000:15-16). Exactly this issue of control is the biggest concern for many Maori, and Maori are increasingly taking matters into their own hands. This goes both for local communities and larger tourism operators (Barnett 1997:473, Taylor 2000:15).

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<sup>7</sup> Rotorua museum, visited on the 8 April 2015

### Chapter 3: Mapping the field; Rotorua

My fieldwork took place in Rotorua, a city on the northern island of New Zealand. Rotorua is famous for its geothermal activity and the Maori culture that is prevalent there. The city offers many tourism ventures, mostly Maori tourism and adventure tourism. For this research, I have participated in tourist visits to three cultural tourism ventures: *Mitai Maori Village*, *Tamaki Maori Village* and *Whakarewarewa, the Living Maori Village*. In addition to this, I visited the village of Ohinemutu. An introduction to each of these initiatives will follow.

#### *Tamaki Maori Village*

Tamaki Maori Village is a reconstructed pre-European village, which was built for tourism purposes. The business was set up by two brothers, Mike and Doug Tamaki, in 1989<sup>8</sup>. One of my informants, Thomas, told me that originally, the cultural performances took place on his family's *marae*. This, however, caused problems at times, for example when the *marae* was needed for meetings or *tangi*, funerals<sup>9</sup>. That is why it was decided to build a new village, so the business could flourish without interrupting daily Maori life. By now, Tamaki Maori Village has grown to become a big family business, employing over 150 Maori staff<sup>10</sup>. The adult entrance fee for the cultural evening programme that Tamaki Maori Village offers is NZ\$110<sup>11</sup>.

The village is located outside the city of Rotorua, so the evening experience starts off with a bus drive. The bus is referred to as a *waka*. *Waka* are canoes on which Maori first arrived in *Aotearoa* New Zealand, the bus drive to the village symbolizes this journey. During the drive, tourists are encouraged to pick one male from the group to be the chief, who will then play a key role in the following *powhiri* welcome ceremony. This ceremony, in which both parties show to come in peace, is performed prior to the guests' entrance to the village. In the village, tourists are guided along different *whare*, or houses: the house of *haka*, the house of *poi*, the house of fun and games, the house of weaving, the house of exercise and the house of *ta moko*. Two Maori are positioned in front of each traditionally built *whare*, where they briefly introduce the topic and actively involve the tourists. After visiting the different houses, visitors are invited to view the lifting of the *hangi*; food that is cooked underground is

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<sup>8</sup> Information sheet handed out at Tamaki Village's Information Centre

<sup>9</sup> Informal conversation with Thomas, 29 January 2015

<sup>10</sup> Information sheet handed out at Tamaki Village's Information Centre

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.tamakimaorivillage.co.nz/pricesbookings>, last accessed on the 25 June 2015





unburied and shown to the tourists. One by one, trays filled with potatoes, *kumara* or sweet potatoes, chicken and lamb are lifted from the *hangi* pit. These are now taken into the kitchen, where the final preparations for the buffet take place. Next up on the evening programme is a cultural performance. A group of about eight Maori performers steps onto the stage. Their performance includes *haka* and *poi* dance, partly accompanied by the guitar, partly sung a cappella. The group also shared a love story of how their direct ancestors met and shared their lives together, which was followed by a love song. Finally, the tourists viewed a short film on Maori culture. After the performance, the guests are led into the dining hall. They enjoy a buffet with the foods lifted from the *hangi*, along with several side dishes and a dessert. Finally, the guides give a word of thanks, and in turn, the tourists thank the hosts and the people working back stage for the evening. The male guests get the opportunity to perform a *haka* once again and some songs are sung. At the end of the night, the guests are dropped off at their accommodation<sup>12</sup>.

### *Mitai Maori Village*

Mitai Maori Village is similar to Tamaki Maori Village. This village, too, is reconstructed pre-European and the activities offered during the cultural evening experience are quite similar to those offered at Tamaki. Performers from the Mitai family used to be employed at Tamaki village, but in 2002 the family decided to set up their own business.<sup>13</sup> The business has just under a hundred employees, mostly consisting of family, friends and relatives of Maori descent.<sup>14</sup> The adult fee for the cultural evening experience at Mitai Maori Village, is NZ\$116.<sup>15</sup>

The cultural evening starts with a pick-up from the tourists' accommodation. Upon arrival at the village, a guide, dressed in black company clothing, welcomes everybody and teaches the visitors the word *kia ora*, or welcome. He then proceeds to provide them with some general information on the evening, Maori culture and the Rotorua area. He requests the tourists to pick a male chief to represent their *tribe of many nations*. Visitors then view the lifting of the *hangi*, the food that was cooked in a pit underground. The foods that are offered, are *kumara* or sweet potato, potato, chicken and lamb. After viewing the *hangi*, visitors are taken to the

<sup>12</sup> The description above is based on my participant observation of the tour at Tamaki Maori Village on 14 March 2015

<sup>13</sup> Interview with two members of the Mitai family, 27 March 2015

<sup>14</sup> Interview with two members of the Mitai family, 27 March 2015

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.mitai.co.nz/book-now/>, last accessed on 29 June 2015



small river in the bush to see a traditional *waka*, or canoe, paddled by eight male warriors, pass by. The tourists are then led to the area where the cultural performance would take place. This performance area consists of a stage, on which a pre-European Maori village is built, with a campfire burning in the centre. In front of the stage, rows of chairs are placed for the tourists to take place on. The show starts with a *powhiri* welcome ceremony, in which the selected Chief is included. This ceremony is concluded by both parties singing a song. When it is established that the visiting tribe comes in peace, the programme is continues. Between different acts, the performers take the time to tell the audience stories about Maori culture and traditions. First they perform a *haka*, after which they show some of the instruments they use. For each instrument, the performer asks the audience to repeat the Maori word for it after him. The performers also show the audience a Maori stick game, weapons, *ta moko* tattoos and *poi* dance, explaining the visitors about these as they go along. When the cultural performance comes to a conclusion, the guests are led into the dining hall, where they enjoy the *hangi* which has been revealed before, with some side dishes and a dessert. The evening concludes with a guided bush walk, where visitors get the opportunity to see native bush, glow worms, medicine, food and a cold water spring. After this walk, tourists get on their busses to be driven back to their accommodation<sup>16</sup>.

#### *Whakarewarewa, the Living Maori Village*

Whakarewarewa differs from Mitai and Tamaki villages. This village was not built for tourism purposes, but about 25 Maori families actually live in it. The people of this village have been welcoming visitors for over 200 years, since the early 1800's.<sup>17</sup> A guided tour starts every hour, and there are two cultural performances per day. During the cultural performance, traditionally dressed Maori perform *haka* and *poi* dance, whilst interacting with the audience. Both the cultural performance and the guided tour are included in the NZ\$35,- adult entrance fee.<sup>18</sup> Visitors have the option of buying a *hangi* meal in the local café and there are several gift shops in the village.

The guided tour starts with a short introduction to Maori culture and language, after which tourists enter the village. First, they view some old *wharepuni*, or sleeping houses, which are

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<sup>16</sup> The description above is based on my participant observation in the evening programme at Mitai Maori Village, 20 February 2015

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.whakarewarewa.com/About+Us.html>, last accessed on 30 June 2015

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.whakarewarewa.com/shop/Bookings/Whakarewarewa+Tour.html>, last accessed on 30 June 2015



not in use any longer. The houses in which the villagers live today are modern houses, similar to many houses in the city of Rotorua. Geothermal activity is this village's life source, as is shown in the cooking and bathing areas. After viewing these areas, the guide takes the group up on a platform from which the three active geysers near the village are viewed. The tour then goes on into the village and onto the *marae* with its *wharenuī*, or meeting house, and its two churches, Anglican and Catholic. Families are divided over these churches, but this does not influence village relations negatively. Whilst walking around and viewing these buildings, the guide takes time to tell the tourists about them and the carvings they are decorated with, *ta moko* or tattoos, the *haka* warrior dance, *poi* dance, some weapons and the Treaty of Waitangi. The tour ends on another viewing platform, again overlooking the geysers. The guide sings his guests a song to say goodbye, and ends his tour with the following quote: "Ki mai koe ki a au, he aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata! He tangata! He tangata!", which means: "If you should ask me what is the most important thing in the world? It is people! It is people! It is people!"

Tourists now can take the time to stroll around the village by themselves. They have the option of visiting one of the gift shops in the village, of going to the local café to buy themselves a *hangi* meal, or of going to the cultural performance. A group of five traditionally clothed women and three men provide the cultural performance, which starts with the customary Maori greeting *kia ora*. A *powhiri* welcome ceremony is then performed, although tourists are not asked to appoint a chief or to participate in it. *Haka* and *poi* dance are performed, and a traditional Maori stick game is played. In addition to this, some of the songs feature Maori weapons. After performing some traditional songs, the group sings a song in honour of two ancestors who fell in love, but who were never to see each other. Love won and they settled here in the Whakarewarewa village. The performers are some of their direct descendants. After this, the audience is asked to join in and sing and dance to a Maori children's song which serves to teach them the names of different body parts. The show is concluded with one last *poi* dance. After the show, the performers encourage the audience to take a photo with them.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> The description above is based on participant observation of the guided tour and cultural performance in Whakarewarewa Village on 25 March 2015



### *Ohinemutu*

Finally, I have done fieldwork in Ohinemutu village, located in Rotorua at the lakeside of Lake Rotorua. Ohinemutu is not a tourism venture and there is no entrance fee, but tourists are allowed to visit the village to take a look. The village, which is rich in geothermal activity, is quite small, and only Maori families live in it. There are a few *marae*, two churches, and a gift shop in the village, but there are no schools or other shops. Ohinemutu is mentioned on several websites<sup>20</sup>, but villagers themselves do not advertise it. Some tourism initiatives include Ohinemutu in a guided tour, which at times leads to frustration among villagers, as we will discuss in the third chapter.

Ohinemutu was already established when European settlers first came to what is now the Rotorua area. The villagers welcomed these settlers and gifted land for them to build the township on. In addition to this, tourists were welcomed in locally run hotels that Ohinemutu featured.<sup>21</sup> Even though many of these hotels have now lost their glory and are not in use any more, the village is still visited by tourists daily. A main attraction is the Anglican St. Faith's Church. This unique church which has been established in 1914<sup>22</sup> is completely decorated in Maori style, with carvings, weavings and paintwork. It features, for example, an image of Jesus, wearing a traditional Maori feathered cloak. In addition to this, Sunday service in this church is bilingual, combining Maori hymns and prayers with English ones. Other churches in New Zealand – even those in Maori villages – are built in European styles, making St. Faith's one of a kind and thereby making Ohinemutu a popular tourist destination.

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<sup>20</sup> See, for example, <http://www.newzealand.com/nieuw-zeeland/feature/ohinemutu/>, last accessed on 5 July 2015

<sup>21</sup> Informal conversation with John whilst walking through the village, 2 April 2015

<sup>22</sup> Booklet on St. Faith's Church, bought in the church.







**Figure 1:** Performance of the *powhiri* ceremony at Tamaki Maori Village<sup>23</sup>



**Figure 2:** old *wharepuni* in the geothermally active Whakarewarewa Village<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Taken by the author the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2015

<sup>24</sup> Taken by the author on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2015





## Chapter 4: Maori tourism

*As all of the tourists are lined up in front of the entrance gate to the village, the guides tell Dylan, the appointed Chief, what to do. After a while, the sound of someone blowing on the 'putatara', a musical instrument made from a conch shell, emerges from the village. Then, male and female voices can be heard chanting and a warrior appears on the square. He is traditionally dressed in a grass skirt and has a feathered cloak draped over his shoulders. His right arm features a tattoo, and another 'moko', or tattoo, is painted on his face. He carries a 'taiaha', a long spear decorated with feathers. This weapon represents an ancestor. He swings the weapon, making quick movements. Whilst doing so, he takes steps towards Chief Dylan and does 'pukana', staring wildly and poking his tongue. All of a sudden, he runs off and the next warrior appears. He too quickly moves around, swinging the 'taiaha' and intimidating our chief and tribe. After he disappears, the third and last warrior emerges from the village. He has a fern leaf in his hand, which serves as a 'take' or peace token. He places the 'take' on the ground, halfway between himself and Chief Dylan, whilst swinging his 'taiaha'. Dylan remains completely still, as he was instructed to. The other two warriors return to the square, swinging their weapons and doing 'pukana', bulging their eyes and poking their tongues. All chanting voices from the village die out and the warriors remain still. Dylan gets a sign from the guide that he can now proceed to pick up the 'take', the peace token. He comes forward and slowly bends down to pick it up, keeping eye contact with the warriors. Then the two parties perform a 'hongi' greeting, in which they press their noses together. It has been confirmed: the tribe of tourists comes in peace.<sup>25</sup>*

### Introduction

In this chapter, we will see how Maori identity is being constructed, reshaped and redefined in interaction with tourists. In order to do so, we will consider authenticity and study Tamaki and Mitai Maori Village through this concept. We will then shift our focus to some important Maori cultural values, which form a significant part of Maori cultural identity. How these values are presented in tourism practices will be shown. Once the reader is familiar with these values, the concept of sincerity will be introduced. This concept offers a starting point, from which Maori identity construction and the shaping of cultural values takes place. This concept of sincerity will then be applied to Whakarewarewa, the Living Maori Village. We will conclude that Maori identity is partly constructed in sincere interactions between tourists

<sup>25</sup> Participant observation at Tamaki Maori Village, 14 March 2015



and Maori performers. The vignette above illustrates this argument. It describes a *powhiri* welcome ceremony, performed at Tamaki Maori Village. In this ceremony, the tourists and performers show that they come in peace and a bond of friendship is sealed between the two groups. Interactions between tourist and performer take place on a sincere level through this ceremony.

### Authenticity

Tourism initiatives such as Mitai and Tamaki Maori Village often stress that they offer an authentic experience. On the information brochure of Mitai Maori Village, for example, it says that it is “an authentic traditional Maori experience”. We have seen several forms of authenticity in the theoretical framework above. It can be argued that Maori culture is seen as *traditionally authentic*. Maori culture as presented in Mitai and Tamaki Maori Villages is seen as authentic, because it is regarded as a correct reproduction of the pre-European, or pre-colonial, past. A feature of this kind of authenticity is, as we have seen above, that the indigenous group is presented as frozen in time. I would like to note, however, that both Mitai and Tamaki villages stress that the way of life that is presented, was their ancestors’ way of life. During the evening performance at Mitai Maori village, for example, the traditionally dressed performers joked that nowadays, they have a McDonalds around the corner. The guide also told us to enjoy the show, recognizing that the performance was a show and therefore not necessarily accurate for Maori everyday life nowadays.<sup>26</sup>

This leads us to consider other categories of authenticity. We have discussed, for example, *globalized image authenticity*. This category entails that something is regarded as authentic, when it corresponds to the tourists’ image of how it should be. Images of how it should be are created in globalization processes, as has been described in the theoretical framework. Maori, for example, are famous for their *ta moko*, tattoos. These tattoos are indeed an important aspect of Maori culture and many Maori do have such a tattoo. Yet, facial tattoos are not as common as one might expect. In Mitai and Tamaki Maori Villages, however, the performers choose to use make-up to paint *ta moko* on their faces. Even though they tell the tourists that these facial tattoos are painted on, they do confirm an existing stereotypical image.<sup>27</sup> Taylor

<sup>26</sup> Participant observation at cultural evening experience at Mitai Maori Village, 20 February 2015, and Tamaki Maori Village, 14 March 2015

<sup>27</sup> Participant observation at cultural evening experiences at Mitai Maori Village, 20 February 2015, and Tamaki Maori Village, 14 March 2015



(2000:22) argues that often repeated images of Maori in, for example, brochures and postcards, are certified, duplicated and returned with new found validity to tourists in such evening experiences. The existing image of Maori as an Other, perhaps even an exotic Other, is then confirmed for these tourists. The image of a traditionally dressed Maori and covered in *ta moko* tattoos remains (Taylor 2000:20).

We have seen that Mitai and Tamaki Maori Village might fall into the categories of *traditional* and *globalized image* authenticity. We will consider Whakarewarewa, The Living Maori Village in more detail later in this chapter. An important aspect of Maori identity and therefore also of Mitai, Tamaki and Whakarewarewa Village, are Maori cultural values. These values are considered as an authentic part of Maori identity. Some of these values are described below.

### *Cultural values*

In the presentation of Maori culture to tourists, several cultural values can be distinguished. These cultural values, seen and presented as rooted in pre-European Maori culture, are regarded as part of authentic Maori culture and as important to live by. The first of these values is *manaakitanga*, which means hospitality or warmth. It is important to feed guests both mentally and physically. This is done by sharing food and knowledge and by entertaining guests with a cultural performance. This value is often named in tourism ventures' brochures. Consider, for example, the sentence: "Enjoy the hospitality of our Mitai family and receive a warm welcoming from our Maori maidens."<sup>28</sup> The value of *manaakitanga* is put into practice in Tamaki and Mitai Maori Village by including a *hangi* meal in the evening programme. In Whakarewarewa village, the guide emphasized that the villagers were being hospitable by allowing tourists to walk in their backyards<sup>29</sup>. Additionally, in all the three tourism ventures that I visited – Mitai, Tamaki and Whakarewarewa villages – great emphasis was put on the phrase *kia ora*. This means 'hello', 'welcome' and 'good health to you'. By greeting someone with this phrase, the speaker signifies that they wish the best for their conversation partner. In everyday life I often observed the value of *manaakitanga* being put into practice, as I was always offered a cup of tea or even food when visiting informants' homes, and I have been invited over for dinner on several occasions.

<sup>28</sup> Brochure, Mitai Maori Village

<sup>29</sup> Participant observation at the guided tour at Whakarewarewa village, 25 March 2015



Another important value, is the value of *whakapapa*, or genealogy. This value is expressed in many aspects of daily Maori life. *Whakapapa* is intertwined with the values of *whanau*, family, *hapu*, subtribe or a group of extended families, and *iwi*, the tribe.

In tourism ventures, the value of *whakapapa* is strongly expressed. Consider the fact that Mitai<sup>30</sup> and Tamaki<sup>31</sup> Villages are family companies. Also, Whakarewarewa is set within a village, in which about 25 extended families are settled<sup>32</sup>. This shows that family is important to these Maori, as the very businesses themselves are set up by families. In addition to this, cultural performances at these ventures often include a story or song about ancestors. At Whakarewarewa village, for example, the performers told us about two of their ancestors who fell in love, but whose families did not approve of their love at first. Love won, of course, and these ancestors started a family of their own. The performers are some of their direct descendants. They then proceeded to sing a song about this love.<sup>33</sup>

The value of family seems to have symbolic importance as well. It does not always matter whether one is actually your direct family. Many people start Facebook status updates with “*Kia ora, whanau*”, or “welcome, family”. Maori also often call each other ‘cous’, short for cousin, even when they are not first cousins. When I asked Thomas about someone he called cous, he replied: “He’s not my first cousin, but we might be more distantly related. If we would sit down and take the time for it, we could probably figure it out”<sup>34</sup>. When two Maori meet for the first time, they often try to find a connection between them. The first question will be where they are from. They will ask whether the person knows any people that they know from around there and this questioning goes back and forth, until a connection is found.<sup>35</sup>

The honouring of ancestors also comes back to this value of *whakapapa* or genealogy. The remembrance and honouring of ancestors is done through storytelling. This storytelling can be done verbally, but also through music and arts. Songs performed during *haka* and *poi*

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<sup>30</sup> Participant observation at Mitai Maori Village, 20 February 2015

<sup>31</sup> Participant observation at Tamaki Maori Village, 14 March 2015

<sup>32</sup> Participant observation at Whakarewarewa Maori Village, 25 March 2015

<sup>33</sup> Participant observation at Whakarewarewa, the Living Maori Village, 25 March 2015

<sup>34</sup> Informal conversation with Thomas, 5 April 2015

<sup>35</sup> Interview with an employee of New Zealand Maori Tourism, 30 January 2015



dance, often tell the story of a person or event<sup>36</sup>. Meeting houses represent the body of an ancestor, often of a chief or a captain of a *waka*. The carvings inside the meeting houses represent ancestors who were related to the person the house is dedicated to<sup>37</sup>. *Tukutuku* panels with weavings on them, too, tell stories. These patterns, which are often placed in meeting house, can be symbols for stars, fish, checker boards the Europeans brought with them and much more. A pattern that is often seen in meeting houses and also in St. Faith's church in Ohinemutu, is a staircase. This pattern represents *whakapapa*, with each step being a new generation.<sup>38</sup> Josie, an inhabitant of Ohinemutu, commented on how she feels when she enters the church:

“Just being in there, with all the carvings and *tukutuku* panels, we're being nurtured as we feel the cloak of our ancestors. Every time we go in there to pray, we feel that. It's an alive place; the walls are alive, the carvings are alive. Everybody who put up those carvings and those *tukutuku* panels, they are all there. We feel their presence.”<sup>39</sup>

The value of *utu*, or reciprocity, is also of great importance. This value creates an obligation to be hospitable. When one has been warmly welcomed, they are expected to welcome others back into their home. This tends to escalate: on every occasion more is given. *Utu* can also be negative, leading to revenge.<sup>40</sup> In tourist visits to Maori Villages, guests are expected to show interest and to participate in the activities, in return for the efforts that the performers put into the evening. In Tamaki Maori Village, for example, tourists are guided along several *whare*, or houses. In each of these houses, tourists are actively involved. In the house of *haka*, for example, the male tourists are taught a short *haka* war dance. In the house of *poi*, the females are invited to practice *poi* dance. In the house of fun and games and the house of exercise, both male and female tourists are invited to join in and to briefly experience the Maori way of life.<sup>41</sup> At Whakarewarewa Village, tourists are asked to join in during the cultural performance. Everybody is asked to stand up and dance along to a Maori children's song, which serves to teach the names for different body parts.<sup>42</sup> Finally, at both Mitai and Tamaki Maori Villages, the group of visitors is asked to appoint a chief from their midst. The group is

<sup>36</sup> Participant observation at a kapa haka group in an urban marae in Wellington, 2 February 2015

<sup>37</sup> Participant observation at Whakarewarewa Maori Village, 25 March 2015

<sup>38</sup> Informal conversation with Pare at St. Faith's Church in Ohinemutu, 27 March 2015

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Josie, 12 April 2015

<sup>40</sup> Information obtained from the Rotorua Museum, 8 April 2015

<sup>41</sup> Participant observation at Tamaki Maori Village, 14 March 2015

<sup>42</sup> Participant observation at Whakarewarewa, The Living Maori Village, 25 March 2015



then asked to participate in the *powhiri* welcome ceremony.<sup>43</sup> Consider, for example, the vignette above. All of these kinds of audience participation are a form of reciprocity. Maori people expect tourists to pay attention and to actively participate in the programme, in return for their efforts.

Finally, the value of *mana* is important. *Mana* is a spiritual force which exist in people, places, animals and objects. It is related to the values named above, as it can be received through those values. *Mana tupana* is the *mana* received from ancestors, *mana tangata* is *mana* received through personal qualities and *mana atua* can be received through a connection with Gods and by spiritual power. Being hospitable can enhance *mana*, so when two groups or persons are hospitable to one another, *mana* of both parties is enhanced. It is also possible for *mana* to be taken away, which is what happens when the value of *utu* or reciprocity comes in the form of revenge. Generally, chiefs and spiritual leaders have much *mana*<sup>44</sup>. *Mana* helps us to make sense of the values described above. It is, after all, ancestors, hospitality and reciprocity that can enhance this spiritual power.

Life forces are expressed in tourism ventures through their cultural performances. An essential part of *haka* and *poi* performances are a movement of the hands, which can perhaps best be described as waving or shaking. With these movements, *mauri* is expressed. *Mauri* is a life principle, the essential quality and vitality of a being or entity. It is expressed through the movement of the hands, for where there is movement, there is life.<sup>45</sup>

We are now familiar with some of the main Maori values, which are a crucial part of Maori cultural identity. In the following section, we will consider how these values are being constructed in interactions with tourists.

### *Creating cultural values in sincere interactions*

Many Maori find the origins of the cultural values described above in their traditional pre-European culture. Even though these values might indeed be historically grounded, it is

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<sup>43</sup> Participant observation at cultural evening experience at Mitai Maori Village, 20 February 2015, and Tamaki Maori Village, 14 March 2015

<sup>44</sup> Information obtained from the Rotorua Museum, 8 April 2015

<sup>45</sup> Participant observation at Whakarewarewa, The Living Maori Village, 25 March 2015



important to note that these values have been shaped in interactions, with for example British colonialists in the past and tourists now. Identity is formed in interaction. It is not private and fixed, but rather public and negotiable (Eriksen 2010:71). Hanson (1989:890) discusses the construction of identity, stating that traditional culture is more of an invention constructed for contemporary purposes, than it is a stable heritage from the past. Anthropologists often participate in this process of creating culture. Maori culture and thereby Maori identity are constructed in interactions with different parties. One of these parties is formed by tourists, as has been argued in this chapter. The construction of an image of an essential Maori Other, is not only done by, for example, Europeans. Maori themselves participate in this construction as well, in amongst others in tourism ventures (Taylor 2000:21). As we have seen above, often repeated images of Maori, for example dressed in traditional clothing and covered in *tamoko*, tattoos, are confirmed in tourism ventures. The existing image of the Maori thus remains, leaving the Maori as an Other, perhaps even viewed as exotic.

Recognizing that an essential image of the Maori Other is created, may lead us to question whether the practices at tourism ventures are authentic or not. The mere observation that the image is *created* and that the identity is *constructed* causes friction with many ideas about authenticity. We have seen earlier that in *traditional* authenticity, something is seen as authentic because it is a correct reproduction of the past. Identity, however, is constructed in interaction. The cultural values described above, too, have been constructed and (re)shaped through interaction. This observation may lead us to the conclusion that *traditional authenticity* is impossible to achieve. Cultural identities change, and even when one aims to reproduce something of the past, this reproduction is influenced by contemporary contexts. A similar question may be asked for *globalized image authenticity*. This category of authenticity suggests that something is seen as authentic, because it corresponds to a globalized image of the group. This image in itself, however, may not be 'real' or authentic. We have thus reached some obstacles in our analysis. Taylor (2000) suggests another way in which issues like these can be regarded, and I follow him in this. This other way is through the concept of sincerity, which will be discussed and applied to Whakarewarewa, The Living Maori Village below.

### *Sincerity*

The notion of sincerity is, as we have seen in the theoretical framework above, significantly different from the notion of authenticity. It does not seek to confirm an essential image of an





Other as ‘real’ or ‘fake’. Instead, the notion of sincerity is grounded in interaction between the participating groups. It is about being true to oneself as a means, rather than as an end. In the interaction between Maori and tourist, negotiation, rather than objectification, takes place. By employing this notion of sincerity, the boundary between who is on display and who is consuming the event may be blurred (Taylor 2000:23-24). This is done, for example, in Tamaki Maori Village. Tourists are asked to participate in the event, for instance by learning a *haka* war dance, or by participating in a Maori game<sup>46</sup>. This can be seen as a form of reciprocity, which is one of the cultural values we have observed above. In both Tamaki and Mitai Maori Village, tourists are asked to select a chief from their midst, who will then represent them in the *powhiri* ceremony. Turning the group of tourists into the *tribe of many nations*, allows them to enter a hybrid space in between being a tourist and being a Maori performer<sup>47</sup>. In such sincere interactions, Maori culture is being redefined and reshaped. Sincerity may be seen as a means through which authenticity can be redefined in terms of local values (Taylor 2000:24). Maori identity, then, is created in sincere interactions with tourists. This allows Maori people to change, for it is impossible to remain exactly the same. The issues with authenticity we saw above, can now be regarded from a new perspective. It is no longer a problem that authenticity and authentic images are created in globalized interactions. These interactions are, after all, the core of identity construction. The point is that the interactions are sincere: a genuine interest from both parties to teach and learn is recognized.

This new point of view allows us to understand tourist practices at Whakarewarewa, The Living Maori Village. It seems hard to place this village under one of the categories of authenticity that we have distinguished earlier. The village is not a pre-European construction: the houses the villages live in are modern. Yet some of the old *wharepuni*, or sleeping houses, remain. In addition to this, the villagers still make use of the communal geothermal bathing and cooking areas.<sup>48</sup> This raises questions regarding the village’s authenticity. It is clearly not *traditionally authentic*, because it is not a reproduction of the past, even though the past is still visible. It is also not necessarily *globalized imaged authentic*. The villagers mainly show their daily lives. They do not paint on facial *ta moko* as

<sup>46</sup> Participant observation at Tamaki Maori Village, 14 March 2015

<sup>47</sup> Examples obtained from participant observation at Tamaki Maori Village, 14 March 2015, and Mitai Maori Village, 20 February 2015

<sup>48</sup> Participant observation at Whakarewarewa, The Living Maori Village, 25 March 2015



is done in Tamaki and Mitai Villages, but they do perform the well-known *haka* war dance. Others might argue that Whakarewarewa Village is authentic in the narrowest sense of the term: it is real, because it is not a reproduction.

I argue, however, that whether or not the tourist experience Whakarewarewa offers is authentic, is not important. When we decide to step away from this discussion and consider it from the point of view sincerity offers us, we see Maori people interacting with tourists. We see how they live a Maori life in a contemporary world, whilst participating in the economy through tourism. They do make a living of it, and profit from the tourism business financially. But there is more to it. They allow tourists to enter the village every single day, and they have allowed them to do so for over 200 years. They sincerely want to share their culture with visitors, and they wish to interact with them. It is within and through these interactions that Whakarewarewa, both as a living village and as a tourism venture, has come to its current shape.

The same goes for Tamaki and Mitai Maori Villages, and I imagine for other Maori tourism practices as well. Villages such as Tamaki and Mitai do not necessarily show a contemporary Maori way of life, but rather choose to portray pre-European times. It might not be relevant to show the contemporary Maori. When I asked Josie<sup>49</sup> and Maxine<sup>50</sup> whether they would find it important for tourist ventures to portray Maori today, they answered that the contemporary Maori is evident everywhere. Tourists meet Maori every day, for example in shops. Considering this, and the fact that Maori cultural capital mostly lies in their past, we see that it makes sense to present pre-European culture to tourists. Yet these portraits of pre-European culture are shaped by current contexts and interactions. Whether or not these portraits are completely historically correct and therefore authentic, is, again, not the point. It is about sincere interactions, in which Maori identity is being shaped.

A conversation I had with Inia, a performer at Te Puia, another touristic venture in Rotorua, illustrates his sincerity as a Maori performer. He named several motives for working there. The job provided him with some pocket money on the side, which allows him to share his culture whilst earning money. The work enables him to learn about his own culture and it is a good place to develop skills and confidence. On the interaction with tourists, Inia expressed that he sees that they are eager to learn, and that they are genuinely there to have an

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<sup>49</sup> Interview with Josie, 12 April 2015

<sup>50</sup> Interview with Maxine, 30 March 2015



experience. He finds it important to remember that, because as Maori performers, Inia and his colleagues are leaving an impression on tourists. The experience of the performance, is what tourists take home and what they will remember about Maori people in general.<sup>51</sup> Again, we see that Maori culture and the presentation of it is formed in sincere interactions between tourists and Maori people. Different factors are at play, such as earning a living and entertaining tourists.

### *Conclusion*

Whilst striving towards an authentic experience remains important for both Maori people and tourists, it is not the task of the anthropologist to decide whether or not these experiences are indeed authentic. In order to move forward from this debate of authenticity, the concept of sincerity has been introduced. This allows us to understand and give meaning to changes that have occurred to Maori culture over the years. Maori identity is defined through interactions. These interactions take place with tourists, as we have seen in this chapter. In the next chapter, interactions between Maori and European settlers, the Crown, the colonial government and later the government of New Zealand will be discussed.

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<sup>51</sup> Interview with Inia, 5 April 2015





**Figure 3:** inside of St. Faith's Church in Ohinemutu<sup>52</sup>



**Figure 4:** sign in front of Whakarewarewa, The Living Maori Village<sup>53</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Taken by the author, taken on the 20<sup>th</sup> of the March 2015

<sup>53</sup> Taken by the author, taken on 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2015





## Chapter 5: From assimilation politics to a policy of biculturalism

*It's almost nine o'clock on Sunday morning as the church slowly fills up. People are warmly greeting one another, as they take place on one of the wooden benches. The church has all the characteristics any church would have. The back wall features a stained glass window, on which Jesus Christ is portrayed. The altar is positioned in front of it, on which two white burning candles and a cross are placed. Yet, this church has something special. The altar is covered in Maori weavings, as well as all the walls, which are decorated with 'tukutuku' panels. These 'tukutuku' panels have weavings on them, creating several patterns. Each pattern symbolizes something, such as 'whakapapa' or genealogy, stars, checker boards or fish. One of the windows in the church features an image of Jesus with a feathered cloak draped over his shoulders. Lastly, the wooden benches that everyone has by now taken place on, are decorated with carvings, representing ancestors. As the service is about to start, everyone stands up. The church fills with voices singing a hymn in 'te reo Maori', or the Maori language. Then, everyone sits down again to grab their prayer book of Aotearoa New Zealand. Its left pages feature prayers in 'te reo Maori', whilst its right pages are in English. The minister starts by saying prayers in English, but soon his glance shifts to the left page to continue in Maori. The service continues with a reading from the Bible in the English, after which another Maori hymn is sung. The group continues its Sunday morning prayers, occasionally interrupted by a joke or funny anecdote. As the service comes to a conclusion, everyone is called forward to perform the weekly Holy Communion, a ritual of eating bread and drinking wine, which represent the body and blood of Christ. After one last hymn, everyone leaves the church chattering. It's time to drink a cup of tea.<sup>54</sup>*

### Introduction

In this research I aim to find how Maori identity has been and is being constructed, (re)shaped and (re)defined in interactions between Maori and other actors. The British colonists and later the Crown, the colonial government and finally the government of New Zealand are relevant actors that Maori have interacted with. In this chapter, we will consider some of the main politics and events that have contributed to Maori identity today. First, changing national policies from assimilative to bicultural will be discussed. Then, these changing politics will be illustrated with discussions about *te reo Maori* and the land. We will

<sup>54</sup> Vignette based on participant observation at the Sunday services at St. Faith's Church, Ohinemutu, Rotorua, 29 March 2015 and 5 April 2015



consider how these changing politics relate to Maori identity and its cultural values. The chapter concludes that these interactions, too, have shaped Maori identity. The vignette at the beginning of the chapter describes a typical Sunday service at the Anglican St. Faith's Church in Ohinemutu, Rotorua. It serves to illustrate how two cultures – European and Maori – have flown together into a whole, as the building has features of typical European churches, but is decorated in Maori style. In addition to this, the service is bilingual. The church can be seen as an emblem of biculturalism. It shows that contemporary Maori cultural identities include European features, which originate from sincere interactions that have taken place in the past and are still taking place today.

### *Assimilation politics*

When the British first arrived in New Zealand, they held a politics of assimilation. The vision was to create one culture, European in form. In order to achieve this, it was necessary to look for similarities between Maori and European, to allow for the two cultures to become one, or rather for Maori culture to become European (Hanson 1989:894). A main event that has taken place in light of these assimilation politics, is the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. This agreement was signed between a representative of Queen Victoria of Britain and a number of chiefs of the majority of Maori tribes (Rata 2005:268; Rosenblatt 2005:113). After this initial signing, representatives of the Crown took several copies of the Treaty around the country, gaining the signatures of about 500 chiefs (Rosenblatt 2005:113). Many of the tribes in Rotorua, that originate from Te Arawa *waka*, didn't sign the agreement at first, but in the 1860's they signed a document that states that they recognize the treaty.<sup>55</sup>

In the Treaty of Waitangi, it was guaranteed that Maoris would have “the unqualified exercise of their chieftainship over their lands, villages and all their treasures” (Dominy 1990:11). The treaty reflected an attempt by British authorities to assert some control over the shape and nature of colonization, as this promised chieftainship would be achieved under British ruling. The colonial government was founded on the basis of this treaty (Rosenblatt 2005:113). New Zealand as a state is still obligated to follow the agreements that have been made in the Treaty of Waitangi. Paradoxically, the signing of this treaty might partly explain why there has been relatively much recognition of indigenous culture in New Zealand. There

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<sup>55</sup> Participant observation at Whakarewarewa Maori Village, 25 March 2015. Interview with Josie, 12 April 2015





has been, for example, much less public recognition of aboriginal claims in Australia than of Maori claims in New Zealand (Smits 2014:45). Any talk of sovereignty, Maori or otherwise, eventually comes around to what was agreed in the Treaty of Waitangi (Rosenblatt 2005:113). The treaty can be interpreted in different ways, which explains that discussions about the document are still being held today. Two versions of the treaty have been made: an English one and a Maori one. In addition to this, concepts described in the Treaty may be interpreted differently in Maori and British culture. Unfortunately, the Treaty has been violated by the colonial government, in terms of both versions – the Maori and the English (Rosenblatt 2005:114). After the signing of the Treaty, land wars broke out from the 1860's to the 1890's, because the government violated the document.<sup>56</sup> The New Zealand government recognizes these violations. Consider, for example, the following citation on the history of New Zealand. It has been obtained from the government-issued *New Zealand in Profile 2015*:

“In 1840, 500 Maori chiefs and representatives of Queen Victoria signed the Treaty of Waitangi. New Zealand became a British colony and many settlers arrived. However, government sometimes broke promises to protect Maori rights, which led to conflict between some Maori tribes and British and colonial troops. After this, Maori had much of their land taken.”<sup>57</sup>

We see, thus, that early interactions between Maori and British settlers have led to assimilation politics, the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, conflict and the violation of rights. In the 1980's, another rhetoric was applied by the government: that of biculturalism.

### *Biculturalism and Mana Maori*

Biculturalism is the coexistence of two cultures. In the context of New Zealand, these two cultures are *Pakeha*, or European, and Maori. The term biculturalism was first introduced to the context of New Zealand in the 1960s by anthropologist Erik Swimmer. He used it to refer to the fact that Maori wanted to stay Maori and preserve their culture (Rosenblatt 2013:145). It was not until the 1980s that the New Zealand government recognized this and began to support Maori desires to stay distinct. Before that time the government handled a

<sup>56</sup> Visit to Te Papa, New Zealand's National Museum with Thomas, 29 January 2015. Informal conversation with John, 2 April 2015

<sup>57</sup> New Zealand in Profile 2015, [http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-in-profile-2015.aspx](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-in-profile-2015.aspx), last accessed on 21 June 2015



politics of assimilation, as we have seen above (Rosenblatt 2013:145; Thomas & Nikora 1996). Biculturalism became the dominant rhetoric of nationalism in New Zealand in the 1980s and 1990s (Rosenblatt 2013:145). When we consider the vignette at the beginning of this chapter, we see biculturalism embodied in a church. The two cultures came together, forming a European church, decorated in Maori style. This church was built in 1914, which reminds us of the fact that changes do not occur suddenly. Biculturalism did not appear out of the blue in the 1980's, the movement has been underway for a much longer period of time.

Bicultural politics paired with a Maori movement called *Mana Maori* (Maori Power) or *Maoritanga* (Maoriness). The goal of this movement was to secure a favourable place for Maori in the nation that was being built in New Zealand (Hanson 1989:894). Their image of a future New Zealand was one of a bicultural society. In such a bicultural society, Maori and *Pakeha* are equals, economically, socially and politically. This means that Maori culture, in its distinctiveness, would be respected as equally valid to *Pakeha* culture. In order to achieve such a recognition, the *Mana Maori* movement stressed the unique contribution that Maori culture has made to national life in New Zealand. Instead of focussing on similarities, as was the means for assimilation politics, in biculturalism and this *Mana Maori* movement, the focus is on differences (Hanson 1989:894).

We are now familiar with policies and ways of thinking held and applied by the colonists, the Crown, the colonial government and later the government of New Zealand. Next, we will consider how these different ways of thinking have influenced an essential part of Maori culture and identity: *te reo Maori*; the Maori language.

### *Te reo Maori*

*Te reo Maori*, or the Maori language, serves to illustrate how politics in New Zealand have changed over time. Soon after the British colonist arrived, they introduced the written language. Up until that point Maori language was exclusively oral.<sup>58</sup> History was communicated through myths and stories, carvings, weavings and paintings. This can still be seen today, as meeting house embody ancestors, and *tukutuku* panels located within these *wharehau* represent, for example, European checker boards, or a species of fish which was of

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<sup>58</sup> Participant observation at Whakarewarewa Maori Village, 25 March 2015.



great importance.<sup>59</sup> Maori language, which is a significant part of Maori identity, has been reshaped in interaction with colonists, as the written language was created.

During the time of assimilation politics, the government decided to only teach in English.

Maxine explained to me that in school, she was discouraged to speak *te reo Maori*:

“In my days, it was discouraged [to speak the language] and in the early days they weren’t allowed to speak Maori at all, even though that was their first language. When they went to school, pupils were instructed not to speak Maori on the school grounds. Or else they were punished. It was strict. But they were speaking the only language they knew. They went to school to learn another language.”<sup>60</sup>

This provides an explanation for the fact that many Maori today do not fluently speak the language. According to New Zealand Statistics, 23% per cent of Maori speak *te reo Maori* fairly well or better.<sup>61</sup> Many Maori do not speak *te reo Maori* in everyday life, but they do tend to replace English words with Maori words in regular sentences. An example is the sentence “Let’s have a *korero*”, which means “Let’s have a conversation”. Maxine expressed that this discouraging or even forbidding of Maori to speak their language, may partly account for the fact that some Maori have experienced difficulty with keeping up in educational institutions. This may then have led to problems with finding employment and to financial issues.<sup>62</sup>

With politics of biculturalism, the Maori language was recognized as one of the three national languages in New Zealand, the other two being English and New Zealand sign language.<sup>63</sup> In correspondence with what the *Mana Maori* movement aims to achieve, there seems to be a trend among Maori to learn the language and to teach it to the next generation. Therefore, pre-schoolers often go to ‘language nests’, where they get accustomed to sounds of the Maori language.<sup>64</sup> Some parents speak Maori to their infants, before teaching them English. For adults, several-day meetings take place, where the language is taught.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Informal conversation with Ann, 27 March 2015

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Maxine, 30 March 2015

<sup>61</sup> New Zealand in Profile 2015, [http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-in-profile-2015.aspx](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-in-profile-2015.aspx), last accessed on 21 June 2015

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Maxine, 30 March 2015

<sup>63</sup> New Zealand in Profile 2015, [http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-in-profile-2015.aspx](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-in-profile-2015.aspx), last accessed on 21 June 2015

<sup>64</sup> Participant observation at Whakarewarewa Maori Village, 25 March 2015

<sup>65</sup> Informal conversation with Pare, 29 March 2015



*Te reo Maori* is also strongly integrated into the cultural experiences tourism ventures offer. In Mitai and Tamaki Maori Village, the guides and performers ask guests to repeat every Maori word they use. Both evenings would start with the words “*Kia ora! Can you all say: kia ora?*”, after which the audience would repeat the words. This structure of saying a word in the Maori language and then asking the tourists to repeat it would be continued throughout the evening.<sup>66</sup> At Whakarewarewa, The Living Maori Village, our guide started the tour with a short lesson on *te reo Maori*. He too started the tour with the greeting *kia ora*, after which he asked the tourists to pronounce the full name of the village, which could be read from a sign that was placed in front of the gate to the village. The full name is ‘Tewhakarewarewatangaoteopetauaawahiao’. This means: ‘the uprising of the war party of Chief Wahiao’. The guide then used this sign to explain us more about the structure of the language, noting, for example, that it only consists of fourteen letters, all of which are included in the full name of the village.<sup>67</sup>

We see, thus, that attitudes towards the language have changed over the years. Many Maori people today do not speak the language as a result of assimilation politics. There is a movement, however, of Maori learning the language and teaching it to the youngest generations. The current attitude towards Maori language is also expressed in tourism, as ventures take the time to teach visitors some words. Next, we will consider how land politics have changed in light of the changing national politics from assimilative to bicultural.

### *The significance of the land and selling it*

Many New Zealand politics and claims on the Treaty of Waitangi revolve around land. It is important to recognize the value that Maori people attribute to the land, and the connection that they feel to it. People live off the land: it provides them with food, medicine and everything one needs to survive. In the Rotorua area in particular, which is so well-known for its geothermal activity, the land gives people the opportunity to steam cook their food and to bathe in natural hot pools. The land is the basis of life and therefore the basis of development. Maori belong to the land, as they express in the saying *I am my river and my river is me*<sup>68</sup>. Maori do not regard themselves as owners of the land, but rather as caretakers of the land.

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<sup>66</sup> Participant observation at Tamaki Maori Village, 14 March 2015, and Mitai Maori Village, 20 February 2015

<sup>67</sup> Participant observation at Whakarewarewa Maori Village, 25 March 2015

<sup>68</sup> Informal conversation with Sarah, 26 January 2015



The land, after all, is forever. It has always been there and will always be there<sup>69</sup>. Taking care of the land, is taking care of future generations. Every generation that comes after owns the land.<sup>70</sup>

This belonging to the land and being part of it, makes the selling of land complicated. However, Maori have sold land in the past, for several reasons. On many occasions it has had to do with the Treaty of Waitangi and the forced selling of land, but other factors have been at play. Josie described to me that in the Rotorua area, land has been sold as a consequence of the eruption of Mt. Tarawera in 1886. People living there were forced to move as the eruption left much land destructed. Some of these people then moved to Whakarewarewa. In order to be able to make this move and to create a new livelihood, they were forced to sell land. The government did not support these people, or compensate for the loss of land they had endured as a consequence of the eruption. Therefore, selling parts of land unaffected by the eruption was, at that time, their only option.<sup>71</sup>

Even though land has been sold in the past, and may still be sold today, many of my informants wish to keep and preserve it. Maxine, for example, commented on families moving away from the village of Ohinemutu and selling their land: “When you sell your land, what do you come back to? And what do you leave your children? It’s all very well to teach them who they are, their cultural identity, but you have to have land so they know where they stand. It’s part of them.”<sup>72</sup>

We see, thus, that the land is an essential part of being Maori, and therefore of great importance to Maori identity. Circumstances have led and may still lead Maori people to sell their lands, but many now strive towards preserving it. These changes that have occurred towards selling or keeping land are in line with the changing political environment we have discussed above. Land has been sold as a consequence of assimilative politics and the Treaty of Waitangi, but in light of biculturalism and the *Mana Maori* movement, land is now mostly kept. Next, we will discuss the history of Maori gifting land to European settlers in the Rotorua area.

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<sup>69</sup> Interview with Maxine, 30 March 2015

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Josie, 12 April 2015

<sup>71</sup> Interview with Josie, 12 April 2015

<sup>72</sup> Interview with Maxine, 30 March 2015



### *Gifted land*

When Europeans first came to the Rotorua area, the village of Ohinemutu was already established. Maori living there have gifted a lot of land for township development. Whenever I discussed the land and land issues with informants, they would point out that the city centre of Rotorua was built on Maori land, which they gifted when the settlers arrived.<sup>73</sup> When land was gifted, it was gifted for certain purposes. Josie told me, for example about the hill behind Ohinemutu village. The villagers of Ohinemutu gifted this hill to be used as sports fields. It has been used for that purpose, but when the First World War broke out, accommodation was needed for wounded soldiers. It was then decided to change the sports fields into a hospital area. This had to be done by parliament act, for the original agreement was to use the land for sports fields. The hill is still home to a hospital today. “But”, Josie said, “if at any time it stops being a hospital, that land comes back to the people”.<sup>74</sup>

However, these agreements have not always been followed, and sometimes the government has attempted to change the purpose of the land without consulting the Maori people who gifted it. In Rotorua, for example, Maori gifted a piece of land to build a railway station on. When it was decided to remove the station, Maori claimed the land back, whilst developers were deciding on what to do with that piece of land next<sup>75</sup>. “Gifted doesn’t mean that it’s yours to keep forever and ever”, Maxine once explained to me.<sup>76</sup> Josie also commented on that, stating that “The land was gifted to build a railway station on. If you don’t need the station anymore, the land comes back to us”<sup>77</sup>. This issue in particular has been resolved through a leasing agreement. Now, there is a mall on the land, and shop holders pay lease money to Maori. The Maori divide the income that is generated from this amongst the community.<sup>78</sup>

There has been and still is much confusion and frustration over land that has been gifted. The roots of these confusions lie in the different interpretations that Maori and the government have of what it means to gift something. The government reckons that land that is gifted, is

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<sup>73</sup> Interview with Maxine, 30 March 2015, Interview with Josie, 12 April 2015, Informal conversation with John, 2 April 2015, Informal conversation with Pare, 2 April 2015

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Josie, 12 April 2015

<sup>75</sup> Informal conversation with John, 2 April 2015

<sup>76</sup> Interview with Maxine, 30 March 2015

<sup>77</sup> Informal conversation with Josie, 13 April 2015

<sup>78</sup> Informal conversation with John, 2 April 2015



theirs. Maori, however, are of the opinion that they need to be consulted first if the government wants to change purposes of the land. At times, gifted land has even been sold by the government. Many claims on the Treaty of Waitangi are over issues like these.<sup>79</sup> Even though gifting land has led to problems, Josie emphasized that Maori take pride in gifting land. On the hospital, she commented the following: “We all know that that’s our land. So that is something that gives you pride. To know that our people had so much foresight in gifting a lot of these lands, that we weren’t really giving things away”.<sup>80</sup> By gifting land, Maori have invested in future generations. The hospital, for example, has been in use for many years, and the whole community benefits from it being there.

When we study the history and views on gifting land described above, we can distinguish several cultural values which have been discussed in the first chapter. First of all, Maori have been hospitable by gifting land to European settlers, for them to build the township of Rotorua on. Their motives for doing so, partly lie in their consideration for future generations. At the same time, the current generation takes pride in the earlier ones, who foresaw the importance of gifting the land. The value of *whakapapa* or genealogy is confirmed. In addition to this, Maori expect a reciprocal relationship when gifting land. They gift land, and expect their community to be able to benefit from it. They also expect receivers of the land to consult them before making big decisions, such as changing its purpose or selling it. Just as is the case with tourism, it is very likely that the emphasis on the values named above has been result of these sincere interactions with European settlers, the Crown, the colonial government and finally the government of New Zealand. In interactions such as these, Maori might have seen that their culture and what they value differs from European views. This, then, may have led them to emphasize the cultural values named above. These values are then also expressed in tourist ventures, where they are further moulded and reshaped.

Maori land has thus been gifted, in order to build the township of Rotorua, for the whole community to benefit from. Maori have also claimed land that has unrightfully been taken in violations of the Treaty of Waitangi. Pieces of land that have been claimed back are often run by trustees. We will now further look into these.

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<sup>79</sup> Interview with Maxine, 30 March 2015

<sup>80</sup> Interview with Josie, 12 April 2015





### *Land trustees*

Many pieces of Maori land are controlled by a committee of trustees. These trustees manage the land, which means that they decide if and how to invest in it and how to distribute the income they receive from it. Before making any big decisions, trustees will generally call a meeting with the *hapu*, or subtribe, so their plan can be presented and people can vote on it. On many occasions, earnings are equally distributed among the community by giving out grants, such as health or educational grants. Around Rotorua, several trustees hand out grants to schools, which means that every schoolchild living in the area benefits from the money earned, regardless of their descent. Adolescents that go to college, can apply for educational grants at trustees of any piece of land that their direct family has a claim on. Most Maori youth can apply for several grants, some of which are about 100 dollars per year, others are higher. For some grants all students have to do is apply, after which they will receive the money. In other cases, students have to go to, for example, information meetings on Maori culture. This is a way in which trustees aim to keep Maori culture alive.

Pare, one of seven trustees of a piece of land, told me the story of the trust fund that she is part of. The piece of land her trust manages, used to be under control of the governmental organisation Maori Affairs, which seemed to be governing *for* Maori, rather than *with* them. They managed big parts of Maori land, but the community did not benefit from it. Pare's father and some other members of the *hapu* claimed the land back. It was hard to get the land back from Maori Affairs, and when the first trustees finally received it, it had a high debt on it. This first trustee decided to use the piece of land to plant trees on, which they later sold to a wood chopping company. After many years of managing the land, the group was able to pay off the debt and make a profit on the land. Part of the profit was then directly distributed among the community, and part of it was invested. Now the trustee owns buildings in town as well, from which they earn rent. The trustee has a stable income, and they continue the trend of investing and giving back to the community. Pare's grandchildren, as direct descendants from someone who has a claim on the land, can apply for the student educational grants that the trustee gives out. Once all the applications are in, the trustees equally divides the amount of money reserved for educational grants among the students. Because her husband has claims on some pieces of land as well, Pare's grandchildren can apply to several grants, which gives them the opportunity to go to college. By equally dividing the money over the schools and students that apply, many people are touched and much is given back to the



community to benefit from<sup>81</sup>. The claiming back of land and managing it in committees consisting of trustees, can be seen as a way in which the *Mana Maori* movement continues its work today. We see, also, that the Maori values we distinguished earlier, can be recognized in the practices of the trustee. The trustee makes sure to consult the community before making big decisions, and all profit earned is distributed as equally as possible amongst the people who have a claim on the land. There is a balanced, reciprocal relationship between trustees and the community.

Once Maori land is given back, however, issues are not always resolved. I was, for example, taking a day trip with one of my roommates, a young woman of European descent. “Do you see that mountain over there?” she asked me. “It used to be open to everybody. We used to hike up there, the view is amazing. A few years ago they gave it back to Maori, now nobody is allowed on it anymore. I understand that Maori want to protect the land, but closing it off completely isn’t the only way to do that.”<sup>82</sup> We see thus, that tensions between Maori and *Pakeha* still occur, as a result of cultural differences. We will further explore these relations in the next chapter.

### Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen how Maori identity has been and is being constructed in interaction with British colonists, the Crown, the colonial government and later the government of New Zealand. We have seen how policies changed from assimilative, with the signage of the Treaty of Waitangi as a main event, to bicultural, with the upcoming of the *Mana Maori* movement. We have considered how attitudes towards *te reo Maori* have changed over the years, leading it to become an increasingly important part of Maori identity. This is then also expressed in tourism ventures. Finally, we have considered land politics. We have seen that land that has been gifted is in line with Maori values, which has led us to consider how these values as part of Maori identity have been shaped in interactions with the parties named above. We have also seen that Maori land that was claimed back is managed by trustees, who then give back to the community. In the next chapter, we will discuss current relations between Maori and *Pakeha*, or New Zealanders of European descent. We will aim to discover how Maori identity is being constructed and (re)shaped today.

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<sup>81</sup> Interview with Pare and John, 5 April 2015. Interview with Josie, 12 April 2015

<sup>82</sup> Informal conversation with my roommate, 11 April 2015



**Figure 5:** *wharenui* in Ohinemutu<sup>83</sup>



**Figure 6:** Street in Whakarewarewa, the Living Maori Village<sup>84</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Taken by the author the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2015

<sup>84</sup> Taken by the author on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2015



## Chapter 6: Maori and Pakeha nowadays

*A group of about nine people bikes onto the 'marae' in Ohinemutu. All of them have the same bike, with a little basket attached to the steering wheel. Some of them have a green bike, others a yellow one. They even have matching helmets. The man who seems to be guiding the group stops in front of the 'wharenuī', the meeting house, after which the other eight cyclists stop as well. As he starts explaining something, the group takes pictures of the meeting house. It is at this moment that Josie, an inhabitant of Ohinemutu, and I happen to be walking into the village. We just had a conversation about tour guides coming to the village, and now we witnessed one of them with his bikes. "Look at them!" Josie said, pointing out the group. "This is what I meant just now. That is so disrespectful! They come out here biking over our 'marae'. Some groups even come on segways." she sounded frustrated. "And the guide, she continued, "I don't know what he's saying. How can he tell our story? He's not even Maori!" One of the trustees of the 'marae' walked by, and Josie told him about what was going on. He decided to walk up to the guide and to politely ask him to leave. The guide looked irritated, but he did get on his bike. The group followed him as he left the village. At least for now. "They'll be back this afternoon", Josie said. "They do two tours daily."'<sup>85</sup>*

### Introduction

This chapter discusses relations between Maori and *Pakeha*, or New Zealanders of European descent, nowadays. We will first consider how Maori culture is portrayed in museums, and we will look into the interactions that took place behind the scenes of the museums. These interactions shed light on relations between Maori and *Pakeha* nowadays and give us insight into how current presentations of Maori culture in museums were shaped. We will then look into tourism in Ohinemutu, where tensions occur between the villagers and guided tour operators. These tours are often run by *Pakeha* outsiders, but an inhabitant of the village has also set up such a tour. Finally, we will look into motivations for and benefits of being involved in tourism. We will consider this in light of the commodification and strategic use of cultural heritage, after which we will regard it through the concept of sincerity. We will conclude, then, that Maori tourism is created and shaped in sincere interactions between Maori and *Pakeha*. The vignette above illustrates relations like these. It describes how a *Pakeha* tour guide enters Ohinemutu village with his group, without consent of the villagers.

<sup>85</sup> Informal conversation with Josie, 12 April 2015



*Maori culture being portrayed in museums*

Maori culture is often portrayed in museums. Te Papa, the national museum of New Zealand, located in Wellington, has an entire floor of the building committed to Maori culture. I visited the Maori section of the museum with Thomas, a Maori man. He first took me to the section on the Treaty of Waitangi. The room featured the two versions of the document, English and Maori, facing each other on opposite walls. This document has been defining for national politics and relations in New Zealand, as we have seen above. As we walked through the museum, we saw a traditional *waka*, which is a canoe, a *wharenui*, or meeting house, a *wharepuni*, or sleeping house, and a storage house. On signs, walls and in short videos, information was given on these objects and on Maori history.<sup>86</sup> In contrast to the tourism ventures we have discussed earlier, it was only objects that were portrayed. There was no direct human interaction, which may lead visitors to see Maori as an exotic Other. As an unknown people who use the exotic objects portrayed in the museum. The museum focusses on history, mainly pre-European, and there is little nuance in this, suggesting that Maori now live modern lives. The same goes for the tourism ventures discussed in the first chapter, but in those ventures Maori got the chance to make comments such as “this is how our ancestors used to live, but we do not live in that way any longer. Now we have Facebook and a McDonalds around the corner”<sup>87</sup>

If we look beyond these inanimate objects, however, we see many interactions taking place. Considering these interactions sheds light on relations between Maori and *Pakeha*, or New Zealanders of European descent, today. The *wharenui*, or meeting house, that is portrayed in the museum, for example, has been in use by a tribe before it ended up in the museum. This tribe who owns it then abandoned it, after which it was placed in the museum. Thomas explained to me that *wharenui* sometimes get abandoned to stop the spread of diseases. If the meeting house has been empty for a longer period of time, it is possible to use it again, as diseases will have disappeared. If the tribe does not want to come back to the meeting house, they remove the carvings from it. All the carvings in this particular meeting house portrayed in the museum were still there, indicating that the tribe did not really abandon it, but rather left it for a period of time with the intention of taking it into use again in the future. The tribe

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<sup>86</sup> Visit to Te Papa National Museum, Wellington with Thomas, 29 January 2015

<sup>87</sup> Participant observation at Mitai Maori Village, 20 February 2015





wants to get the meeting house back.<sup>88</sup> This particular issue shows that misunderstandings between the two cultures still occur today. These misunderstandings lead to difficulties in maintaining national relations.

This very same museum, however, also provides us with examples of national relations between Maori and *Pakeha* improving, influenced by the policy of biculturalism. Thomas was involved with the building of the storage house that is on portray in the museum, and other Maori people built the *wharepuni*, sleeping house. Thomas explained to me that being involved with the building process led to a cultural revival. The people involved with the project researched Maori history and building techniques, to be able to build the storage house as authentically as possible.<sup>89</sup> Here, we see how Maori identity is constructed in interaction with the museum. As a result of the museum's request to have the storage and sleeping houses built, the Maori involved learned about their own history and culture. The information they gained and the skills they learned during this process, may lead them to consider themselves as Maori in a different way. They might feel, for example, a stronger connection to their Maori side and their ancestors.

Finally, the museum has a section dedicated to one particular tribe, which changes periodically. The particular tribe that is portrayed gets the opportunity to tell their story, as they decide how the section is organized and what content and objects are shown.<sup>90</sup> This, again, gives Maori the opportunity to discover their own cultural heritage. It also signifies that relations between the two cultures are changing, for the museum recognizes different Maori tribes and allows them to manage the content that is portrayed about them.

The museum of Rotorua, too, has a large exhibition dedicated to Maori culture. When I spoke with Ann, a *Pakeha* woman who has worked as the public programme manager and the curator of the museum for a long period of time, it became clear to me that there are *Pakeha* efforts to actively involve Maori in the museum. Ann expressed a wish for involving Maori in projects about their culture, so the experience would be as authentic as possible and in line with what Maori want. Every time a new exhibition would be developed, Maori were asked

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<sup>88</sup> Informal conversation on the visit to Te Papa National Museum, Wellington with Thomas, 29 January 2015

<sup>89</sup> Informal conversation on a visit to Te Papa National Museum, Wellington with Thomas, 29 January 2015

<sup>90</sup> Informal conversation on a visit to Te Papa National Museum, Wellington with Thomas, 29 January 2015





to contribute. This has made the museum a place where Maori have the opportunity to learn about their culture as well. Often times, Maori visit the museum<sup>91</sup>.

We see, thus, many interactions at play within the context of these two museums. We see that today, attempts are being made to actively involve Maori people in the museums, to make sure that the objects and stories at display are authentic. These attempts take place within sincere interactions between the two parties. These interactions lead to Maori identity constructions, both for people directly involved in them – for example in the process of building the storage and sleeping house – and for the people visiting the museum. Relations between *Pakeha* and Maori remain difficult at times, as we have seen in our discussion of the meeting house above. In the next section, we will discuss tourism in Ohinemutu village. We will see how the villagers are confronted with people making a profit of the village, without giving back to the community, and we will see how they handle this.

#### *Tourism in Ohinemutu*

As we have seen earlier in the description of Ohinemutu village, tourists are free to enter the village. They are able to view the meeting house from the outside and to visit St. Faith's Church, known for its decorations in Maori style. It has occurred, however, that individuals who run tourism businesses have misused this hospitality. Often times, people running such tourism ventures are *Pakeha*. Several tours around Rotorua include Ohinemutu in their programme, which results in groups of tourists on bikes or segways entering the village. The owners of the touristic ventures, however, never asked for permission to run their tour there. They also do not give back any of the income they receive to the villagers. This leads to frustrations among inhabitants of Ohinemutu, who perceive the ventures as disrespectful. Consider, for example, the encounter between a tour guide with his group and Josie, an inhabitant of Ohinemutu, described at the beginning of the chapter.

The villagers of Ohinemutu are happy to welcome interested visitors and to talk with them about their lives. Unfortunately, external parties use the village in their tourism venture, telling stories *for* Maori, not *with* Maori, and without giving back to the community. Josie, an inhabitant of the village, commented the following on tourism in Ohinemutu:

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<sup>91</sup> Interview with Ann, 10 April 2015



“Tourists come here all the time. And they’re allowed to come. But I think the time is coming now that some perimeters have to be put down, because tourism companies are using our marae as part of their itinerary. We have no problem with casual travellers at all, but it is people who arrange tours. There’s hordes of tourists who are conducted across there. Those conductors do not pay anything back to the *marae* or to the church to help sustain it.”<sup>92</sup>

The value of hospitality expressed by the villagers is being misused by the tour operators, as the free entrance to Ohinemutu was clearly not meant for others to profit from by making tourists pay after all. In addition to this, the value of reciprocity is being ignored. Tour operators make use of the village, without giving anything back to the community living in it. This is not a balanced relationship, which leads to frustration among villagers. A strained relationship between Maori villagers and tour operators is apparent. Within the interactions that take place here, Maori identity is being (re)shaped. It may lead, for example, to Maori putting more emphasis on their cultural values, stressing that hospitality and reciprocity are important aspects of a healthy relationship.

Up until this point, we have mainly focussed on interactions between Maori and other actors. Identity construction, however, also takes place in interactions between Maori people amongst themselves. We must not forget that Maori form a heterogeneous group. The values described in the first chapter, for example, may be interpreted in various ways by different individuals, and some cultural values might be more important to one particular person than to others. In the case of Ohinemutu, tensions have occurred between a young man and the community.

A young inhabitant of the village decided to set up a guided tour of Ohinemutu. He earned a lot of money from running his business. In his tours, the young man would take tourists around the village, show them the church and take them into the meeting house. He had access to this meeting house because a family member of his was one of the trustees of the *marae*, so they had the keys to *wharenuī*. The young man proceeded to take tourists into the church and onto the *marae*, without asking the community permission for doing this tour. He also failed to give some of the profit that was earned from doing the tour back to the

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<sup>92</sup> Interview with Josie, 12 April 2015



community.<sup>93</sup> Like the *Pakeha* tour operators mentioned earlier, he ignored the values of hospitality and reciprocity. Whilst his fellow villagers were being hospitable by allowing tourists to visit the village for free, he decided to ask tourists for a payment. He was not being reciprocal, for he did not give money to the community in return for him being able to run his business. By not giving back to the other inhabitants of Ohinemutu, the young man also ignored the value of community. Part of living in a community, after all, is that everybody gives back to it. Because individuals contribute to the community, the village is able to upkeep the three *marae*, the Church and its other buildings.

As I was discussing this issue with Maxine, a local woman in her seventies, she told me that the man got arrogant and disrespectful, and at some point even verbally abusive. In response to this, the doors of both the meeting house and the church were closed. “This shows the difference in the upbringing of the new Maori”, she said. “They think that tourism is golden. And the golden coin is worth more than your culture. It’s about exploiting cultural assets. [...] He is driven by money and greed.”<sup>94</sup> There is, thus, a tension in the interaction between the young man and the villagers. A tension between a younger and older generation, and a tension between cultural values and the value of earning money.

The meeting house remains closed for tourists, as it has always been – with the exception of the tour described above. Maxine explained it is too precious to be open like that, because tourists tend to touch everything. This would damage the carvings. In addition to this, tourists have the option of going to a museum to see a meeting house. “They don’t have to particularly walk into this one. And a lot of people don’t come here to see the meeting house, they come here to see the church.”<sup>95</sup> Because so many people come to see the unique St. Faith’s Church in Ohinemutu, it has recently been decided to open the doors of the church again. It has, after all, been openly accessible during the hundred years since the church was first built, and churchgoers are eager to share the beauty of the church with international visitors. A group of regular churchgoers voluntarily mends the doors of the church, they do so in two shifts with two volunteers per shift, every day. They welcome visitors, kindly ask for a donation, talk about the church, its history and the decorations, and they answer

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<sup>93</sup> This issue has been discussed by several informants in informal conversations at St. Faith’s Church in Ohinemutu

<sup>94</sup> Interview with Maxine, 30 March 2015

<sup>95</sup> Interview with Maxine, 30 March 2015



questions<sup>96</sup>. The church is pleased that much income has been generated from this, with which the church can be maintained. Maxine commented on this:

“It hasn’t sat easy with us, because it’s a church. But it still has to have paintings and repairs, we need to pay for our minister and we need to have prayer books. We don’t have any other income, apart from Sunday service and some weddings and baptisms, but that is all voluntary. It’s up to the people to make a donation.”<sup>97</sup>

The church thus felt compelled to ask for a donation, as a result of the issues surrounding the guided tour described above and the lack of funds. They did want to remain hospitable, which is an important Maori value and also suits a church. A compromise was reached by asking for a donation, which is on voluntary basis and can be as big or small as the visitor wants it to be.

In the next section, we will discuss how Maori make money out of tourism. We will consider how commodification of Maori culture takes place in the context of interactions with *Pakeha*.

#### *Self-commodification and the strategic use of Maori cultural heritage*

In the discussion of self-commodification in the theoretical framework, we have observed that in the case of indigenous tourism, culture tends to be commercialized. Culture is then presented by a commodified persona, in the case of Maori this entails a traditionally clothed person with *ta moko* tattoos painted on his or her face. Maori strategically use their cultural heritage by setting up tourism businesses and earning money with that. These business have been set up and are still maintained in interactions with *Pakeha* and in the context of New Zealand, as well as in other, perhaps global, contexts. When I asked the Mitai family what their motivations were for setting up their business, one of the things they named was to earn money and to provide for their family. This business enables them to employ many members of the Mitai family. It is also a learning environment for younger family members, who then get some experience in working for or even running a business.<sup>98</sup> These motivations partly flow from the national position of Maori. In 2014, employment rates for Maori people were about 8% lower than those of European New Zealanders<sup>99</sup> and Maori median hourly earnings

<sup>96</sup> This has been explained to me in informal conversations on several occasions by different informants

<sup>97</sup> Interview with Maxine, 30 March 2015

<sup>98</sup> Interview with the Mitai family, 27 March 2015

<sup>99</sup> [http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-social-indicators/Home/Labour%20market/employment.aspx](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-social-indicators/Home/Labour%20market/employment.aspx), last accessed on 9 July 2015



were NZ\$3,51 lower than was the case for European New Zealanders.<sup>100</sup> In addition to this, in 2013 the percentage of 18-year-old Maori individuals who left school with a NCEA level 2<sup>101</sup> or higher was 63,3, whilst the percentage for their peers of European descent was 83,4.<sup>102</sup> Tourism businesses such as Mitai Maori Village help Maori people in making a positive change, and in creating new working and learning environments.

In the theoretical framework above, we saw that motives for setting up tourism businesses might be political, as well as economic. The statistics mentioned above are political, as well as economic, in nature. We might, however, also consider other political motivations. We have seen that the Treaty of Waitangi has been violated in the past and that Maori rights and culture was not always respected. However, I have not observed significant attempts to make tourists aware of the current political status of Maori people in the guided tours that I have participated in. An explanation for this might be that the process of introducing bicultural policies into New Zealand has started in the 1980's already, as we have seen in the second chapter. The language has been recognized as a national language and many pieces of lands have already been given back to Maori people. Even though there is still much room for improvement, the process is well underway. In addition to this, touristic tours are set up to last only one day or evening. Many tourists want to have a nice experience and enjoy themselves. They want to see traditional Maori culture, rather than learn about complex national relations within New Zealand. We have noted earlier different kinds of tourists exist, amongst which are tourist who want to stay off the beaten track and to experience the country during a longer period of time. According to Marama Fox, a politician of the Maori Party, it is exactly those kinds of tourists who could be great advocates of Maori culture. They want to know about the Treaty of Waitangi, learn about indigenous rights and they want to see the world through Maori eyes.<sup>103</sup> The tours I have participated and observed in, however, are

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<sup>100</sup> [http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-social-indicators/Home/Labour%20market/med-hourly-earnings.aspx](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-social-indicators/Home/Labour%20market/med-hourly-earnings.aspx), last accessed on 9 July 2015

<sup>101</sup> National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is the main secondary school qualification in New Zealand for students in years 11–13. NCEA can be gained at three levels – usually level 1 in year 11, level 2 in year 12, and level 3 in year 13. Information obtained from [http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-social-indicators/Home/Education/18-year-olds-with-higher-qualif.aspx](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-social-indicators/Home/Education/18-year-olds-with-higher-qualif.aspx), last accessed on 9 July 2015

<sup>102</sup> [http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-social-indicators/Home/Education/18-year-olds-with-higher-qualif.aspx](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/snapshots-of-nz/nz-social-indicators/Home/Education/18-year-olds-with-higher-qualif.aspx), last accessed on 9 July 2015

<sup>103</sup> Interview with Marama Fox, held on The Torungapu Show, on Te Upoko o Te Ika radio station, 15 April 2015



meant for the greater public and they last only a few hours. This leaves little room for advocating Maori culture.

Tourism does, however, show the value of Maori culture as something that is unique to New Zealand. The country is promoted as a tourist destination in international campaigns, with a theme that changes every few years. Earlier themes were *The Lord of the Rings*, which focussed on the famous book and movie trilogy, and *100% pure*, which focusses on New Zealand's beautiful nature and landscapes. New Zealand Tourism is now, in collaboration with New Zealand Maori Tourism, setting up the next campaign, which revolves around Maori culture. The aim in this campaign is to showcase not only traditionally dressed Maori people, but contemporary Maori as well.<sup>104</sup>

Presenting Maori culture to tourists may thus have benefits to Maori people running businesses, to Maori people in general and to New Zealand as a country. The motivations and benefits of these are created in the national context of New Zealand, as we have seen above. The context of New Zealand is shaped by the relations between Maori and *Pakeha*, which are enacted in sincere interactions. Again, we must remember that motivations for being involved in tourism are not solely economic, but personal and cultural as well. We have seen earlier that both Inia, a Maori cultural performer, and Thomas, who was involved with building the storage house for the museum, learned about their own culture in the process. When we regard the commodified persona through the concept of sincerity, we see that this is not a character that is simply created in order to make money. Rather, it is a way of presenting Maori people that has been constructed in interactions with tourists and in the context of New Zealand.

### Conclusion

In this chapter, we have regarded relations between Maori and *Pakeha* in a national context. We have observed several interactions which shed light on how the current presentation of Maori culture to tourists has come to its current shape, as well as how this continues to change. In museums, we saw proof of improving relations between Maori and *Pakeha*, whilst the case of the village of Ohinemutu shows tensions between Maori and tour operators. Many tour operators are *Pakeha* from outside the village, but one of the villagers has also caused

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<sup>104</sup> Interview with an employee of New Zealand Maori Tourism, 30 January 2015





tensions with his tour. This has led us to consider the heterogeneous character of Maori as a group and interactions within this heterogeneous group. Finally, we discussed the commodification and strategic use of Maori culture in tourism. We noted that there might be economic benefits of running a tourism business. There are, however, many other motivations and it is important to remember the broader context, some of which has been explored in this research. Maori tourism today is being constructed in sincere interactions between Maori and *Pakeha*. These interactions are about more than just making money.





## **Conclusion**

Maori identity is being constructed on several levels in different interactions. We have considered interactions with tourists in the fourth chapter, with British settlers, the Crown, the colonial government and the government of New Zealand in the fifth chapter, and with *Pakeha* in the last chapter. There are, naturally, many more actors and factors at play. This research only covers a fraction of these interactions, which are sincere in nature. The fact that there are so many and such complex interactions, shows us that Maori tourism is not simply commodified to earn money, or strategically used as a political means. In addition to this, it is not realistic, nor desirable for us as anthropologists to try and label Maori culture as presented in tourism as authentic or not authentic. Culture is fluid and subject to change in its very nature, as it is constructed in sincere interactions. Maori culture today is not less authentic than in pre-European times.

However, pre-European times are often portrayed in contemporary touristic practices. Yet, these portraits are strongly influenced by colonial histories and current interactions. All sincere interactions that have taken place over the years have influenced how Maori see themselves and how they act out their culture, in daily life and in tourism ventures. Both culture and identity are, after all, constructed in public interactions and negotiations. They are not private and fixed. It is impossible to exactly trace the process of identity construction, for this process has taken and is still taking place in many interactions at several levels, with different people and at different times. In addition to this, there is no such thing as *the* Maori culture, *the* Maori identity, *the* Maori cultural values or simply, *the* Maori. Maori form a heterogeneous group, with many unique individuals.

Having said that, when we look into some of the interactions that take place, we do notice some cultural values that many Maori share. We have distinguished values of hospitality, genealogy and reciprocity. These cultural values are woven into tourism practices, museums and all of the interactions that have taken place and are still taking place in interactions between Maori and other actors. And every interaction has its influence on the cultural values acted out, leading Maori to emphasize them, to view them from a different aspect, or even to change them.

This has been illustrated with *te reo Maori*, the Maori language, and land politics. Policies in New Zealand changed from assimilative from the moment the British colonists arrived to bicultural in the 1980's. These histories can be strongly recognized when we consider the language and land politics. When assimilative policies were held, Maori were disallowed and later discouraged to speak their language in, for example, schools. When biculturalism arrived, in which Maori and *Pakeha* culture are equally valued, *te reo Maori* was recognized as a national language of New Zealand. Now, many Maori aim to learn the language and to teach it to the younger generations. These processes have strongly influenced Maori identity.

Similarly, land politics changed. In early colonial times, the Treaty of Waitangi was signed and land was unrightfully taken. Now, many efforts are underway to change this and to give Maori land back to its rightful owners. At the same time, Maori utilize the land they get back to improve their national position. We have seen that fewer Maori people have diplomas than people of European descent. Because of this, land trustees have set up educational grants, which are used to divide money that is earned from the land among the community. Students receive money from those grants, enabling them to fund their education. These practices are in line with the cultural values we have mentioned earlier.

Tourism ventures are businesses. Maori cultural tourism businesses often exclusively employ Maori people, again allowing them to improve their national positions. Unemployment is higher among Maori, whilst their hourly pay is lower than New Zealanders of European descent. Tourism businesses provide Maori people with a job and allow them, especially younger generations, to have a learning experience. One might conclude that Maori commodify their cultural heritage, which they then strategically use to make money. I argue, however, that more factors are at play. Being involved in tourism, allows Maori to (re)discover their own culture and cultural heritage. In the process of deciding how to present themselves, they dive into the past. They learn about ancestors and about how these ancestors lived their daily lives. They might see themselves in a different light, perhaps feeling a stronger connection to their Maori side, or to their ancestors. In addition to this, Maori need to decide how they wish to present themselves. They only have a few hours to present their culture. In this time, tourists need to be able to keep up with what is said, they need to have a good time and dinner is served. Such evenings are thus planned out and thoroughly prepared for. Maori must decide what aspects of their culture to present and in what way, allowing



themselves to leave a positive impression of themselves. Maori then consider what cultural values and traditions are most important to them.

Within these preparations for tourism practices, as well as the actual face-to-face interactions with tourists, identity construction takes place. Maori learn about themselves and consider what they find most important, leading them to emphasize certain cultural traditions, values and rituals. What cultural values they decide to emphasize, also stems from interactions that have taken place with British colonists, the Crown, and the colonial government. *Pakeha* views or ways of life may have led Maori to emphasize features of their culture that differ from those *Pakeha* views, or perhaps to see similarities between themselves and *Pakeha*. Similarly, many interactions still take place today. Between individuals, between organisations, and between Maori and other groups as a whole. At all of these levels, identity construction takes place.

Despite the bicultural policies that have been introduced since the 1980's, misunderstandings, frustrations and perhaps even conflicts still take place between *Pakeha* and Maori. These two groups have different cultural values, different points of view and different ways of life. Some of these misunderstandings play out in the context of tourism, as we have seen in the case of Ohinemutu. External actors set up tourism businesses, benefiting from the village's hospitality, as it is free to enter for tourists. This leads to frustrations among villagers, because the money that is earned is not shared with their community, and *Pakeha* tour guides tell stories *for* and *about* Maori people. Within interactions like these, Maori identity is (re)shaped. The value of community might perhaps be emphasized more strongly, for the community as a whole wants to find a solution for the issue. Or the Maori perspective on hospitality may change, leading them to place boundaries on their hospitality. It is impossible to trace the exact process of identity construction, because it takes place within so many interactions, over such a long period of time.

The complexity of Maori identity and Maori identity construction is revealed when we consider the fact that there is no such things as *the* Maori identity, as we have noted earlier. The village of Ohinemutu has also provided us with an example of frustrations and interaction between the community and an individual who set up a tourism business. This

example reminds us of the fact that not every Maori holds the same cultural values, and individual Maori interests may vary.

We see thus, that Maori are constantly changing. Individuals change, circumstances change, cultural values slowly change and the way individuals identify with being Maori changes along with that. Recognizing these changes, it becomes irrelevant to ask whether or not cultural tourism experiences that are offered are authentic. Instead, it is about the sincerity to share one's culture. To show a little bit of their ways of life, or how Maori think their ancestors' way of life may have been. How they portray their ancestors' way of life and what aspects of earlier, sometimes even pre-European life, they show, tells us about what they value today. It shows us how they see themselves as Maori people. And how Maori see themselves, flows from many sincere interactions. Interactions that take place between themselves and other New Zealanders, those that take place between themselves and tourists, and those that take place between themselves and actors that are beyond the scope of this research. At the same time, interactions that take place in contexts of tourism, may have an effect on other interactions, and vice versa. Within all of those interactions, changes take place. Maori now are not the same as they were in pre-European times. In the future, they will most definitely have made further changes. Regardless, they are Maori. What being Maori entails may change, but Maori culture and Maori people remain.



**Appendix A: Glossary**<sup>105</sup>

Aotearoa	The Māori name for New Zealand. It literally means ‘land of the long white cloud’.
Haka	Performance of the haka, posture dance – vigorous dances with actions and rhythmically shouted words. A general term for several types of such dances.
Hangi	Earth oven – earth oven to cook food with steam. It is heated with geothermal stones.
Hapu	Kinship group, clan, subtribe.
Hongi	To press noses in greeting.
Iwi	Extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people, nationality – often refers to a large group of people that descended from a common ancestor and is associated with a distinct territory.
Kapa haka	Concert party, haka group, Maori performing group. These groups often perform haka and poi dance.
Kia ora	Hello, welcome, good luck, best wishes, good health.
Korero	Speech, narrative, story, discussion, conversation.
Kumara	Sweet potato.
Mana	Prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma – mana is a supernatural force in a person, place or object.
Mana atua	Sacred spiritual power from the atua, God.
Mana tangata	Power and status accrued through one’s leadership talents, human rights, mana of people.
Mana tupana	Power through descent, mana received from ancestors.
Manaakitanga	Hospitality, kindness, generosity, support – the process of showing respect, generosity and care for others.
Marae	Courtyard – the open area in front of the wharenui, where formal greetings and discussions take place. Often, this word is used to include the complex of buildings around the marae.
Mauri	Life principle, vital essence, special nature, a material symbol of a life principle, source of emotions - the essential quality and vitality of a being or entity.

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<sup>105</sup> I relied on the website <http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz/> for these translations. Last accessed on 7 July 2015



Moko	Maori tattooing designs on the face or body done under traditional protocols.
Pakeha	New Zealander of European descent – probably originally applied to English-speaking Europeans living in Aotearoa/New Zealand.
Poi	Poi – a light ball on a string of varying length which is swung or twirled rhythmically to sung accompaniment.
Poi dance	A dance in which poi are used.
Powhiri	Invitation, rituals of encounter, welcome ceremony on a marae.
Pukana	To stare wildly, dilate the eyes – done by both genders when performing haka to emphasise particular words. Often done in combination with poking the tongue.
Putatara	Conch shell trumpet with an attached short, wooden mouthpiece.
Reo, also Te reo Maori	Language, dialect, tongue, speech. Te reo Maori literally means “the Maori language”.
Take	Peace token, used in the powhiri ceremony.
Tangi	Rites for the dead, funeral.
Taiaha	A long weapon of hard wood with one end carved and often decorated with dogs’ hair or feathers.
Tukutuku	Panels with weavings on them, often seen in <i>wharenui</i> . Patterns woven into these panels represent various things, such as <i>whakapapa</i> , stars or fish.
Utu	Reciprocity, revenge.
Waka	Canoe, vehicle. Maori first arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand on <i>wakas</i> .
Whakapapa	Genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent.
Whanau	Extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to a number of people.
Whare	House, building, residence, hut, habitation.
Wharenui	Meeting house, large house - main building of a marae where guests are accommodated.
Wharepuni	Principal house of a village, guest house, sleeping house.

## Appendix B: Reflection

When I boarded a plane the 20th of January of this year, I had no idea what kind journey awaited me. I thought about the long flight ahead, about the upcoming transfer in Shanghai and another transfer in Auckland. I thought about meeting my host family and finally taking a shower and getting some proper sleep. I was prepared for the flight, but nothing could prepare me for the journey that followed after landing in Wellington. As soon as I got off the plane, I entered the field. The day after my arrival, I found myself at a *tangi*, a Maori funeral. In the weeks that followed, I viewed *kapa haka* performances, I moved to Rotorua, I participated in touristic tours, I went to bilingual church services, I visited *marae* and I was warmly welcomed into people's homes. On this journey, I met many amazing people, teaching me about Maori culture. In every step on this journey, I learned about doing fieldwork. Without being aware of it, I was becoming a researcher. An ethnographer. An anthropologist. I do not claim to *be* an anthropologist now, but this research has been a huge step in *becoming* one. I especially realized this when I was online chatting with a friend and fellow cultural anthropology student. He asked me whether I felt as if I was doing research, or rather just like I was being on a holiday. I was definitely not on a holiday, even though I wanted to visit some touristic spots. I had and still have a home in New Zealand; I lived there. Most importantly: I was there with a goal. I wanted to learn about Maori culture.

There was a huge contrast between myself as a researcher and tourists. This contrast became explicitly clear when I participated in touristic tours at Maori Villages. Whereas all the tourists were there mainly to enjoy themselves, I was doing fieldwork. I was the only person on such a night with a notebook, taking notes of everything I saw and experienced, writing down Maori terms and what they mean. I tried to keep up with the guides who were explaining lots about Maori culture, taking notes of it all. I wanted to learn as much as I could about Maori, whilst consciously considering my research questions and paying attention to how Maori presented themselves to tourists. While tourists enjoyed their dinner, I was writing down what the buffet served, which foods were traditionally Maori and how the food was prepared. This contrast became bigger with each touristic tour in which I participated. The more time I spent in New Zealand, the more I learned about Maori culture. By the time I got to the third touristic visit in which I participated, I already knew most of what was being told and shown that day. There I was, taking notes, learning in more detail about Maori culture, asking the guide some questions. Amidst of tourists who were just experiencing



Maori culture for a single day. I was most certainly not one of them. It was at moments like these that I realized that I was actually doing fieldwork, something I had only read about until my recent experience in New Zealand.

Moments like those I described above were definitely the ups in my fieldwork experience, but unfortunately I also had some downs. I struggled when I first arrived in Wellington and realized that the field there was different than what I had hoped and expected. I struggled when I moved to Rotorua and tried to get in touch with organisations. I did manage to do a touristic tour at three of the four organisations, but I could organise a qualitative interview at only one of these three organisations. I was insecure, and afraid that I would return home with rarely any data. Fortunately, I got a tip to visit the village of Ohinemutu. I met many people there, who were very willing to help me with my research. At this point, I had just a few weeks left to do research. But I thoroughly enjoyed these weeks, as I was rapidly learning more about Maori culture and land politics, and seeing with my own eyes what parts of the pre-European culture presented in tourist ventures were applied in contemporary Maori daily life. My passion for anthropology grew stronger.

Now that I'm writing this, I finished the thesis. Looking back on the whole process, I realize that the journey had definitely not ended when I landed back home in Amsterdam. Perhaps, the biggest journey was yet to come. I remember first trying to make a writing plan for this thesis. Even though I was physically at home, mentally I was still in the field. Everything I learned rushed through my head as I was trying to make sense of it. I was stuck my data, and did not yet manage to zoom out to see the broader picture. Feedback from my supervisor and thinking, writing and re-writing slowly brought me closer to finding a complete argument, supported by both literature and my data. It was hard work and at times, I did not believe I would ever finish the writing process. But it is the little moments that brought me joy. The moments that I managed to find a new connection between different parts of field data, or between literature and my data. The moment that I finished my first chapter, and realized that everything was actually beginning to make sense. The feeling of accomplishment when I had spent the day writing, and saw some results. And I will without doubt be overwhelmed by feelings of pride and happiness when I will finally hold a printed copy of this thesis.



All in all, this journey has been amazing. I have learned and experienced so much. It was worth the moments that I did not think I would make it, and all the hard work it took. I am a richer person now, as the process of doing this research and writing this thesis has left me with so much. It has left me with a grown passion for anthropology and anticipation of the future, in which I will definitely do more ethnographic research. It has left me with an amazing experience in New Zealand. It has left me with a feeling of accomplishment, for I managed to write this thesis that I am proud of. And, perhaps most importantly, it has left me with a home away from home.







## **Appendix C: Summary**

This is a study of Maori people in New Zealand. The research is based on anthropological literature and data collected by doing ethnographic fieldwork in Rotorua, New Zealand in the period from January to April 2015. The research considers how Maori identity is being constructed in interactions with different parties.

First of all, the thesis discusses interactions with tourists. Maori people interact with international visitors in cultural tourism ventures. In order to present Maori culture, Maori people have to ask themselves what being Maori means to them, and what Maori culture is. Often times, Maori present pre-European times to tourists. Yet, the way they present these pre-European times, and what aspects of this pre-European culture they wish to portray, are strongly influenced by contemporary circumstances.

Second of all, the research focusses on interactions with colonists, the British Crown, the colonial government and later the government of New Zealand. It considers how national policies have changed from assimilative, with colonists attempting to create one European culture, to bicultural, with both *Pakeha*, or European, and Maori culture being valued. These policy changes have strongly influenced aspects of Maori identity, such as the language and the land. This shows that in interaction, aspects of Maori culture change.

Finally, current interactions between *Pakeha*, or New Zealanders of European descent, and Maori are sketched, with a focus on tourism. Relations between these two groups improve, but are at times still conflictual as a result of misunderstandings and cultural differences. The focus on tourism allows us to recognize that there is a mutual influence between different interactions that take place. Interactions on a national level in the past influence contemporary tourism, contemporary interactions between *Pakeha* and Maori may have an influence on how Maori culture is presented to tourists, and interactions with tourists might have an impact on contemporary interactions with other parties.

Somewhere within all those interactions, that take place between far more actors than those described in this research, and that take place over extended periods of time, Maori identities are being constructed. Identities are shaped in interactions, and every encounter may change an individual's or a group's point of view. Recognizing this, it becomes irrelevant to label tourism practices or Maori culture in general as authentic or inauthentic. Maori culture is, after all, constantly changing. These changes then influence what aspects of pre-European



culture are being highlighted. What is relevant, however, is that Maori sincerely interact with other parties, amongst which are tourists. There seems to be a genuine wish to present Maori culture to international visitors, with motivations that go beyond simply earning money. Maori wish to show tourists their world view and their culture, and to interact with them.

*The* Maori culture, *the* Maori identity, *the* Maori cultural values or simply, *the* Maori do not exist. Maori form a heterogeneous group, with many unique individuals. How these individuals perceive themselves and identify as Maori, changes over time. These changes occur within sincere interactions, between themselves and many parties, some of which have been explored in this research. Maori now are different from what Maori were in pre-European times, and Maori people in the future will without doubt have changed even further. This does not make Maori people now less authentic or genuine than Maori in the past, for changes occur naturally. Maori people remain to be Maori if they identify as Maori, regardless of what ‘Maori’ might mean to an individual or a group at a certain point in time.



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