

CONTESTING NEW ZEALAND'S PAST

Postmemory, Transgenerational Trauma and the Implicated
Subject in Māori Renaissance Literature

6632742
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Literature Today
Master's Thesis

Utrecht University
TLMV16017

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October 2020



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Acknowledgements

In the first place I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Susanne Knittel, for her support throughout the entire process. Thank you for all of your advice, help, suggestions and feedback.

Thank you to Luca Jansen for editing my work. Thanks goes to Anna McBride, and Jody Gijssbertsen for locating resources in New Zealand that were unavailable in the Netherlands. Thanks also goes to Leah Rahui for helping me in thinking through Māori-Pākehā concepts.

Thank you to my family, especially Mum, Mary-Anne and Robert, for your love and support from so far away. Thank you for your comments and editing on my research, or for finding other resources in New Zealand that I couldn't access here. Thanks for listening to all my stories about my research and pretending you were interested.

And finally, thank you to God for giving me the strength to complete my research.

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the ways in which literature of the Māori Renaissance functions as postmemory work, in engaging with transgenerational trauma and the implicated subject. The writing of both the Early and the Later Renaissance is concerned with not only reconstructing and remembering repressed aspects of Māori marginalisation and erased elements of Maori culture and tradition, but it also has a deeply political and critical dimension, as it confronts especially Pākehā readers with their implication in Māori marginalisation. Two case studies have been chosen for close analysis: *The Matriarch* by Witi Ihimaera as representative of the Early Renaissance, and *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* by Tina Makereti as representative of the Later Renaissance. I argue that there are key differences in the way this political aspect is brought out. In the Early Renaissance, the focus is on identifying Māori trauma and gaining recognition of transgenerational trauma as perpetuated by Pākehā; consequently, the tone was angry and the emphasis was on acknowledging Maori victimhood and establishing Pākehā perpetratorship in the past and the continuation of structures of inequality into the present. In the Later Renaissance, the focus is less on being angry, and more on nuancing the story and in incorporating other traumatic histories, such as that of the Moriori massacre, which complicate a simplistic narrative. Further, Later Renaissance writing meditates on navigating the complexities of this renewed narrative.

Key words: Māori Renaissance, Postmemory, Transgenerational Trauma, the Implicated Subject, Witi Ihimaera, *The Matriarch*, Tina Makereti, *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*, Moriori

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Glossary:

Most definitions have been taken from the Māori Online Dictionary which has the support of Te Whare o Rongomaurikura, the centre for Language Revitalisation and Te Ipukarea, the Auckland University of Technology research centre for Māori language, culture and knowledge.

Aotearoa – Māori name for New Zealand. A direct translation is “Long White Cloud”. Originally used to refer to the North Island only, but now encompasses all of New Zealand.

Hapu – subtribe

Iwi – larger tribe

Karakia – prayer

Kaumatua – elder, a person of status within the whānau or iwi

Kapa haka – Māori performing arts

Korero – narratives and prose

Koru – spiral motif that is often found in Māori carving or tattooing. It symbolizes new life, growth and peace. It is based on the koru plant which has a spiral or looped structure.

Mana – respect, prestige, authority

Māori – it literally means ‘normal’ or ‘ordinary’. Now it most often refers to the indigenous people of New Zealand as opposed to Pākeha.

Marae – courtyard - the open area in front of the wharenui (meeting house), where formal greetings and discussions take place. Often also used to include the complex of buildings around the marae

Māoritanga – Māori culture, Māori practices and beliefs, Māoriness, Māori way of life.

Mauri – life force, vital essence. Also used for a physical object, individual, ecosystem or social group in which this essence is located.

Mihi – speech of greeting, acknowledgement, tribute

Mokopuna – grandchild

Moriori – indigenous people from the Chatham Islands

Pākehā – it literally means ‘foreign’; refers to people of European descent

Rangatira – chief, high ranking, chiefly, noble, esteemed

Raranga – weaving

Rēkohu – Moriori name for the Chatham Islands

Rēwena – Moriori word for sour dough

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Taonga – treasure

Taonga puoro – Māori traditional musical instruments

Tangata whenua – people of the land (i.e. Māori)

Tangata tiriti – people of the treaty (i.e. Pākehā)

Tangi – funeral, mourning

Tapu – sacred

Te reo – Māori language

Tikanga – correct procedure, protocol; the customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context.

Tipuna - Ancestors

Tohunga – skilled person, chosen expert, priest, healer

Utu – to repay, respond, avenge. Can be used in both a positive and negative sense

Waiata – songs and chants

Whakapapa – genealogy. Reciting whakapapa was, and remains, an important skill and reflected the importance of genealogies in Māori society in terms of leadership, land and fishing rights, kinship and status; it is central to all Māori institutions.

Whakataukī – sayings

Whanau – immediate family

Whare – house

Whakairo – carving

Whaka taua – war canoe

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Introduction

Literature can participate in the process of bringing repressed memories back into circulation. Māori literature, which is often strongly oriented towards the past, is a case in point. *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*, which won the Ngā Kupa Ora Māori Book Award in 2014, by Tina Makereti is a clear example of New Zealand literature contesting the dominant narrative of Māori-Pākehā history and relationships by discussing a much neglected Māori and Moriori story. *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* is a historical fiction novel which focuses on two separate generations who grapple with mixed cultural identities which seem to be in conflict with each other. *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* is especially interesting because it directly addresses the destruction of the Moriori (indigenous people of the Chatham Islands) by the Māori (indigenous people of New Zealand). Although most New Zealanders are somehow aware of this event, it is usually not talked about, especially not by Māori. Rather, Pākehā (British/European) like to use this example to dismiss or ridicule Māori concerns about land theft or marginalization. Makereti's novel – despite being fiction – is one way in which this story is brought to the forefront of people's minds.

Makereti's novel is part of a Māori corpus that stretches back decades. One of the forerunners of modern Māori literature (from the 1970s) is Witi Ihimaera. His writing, like *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*, brings repressed memories back into circulation but in a very different way, and with a different purpose. His novel *The Matriarch* is one of the clearest – and most deliberate – attempts in reconstructing Māori mana (respect, prestige). This novel follows Tama's attempt to fill in the missing gaps he has about his grandmother Riripeti but in

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doing so, he is actually filling in gaps he has about Māoritanga (Māori culture and way of life) which has been ripped away by Pākehā.

Since the 1970s Māori authors have been highlighting Māori affairs in their novels. During this time there was a general rise in literature published by Māori authors, as well as literature speaking about Māori issues, which occurred partially due to the Māori Renaissance developing at this time. Despite being the first inhabitants of New Zealand, by the late 1900s the Māori population was in the minority and it was a widely held belief that Māori were a dying race. In response to this view, Māori and Pākehā set out to develop better political policies for Māori as well as revive Māori culture, arts and language. The increase of literature by Māori was a part of this revival.

Both of these case studies are important sites where traumatic and repressed memories live on. More significantly, they move beyond merely bringing these partial memories to the foreground to negotiating questions of transgenerational trauma and of complicity, often with political undertones. I argue that there are key differences in the way this political aspect is brought out. In the Early Māori Renaissance, the focus is on identifying Māori trauma and gaining recognition of transgenerational trauma as perpetuated by Pākehā; consequently, the tone is angry and the emphasis was on acknowledging Māori victimhood and establishing Pākehā as perpetrators in the past and the continuation of structures of inequality into the present. In the Later Renaissance, the focus is less on anger, and more on nuancing the story and incorporating other traumatic histories, such as that of the Moriori massacre, which complicate a simplistic narrative and meditates on navigating the complexities of this renewed narrative. This will be illustrated by a close reading of *The*

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Matriarch for the Early Renaissance and *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* for the Later Renaissance.

These novels have a complicated historical context, which the first chapter will elaborate on. In short, the (purported) disappearance of the Māori race was the culmination of years of marginalization by Pākehā. Māori culture, traditions and language were all severely devalued. One of the key ways in which Māori were marginalized was by forced removal from large sections of their land. This was done particularly during the Land Wars. Between 1845 and 1872, the British and Māori fought in a series of wars, where Māori lost substantial amounts of land. In later years, the Pākehā government used these wars as an excuse to take more land from the Māori. Land is important to Māori culturally. In formal introductions (mihi), Māori do not only say their name, but also identify the land they come from, their mountain, river, sea and genealogy. Further, many Māori lived in tribes and depended on their land for their identity as well as their food.

Under the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi, signed between the British and Māori, this land grab should never have happened. In the Treaty of Waitangi, which was signed in 1840, Māori ceded sovereignty to the British crown in exchange for receiving full rights and protection as British subjects. The meaning of the articles in the treaty is severely contested, however. The Treaty was originally written in English and translated overnight into Māori. The translation has some notable differences with respect to the English version: whereas the English version required Māori to cede sovereignty to England, the Māori version only mentions the British right to govern the country – and so did not cede ownership of the land.

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The Treaty, the land grab and Māori marginalization remain contentious and traumatic issues. Although Pākehā are generally willing to recognize that they had a hand in the marginalization of Māori, they also contend that Māori themselves are not entirely blameless. At times Māori (unintentionally) initialized their own marginalization, for example by introducing the Native Schools Act in 1867. This act essentially forbade speaking Māori at school to encourage English learning as well as to make assimilation to Pākehā ways easier and resulted in many Māori not being able to speak their own language, even at home. Today, even with extensive efforts to revitalise the Māori language, only 20% of Māori are fluent in their own language. Pākehā justify their behaviour by using the “Moriori argument”. This will be explained in more detail in the contextualisation chapter, but in brief, this refers to a massacre in 1835 in which two Māori tribes massacred, and then ate, the Moriori on the Chatham Islands, enslaving any survivors. Pākehā are also quick to excuse themselves for the land grab, citing the fact that many Māori fought alongside the British and against their own people. Pākehā question why should Māori culture become so important now, when Māori did not consider their own culture important in the past? Further, if Māori contributed to their own marginalization, why should Pākehā be responsible for reconciliation? Additionally, how does one achieve reconciliation from the land grab, when generations of Pākehā have lived on stolen Māori land? For Pākehā, it can be easier to forget the extent of their role in perpetrating violence rather than accept responsibility or seek reconciliation. Reconciliation remains difficult because modern Pākehā refuse to accept responsibility for past wrongs or to recognize that they are still implicated in this part of New Zealand's history. Michael Rothberg's recently coined term, 'the implicated subject' is an appropriate term to denote the modern Pākehā role

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in New Zealand's contested history. Rothberg uses 'the implicated subject' to denote a figure who is

neither a victim or a perpetrator, but rather a participant in histories and social formations that generate the positions of victim and perpetrator, and yet in which most people do not occupy such clear-cut roles. (1)

The implicated subject breaks the perpetrator-victim binary. This can take place as synchronic implication, where an event unfolds in the present day and to which a person is connected to in some form (Rothberg 2019, 45). More relevant to the situation in New Zealand is diachronic implication. Diachronic implication refers to the way people have a relationship to events that occurred in the past but benefit from in the present. For example, although Pākehā are not currently taking land away from Māori, they are clearly participants in the development of Pākehā-Māori relationships. Pākehā still have a role in reconciling past wrongs – wrongs which impact Māori still today. *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* deals extensively with implication, and shows that implicated subjects are often unwilling to accept this responsibility.

Perhaps at the core of Pākehā resistance is the belief that Māori should stop acting as victims when the traumatic events happened to their tipuna (ancestors) and not to them directly, thereby not recognizing the legitimacy of postmemory. Postmemory was coined by Marianne Hirsch and relates to how generations remember events of their parents. They have not lived through the trauma themselves. Hirsch and Spitzer observe that "survivors transmit to their children layered memories of 'home' – nostalgic longing, negative and critical recollections" (81). Although the concept of postmemory was developed specifically with

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reference to the Holocaust, it can be illuminating in the context of Māori memory in New Zealand. This thesis will show that as the concept travels to New Zealand, its scope will be adjusted. Hirsch's definition does not refer to distant ancestors but specifically to the previous generation, but in the context of Māori literature, it becomes clear that multiple generations benefit from postmemory activism. This becomes especially clear when considering urbanised Māori. Even urbanised Māori generations who did not grow up immersed in Māoritanga shared in the collective memory of traumatic events experienced by previous generations and the resultant trauma. So although they have not lived through much of the trauma themselves, the memory of the trauma is passed down from generation to generation, resulting in transgenerational trauma.

Although Māori authors do not explicitly mention the terms transgenerational trauma or postmemory, much of the literature they wrote did and still does deal with these themes. Especially during the Māori renaissance, writers began posing questions about the past, and how that impacted the present and the future. They did not want to be a dying race; a people that would no longer exist in the future. During the renaissance, Māori began giving more deliberate attention to the knowledge which kaumatua (elders) had. Older generations of Māori still knew about Māori cultural practices such as carving, kapa haka (Māori performing arts), and Māori stories. Māori myths had traditionally been passed down orally, or through their art, such as weaving or carving. With Māori urbanisation, generations of Māori were no longer participating in Māoritanga and so did not hear the stories their kaumatua were telling.

In "Cultural Memory Studies: Mediation, Narrative and the Aesthetic" Ann Rigney notes that,

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it has become generally accepted that the arts are an important source of innovation in memory culture: not only because of their huge social reach and cultural longevity, but above all because of their ability to articulate stories that have not yet been told and to bring them into circulation. (2015, 73)

Written Māori literature, however, was not telling stories that were not being told, but rather stories that were not being listened to. Melissa Kennedy, in *A History of New Zealand Literature*, observes that:

In both fiction and responses to it, the Māori Renaissance provides a literary road map of the turbulent years of ... an emerging national biculturalism that came to define the relationship between two peoples committed to a permanent partnership by signing the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. (277)

More specifically, Māori literature addressed questions such as, how do you live as an authentic Māori in a (now) Pākehā world? What responsibility do Māori and Pākehā have in moving past these complex traumas and reconciling with each other? Some texts thematize specific land grabs directly; others discuss Māori marginalization more generally or the loss of Māori culture and heritage. Chadwick Allen's term, the 'blood/land/memory complex' (14) succinctly summarizes the main thematic material in Māori literature.

The development of New Zealand's literature in general has captured the interest of multiple scholars (e.g. Keown, Williams, Kennedy) so there is plenty of literature about New Zealand's literary history. Most well-known novelists started by writing poetry or short stories because these were easier to publish. New Zealand's publishing industry initially only published writing by Pākehā authors, but the Māori Renaissance helped change this. New

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Zealand does not seem to have publishing statistics available so it is difficult to determine how many novels have been published, especially Māori novels. There is a consensus that during the Māori Renaissance there was a huge increase in published writing by Māori authors, partially due to increased access to publishing companies but also due to a more receptive climate towards their writing. The Māori publishing house Huia, which was established in 1991, published texts written in English as well as Māori. Initially most Māori texts were written in English.

Key figures at the beginning of the Māori literary scene include Witi Ihimaera (the first Māori author to be published), Patricia Grace (the first Māori female author to be published), Kerri Hulme (who won the Booker Prize in 1985), and Alan Duff, whose controversial *Once Were Warriors* (1990) was turned into a film (1994) of the same name. These authors and texts are important because of the impact they have had on New Zealand's society; it is common for scholars to choose books by these authors for their case studies when looking at Māori novels, especially when looking at racism, multiculturalism and the situation of Māori in general. It is not uncommon that texts of the 21st century quote or refer to texts from this period. For example, *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* references *Once Were Warriors*.

The first case study in this thesis, *The Matriarch*, was Ihimaera's first published novel after a ten-year self-imposed writing embargo. As we will see in chapter 2, *The Matriarch* is stylistically complex, but the motive is clear: restoring Māori mana. Without directly articulating these concepts, it nevertheless is clearly a work of postmemory and touches on transgenerational trauma and the implicated subject. The other case study, *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*, was published twenty five years after *The Matriarch* and develops these concepts by bringing a new memory to light – the Moriori story. In doing so, it complicates the issue of

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the implicated subject as Māori are no longer Pākehā victims, but also implicated subjects because of their role in the Moriori massacre.

Criticism on New Zealand's literature is in general quite limited. Beyond New Zealand, these texts are not even particularly well-read, much less studied. Of all the Māori authors, Witi Ihimaera has received the most critical attention. However, *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*, which was only published a decade ago, has attracted very little criticism. Most criticism concerning these texts has been published in the South Pacific. Secondary literature on *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* that does exist looks at these texts in relation to race relations and (post)colonial theory, and very occasionally transgenerational trauma. Despite the featuring of the 'blood/land/memory complex' in much Māori literature, it is surprising that the blood, marginalization and land appears regularly in criticism whereas memory is only mentioned in passing, despite it being such a key theme present in Māori literature. Māori literature is rarely analysed through the frameworks of postmemory or the implicated subject. This is unfortunate because these particular frameworks contribute to understanding how *The Matriarch* and *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* see how a post-Pākehā, a post-treaty New Zealand should, or could look like. By examining these texts through the frameworks of postmemory, transgenerational trauma and the implicated subject this thesis will illustrate how these novels make an important intervention into New Zealand memory discourse.

The first chapter will provide contextualisation about New Zealand, including the necessary context about Māori culture, describe the development of Māori-Pākehā relationships and explain some key historical moments relevant to the novels. It will also elaborate on the key concepts of transgenerational trauma, postmemory and the implicated subject, and see how they are connected. The second chapter will explore the angry and

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political nature of Early Renaissance Māori writing, using *The Matriarch* as the case study. In the third chapter I will turn to the Later Renaissance, using *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* as the case study to see how these concepts have been complicated. Analysing these two Māori novels through the prisms of these transgenerational trauma, postmemory and the implicated subject will, on the one hand, bring new perspectives on the novels, but also, on the other hand, shed an interesting new light on these concepts as they travel from the Holocaust and postcolonial contexts to the New Zealand context.

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Chapter 1: Contextualisation

The focus of this chapter is to provide the historical background and the conceptual framework for this thesis. It will discuss the theoretical concepts of transgenerational trauma, postmemory and the implicated subject as well as supply important historical information. Much of the general historical background provided here is considered “common knowledge” for New Zealanders. Especially the Treaty of Waitangi and its different versions, which are taught nearly every year in primary school, is well known to every New Zealander. Had this been written with a New Zealand audience in mind, most of this contextualisation would have been redundant. However, considering that this is written for a European audience, I have chosen to provide a relatively extensive historical background. This is because knowing this background information is necessary to understand the case studies as well as their reception and impact. The dominant source I have used concerning New Zealand's history is Michael King's award-winning *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (2003)¹. Other sources for this section include *Te Ara*, which is an “Encyclopaedia of New Zealand” (Te Ara), the *New Zealand History* website, and the *Waitangi Tribunal* website, all of which are government websites.

A fundamental aspect of New Zealand's history has been, and remains, the relationship between Māori and Pākehā. Unsurprisingly, a lot of New Zealand literature engages with this theme. The Māori-Pākehā relationship has always been tumultuous, with significant ups and downs. The first far-reaching contact between Māori occurred around 1769 when Captain Cook and his crew landed on New Zealand. They contributed to Māori welfare by trading metals, potatoes and turnips

¹ King, a Pākehā historian, was well-respected within the Pākehā, Māori, and Moriori communities. He was so well-respected that he was commissioned by the Moriori to write *Moriori: A People Rediscovered*, which was originally published in 1989. King's *Penguin History* has been praised for its nuanced and well-balanced approach towards both Pākehā and Māori interests.

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and in turn Cook profited from the timber, flax and seals. But this contact also had its dark side: Māori were killed by Pākehā because of misunderstandings, and Pākehā diseases were introduced to which Māori had not built any immunity and so were much more deadly. European contact brought with it both advantages and disadvantages. Initially, the advantages mostly outweighed the disadvantages (King 211). This mix of positive and negative interactions was a template for Māori-Pākehā relationships for decades to come.

Although Māori and Pākehā interacted with each other, these communities remained largely unimpacted in terms of cultural values or way of life. Interaction and intermarriage between Pākehā and Māori increased during the 1830s when Pākehā whalers arrived in Māori communities. Despite this,

the values and protocols of such communities remained largely Māori and most descendants of mixed marriage identified as Māori... They [the whaling-based community] were part of a gradually growing symbiotic relationship between Māori and Pākehā. (King 123)

Māori also initially had positive interactions with missionaries (several denominations sent over representatives from England). Being highly spiritual people, Māori appreciated learning about the European God, and added him to their other deities. Missionaries wrote down the Māori language and in turn taught Māori how to read and write. The missionaries are also to credit for the decrease in inter-tribal warfare and resultant cannibalism. They supported the Treaty of Waitangi because they genuinely believed it was for the best interests of the Māori. In turn, Māori often offered protection to the missionaries (Ballantyne 47, 62, King 179). Had this positive, interactive relationship lasted, then much of the trauma that was inflicted on Māori could have been avoided. Māori were innovative in adapting when it benefited their society, without losing their identity (King

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254, 372). Unfortunately, the interactive relationship did not last, as New Zealand became colonised, resulting in long-term, intergenerational trauma for Māori. The increasing numbers of sailors and whalers who came to New Zealand brought more diseases and lawlessness because the British government largely ignored what their subjects were doing on the other side of the world.

The lawlessness of the sailors and whalers, as well as the settlers encroaching on Māori land was a concern not only for Māori but also for some Pākehā, especially missionaries and British government officials. Britain had not yet formally claimed New Zealand as a colony and was becoming concerned about the French contingent attempting to make headway in New Zealand affairs. There were also further concerns about the New Zealand Company, owned by Pākehā Edward Wakefield, which was interested in buying as much land as possible for as little expense as possible. For these reasons, British representatives began drafting various agreements. In 1834, Busby persuaded Māori rangatira (elders/chiefs) to choose a flag, despite them not really understanding the process or the necessity of flying a flag on merchant ships. The following year, certain Māori chiefs, with the help of Busby, wrote and signed a declaration of independence, which united several northern tribes. In practice, this declaration had very little impact, and it was an “equally contrived ceremony” (King 154) as when the flag was chosen. By 1839, the British wanted to sign an agreement between Māori and Pākehā, to officially make New Zealand a British colony. Despite deliberations among the British occurring over a relatively long time, the document itself was drawn up very quickly in early February when William Hobson, the man who was allowed to sign New Zealand on as a colony, arrived in New Zealand, at Waitangi. It was then translated overnight into Māori, and finally signed on Waitangi grounds on the 6th of February.

The Treaty consists of a foreword and three articles. The meaning and intent of the first two articles are contested because their translation into Māori did not accurately convey what the

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English version intended. In the first article, in the English version, Māori ceded all sovereignty to the Queen of England. In the Māori version, Māori only ceded government. Māori believed that they governed themselves, but left the other subjects to the government of Britain. The second article concerned the rights and ownership of land, taonga (treasured possessions) and resources. In the English version, the Queen promises “undisturbed possession” of these resources for Māori, whereas the Māori version went further by promising full authority – not just possession – and control of the previously mentioned things. In the third article the Queen promises to protect the Māori and treat them as equal British subjects (Te Ara, King 160, Waitangi Tribunal).

A large aspect of the signing was the explanations Pākehā gave to Māori. Eventually, after much deliberation, Māori rangatira began to sign the Treaty, after which the treaty travelled across New Zealand so that other chiefs could sign it. Not all did.

If the Treaty was supposed to encourage peaceful relationships between Māori and Pākehā, then it failed dramatically. King asserts that “the two decades following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi were characterised nationally more by co-operation between Māori and Pākehā than by conflict” (211). While this may be true, the rise of the Land Wars, also known as the New Zealand Wars, quickly negated any positive effect the Treaty had intended. A series of skirmishes in different locations, mostly on the North Island, between Māori and Pākehā occurred between 1845 and 1872. These were predominantly about land. Pākehā wanted more land, for an increasing number of settlers arriving in New Zealand, whereas Māori were often reluctant to sell the land because they realised that in doing so, they were losing a part of their identity. In relinquishing land, in practice Māori also relinquished their authority – or in the words of the treaty, their governorship – over New Zealand. Selling land equated to losing their spiritual connection as well as an influx of Pākehā

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settlers and Pākehā culture. This would affect not only the generation who sold or lost the land directly, but also the following generations would feel the effects of this trauma.

The Land Wars were won by both the Māori and Pākehā sides in terms of land sales. But both sides also lost in terms of culture, although the Māori side suffered more significant losses. Both sides committed atrocities, killing women and children or taking unethical war decisions such as the Rangiaowhia² incident committed by the Pākehā or the Matawhero massacre by Māori. The Matawhero massacre plays a significant role in the case study in the next chapter. Chief Te Kooti and his supporters savagely attacked Pākehā residents at Matawhero in 1868. This was done in revenge for being exiled to the Chatham Islands³. Men, women and children were killed; most were bayoneted, tomahawked or clubbed. In total, about 60 people were killed (NZ History). The separation of Māori vs. Pākehā is also more complicated than put forward here: many Māori fought alongside the British, and to a lesser degree, some Pākehā supported the Māori.

After the end of the Land Wars, the predominantly Pākehā government confiscated land from the Māori, citing breaches of the treaty and the Land Wars as the legal reason for this. However, the land confiscated rarely had anything to do with Māori participation in the Land Wars:

What was taken was selected more for its fertility and strategic importance than for the owners' part in the so-called rebellion: some tribes in northern Waikato who had remained loyal to the Government lost land along with those who had not; and the group that had

² Pākehā attacked Rangiaowhia on Sunday 21 February, 1864. It was not expected that Christians would fight on a Sunday, and yet Pākehā attacked anyway. Rangiaowhia was also not fortified like most other villages were, and its residents included many elderly and children. Further, some non-combatant men were killed when Pākehā fired at a whare karakia (house of prayer) (King 215).

³ The Chatham Islands is also where the Moriori come from; Te Kooti was not involved in the Moriori massacre.

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been perhaps most bellicose in both the Waikato *and* Taranaki wars, Ngati Maniapoto, lost nothing. (King 216)

Instead, the Land Wars were merely used as an excuse for the government to take the land best suited for their own purposes, with very little regard for Māori welfare.

The removal of land was not the only way Māori were marginalized. The stolen land was turned into settler communities, and towns and cities began to develop. New Zealand was becoming more urbanized and many Māori, if they wanted to survive, needed to become urbanized too. But when Māori left their own community, they lost their cultural heritage. Skills such as whakairo (carving)⁴, raranga (flax weaving), and the use of taonga puoro (Māori traditional musical instruments) were severely impacted. Historical and cultural knowledge was also lost. By moving into towns and cities, Māori lost their spiritual connection to their land. This was further exacerbated by Pākehā taking over and destroying tapu (sacred) areas. Māori began to feel alienated in their own country. Legislation made by the predominantly Pākehā government also contributed to Māori marginalization. For example, Māori owned land as an iwi (extensive family/tribe), so not individually. The 1862 and 1865 Native Land Acts ensured that collective ownership of land was no longer possible, making it easier for the Crown to buy land from individuals who did not actually have the full rights to the land according to Māori law (Te Ara). In short, the value of Māori taonga (treasures) and tikanga (culture) was severely undermined.

An important cultural aspect for Māori is the notion of mana. Mana is difficult to define exactly, but it is related to status, power and prestige. The loss of mana is hard to measure tangibly, and so it is hard to understand what exactly has been lost from an outsider's perspective. It is

⁴ Māori used carvings to tell stories. Maraes (meeting area) are full of carvings of important people, or tell the history of specific locations. Waka taua (war canoe) also usually had ornate carvings

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something that is both earned and passed down from generation to generation; one person's mana can be transferred to another through ancestry, but also from winning battles. It goes hand in hand with mauri (life force, power, presence), tapu (sacred), and almost all actions in Māori culture are related in some way to maintaining mana. Because mana is also related to possession to land, when land was lost, Māori also lost their mana. Tapu sites were desecrated as new roads and towns were built by Pākehā further diminishing their mana. Further, the Māori collectively lost their status in New Zealand as Pākehā were more dominant, further weakening mana (Māori dictionary, Te Ara, King 80, 82).

The marginalization of te reo – the Māori language – is slightly more complex. In 1867 the government passed the Native Schools Act which decreed that English was the only language to be used in the education of Māori children. It was not the Pākehā who introduced this bill, however: it was Māori politicians and kaumatua who supported this initiative. Their reasoning for this highlights how much Māori had already been marginalized. Kaumatua had observed that to be successful in New Zealand they needed to be integrated into the Pākehā world. Learning English would give Māori less of a disadvantage because they could interact with the Pākehā world. The intention was for Māori to teach te reo at home, but unfortunately this did not really happen, and so many Māori did not learn to speak their own language (King 361). The law was also enforced very strictly – children were hit for speaking te reo at school, even out on the playground (Simon & Smith 141-142). So although the intention was to empower Māori, the Act aided in further marginalizing Māori.

Today, Māori are still marginalized in society: Māori make up 50% of the prison population whereas they make up only 15% of the general population (Statistics NZ). Māori youth have higher suicide rates than non-Māori youth (Statistics NZ). Child abuse and violence rates higher among Māori than Pākehā (Statistics NZ). Māori are generally less well off than Pākehā families (Statistics

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NZ). Māori students are disproportionately represented in under-achieving children at schools (Statistics NZ). Politically, Pākehā still dominate.

There are multiple reasons as to why Māori were marginalized. It was at times intentional: for some Pākehā the goal was to assimilate Māori into a Pākehā world. It did not concern the government at all that they were significantly marginalizing Māori. Rather, it was even seen by some as a good thing. Atkinson, who was premier of New Zealand on several occasions, after the Land Wars, thought that “the indigenous population should be utterly suppressed and eventually assimilated by the superior British. If this could be achieved by intimidation that would be preferable to fighting” (Bassett, quoted in King 233). This meant that even when active marginalization was not happening, the alienation of Māori and racism was being perpetuated and strengthened. This sense of trauma and loss was experienced not only by the generation that directly experienced the trauma, but was passed down from generation to generation. Another reason that Māori were so severely marginalized is that Pākehā or Māori were simply unaware of the impact certain policies would have on Māori, such as the Native Schools Act. Another reason is that Pākehā often simply did not care. After all, they were only doing what the Māori had done to the Moriori, so what right did the Māori have to complain?

The ‘Moriori argument’ which is used against Māori refers to the small group of people who lived on the Chatham Islands, also known as Rēkohu. It was initially believed that the Moriori were a primitive pre-Māori group who travelled to the Chathams from New Zealand (e.g. MacGill, Shand). However, further research revealed that the Moriori were “distinguishable from the Māori who emerged in New Zealand from the same stock over much the same period” (King *Moriori: A People Rediscovered* 25). The Moriori language shares some similarities to Māori, but is distinct. Moriori have their own values and cultural components, sometimes these are the exact opposite of Māori. In

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contrast to the Māori concept of *utu* (revenge), Moriori followed Nunuku's Law, which forbade murder in any context as well as eating human flesh (Solomon & Thorpe 245). Moriori did not fight even when attacked. In 1835, the Ngāti Mutunga and Ngāti Tama iwis, who were living on Rēkohu, massacred the Moriori. Those who were not killed and eaten were taken as slaves by the Māori. For a long time afterwards, Moriori were considered by both Māori and Pākehā to be worth even less than the Māori: they were deemed stupid, and with their darker skin less developed than Māori (School Journal quoted in King 45). Like Māori, they suffered a lot of marginalization because of their forced integration into Māori society. From around 1980 – a decade after the beginning of the Maori Renaissance – efforts were made to revitalise Moriori culture and language.

The Moriori massacre features much less often in New Zealand's history. This is likely due to several reasons: Rēkohu is 800 km from New Zealand, the Moriori were all but wiped out and little is known about them. Another important reason is that the Moriori story reflects poorly on New Zealand. Pākehā used the 'Moriori argument' to contend that Māori were perpetrators themselves and therefore had no right to complain about the Pākehā landgrab: they were merely doing the same as what Māori had done to the Moriori. For a long time the Moriori story was a neglected and ignored story. Now the subject of Moriori is no longer taboo and more research has been done which shows that they were a successful group of people. Moriori also began to enter into the dominant narrative of New Zealand literature, of which *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* is one example.

Despite the serious effects which marginalization has (had) on Māori, it would be a mistake to think that they passively accepted their fate. There had always been resistance to the Pākehā invasion by Māori in some way. So it did not slip by unnoticed to Māori – or Pākehā either – that they were losing their heritage and mana. Towards the 1970s a movement was emerging to stop the

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Māori race from 'dying out', as was believed was happening (King 258). This is now known as the Māori Renaissance. The Waitangi Tribunal was established in 1975, to investigate claims by Māori. Multiple organisations were set up to protest and advocate for Māori welfare such as the Māori Organisation on Human Rights, and Te Roopu o te Matakite/ Te Matakite o Aotearoa. Also in 1975 the first Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori (Māori language week) was introduced and now occurs annually (Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori). In 1987 te reo was declared an official language of New Zealand. The first Kura Kaupapa Māori school (Māori-language immersion school) was set up in 1985. In Kura Kaupapa Māori schools all education is taught in Māori.

Improvements for Māori went beyond the public and political sphere. The Renaissance was also largely shaped by a cultural revival. Māori cultural schools that taught skills such as whakairo and raranga were set up or existing schools were given more government support. Māori also began to engage with Pākehā cultural forms, such as radio, TV, and especially literature and were recognized by Pākehā for their work. Before the Renaissance, Māori had limited access to publishers, but during the Renaissance this became easier. The establishment of the Māori publishing house *Huia* in 1991 opened up even more opportunities for Māori to become published. Like other tenets of the Renaissance, Māori literature was concerned with reclaiming ownership of their cultural heritage. They were, essentially, rebuilding their mana. Melissa Kennedy notes that Māori Renaissance literature held an "underlying desire to own their cultural interpretation and for this authority to be acknowledged by Pākehā" (279). The first case study, *The Matriarch* looks back at the past as a way to own and identify with Māori culture and reject Pākehā colonisation. The second case study, *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* continues the work of the Renaissance, but with a more modern perspective. Further, it participates in piecing together memories not only of the Māori, but

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also the Moriori, who had their own Renaissance from the beginning of the 2000s. Similar to the Māori Renaissance, it is still ongoing.

One of the major effects of the Māori Renaissance was in the way it reframed the way New Zealand's literary history was looked at. The literary landscape in New Zealand apparently began in the late 1800s, although "New Zealand literature proper" (Williams 3) did not appear until the 1930s (NZ History). The writing of the late 1800s has been called *Maoriland* and is one of New Zealand's first significant literary movements. Unlike the name suggests, Māori writers were not involved in this movement. Rather, Pākehā authors wrote texts that were "oriented towards external approval" (Stafford 56) and portrayed New Zealand as a favourable place to live, "while avoiding any suggestion of threat or discomfort" (Stafford 57). In this type of literature, Māori were heavily romanticised (Stafford 63, 65). The following movement, when "literature proper" appeared, is characterised as "cultural nationalist writing" (Steer 85) in which writers were curating a new, *New Zealand* identity. Before this time, New Zealand had seen itself as a new "and better Britain" (Steer 92), but now an independence from England was being cultivated (Murray 125). The period between the 1950s and 1970s was a nationalist continuation of the 1930s, but "writers were finding ways of deviating within that remit" (Jones 153), such as moving away from the realism which the previous generation had employed. The literary landscape began to flourish more during this period, with the establishment of New Zealand publishers – writers did not necessarily have to publish in Britain anymore, as had been the case before this time.

It is important to note that all of New Zealand's "proper literature" was written by Pākehā; there are no notable authors of Māori background during this time period. This changed in the Renaissance, where Māori literature 'suddenly appeared' (Williams 3). What is really meant, however, is that Māori literature in the Pākehā style started to appear. Believing in this notion

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ignores the strong oral storytelling traditions which Māori had already had for centuries, making Māori, not Pākehā, the earliest literature makers of New Zealand (Loader). This oral literature includes “the genres of *whakapapa*, *whakataukī*, *kōrero* and *waiata* (genealogies, sayings, narratives and prose, songs and chants)” (McRae 1). Despite the Māori language nearly dying out, this oral tradition has survived until the present day.

In contesting the notion that Māori literature began in the Renaissance, by default the definition of “Māori literature” is contested. Māori literature has been defined as any literature written by a Māori author (Kennedy 31, 41). This raises other questions such as how Māori does someone need to be in order to be considered Māori? Many Māori intermarried with Pākehā, so many Māori are ‘only’ part Māori. Further, with Māori urbanisation, there are many Māori who do not identify with their Māori cultural heritage, so how can they then be representative of, or for, Māori iwi? These problems were exemplified by the controversy concerning the reception of Kerri Hulme’s *the bone people*. Hulme won the Booker Prize for *the bone people* in 1985, and it was reviewed as “The New Zealand Novel” (Prentice 439), and more specifically as “the Great Māori Novel” (Harvey 298). This novel tells the story of three individuals who eventually combine to form a new kind of family. Each of the characters represent New Zealand society: Joe represents the Māori, Kerewin the Pākehā, and Simon a hybrid Māori-Pākehā character. When Hulme received the Pegasus award for Māori literature she was criticised for not being “Māori enough” (Stead 102-103), and so her writing could not be considered to be Māori literature. Further, identifying all literature written by Māori authors as Māori literature confines literature written by Māori authors to only having the one purpose of speaking for Māori. Texts written by Pākehā authors are not known as “Pākehā literature”, and considered speaking for Pākehā the same way in which Māori literature is.

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An alternative definition of Māori literature is literature that deals specifically with Māori concerns. Common themes are the loss of land, culture and identity as result of Pākehā colonisation – in effect, transgenerational trauma. It also engages with how to respond to this loss, or recovery from that trauma. The main plot line in *Potiki* by Patricia Grace, for example, is about a Māori community keeping their land as Pākehā try to force them to sell it for a Pākehā-benefitting development project; Alan Duff's *Once Were Warriors*, published later in the Renaissance, deals with urbanised Māori and restorations through actively reclaiming authentic Māori heritage. Māori literature often explicitly narrates background history within the texts. For example, our case study, *The Matriarch*, includes extensive sections of background information, despite the fact that the intended audience was New Zealand-based and so would have known many of the events. But some of these events are less known than others; although New Zealanders most likely know much about the events already, their knowledge has usually been informed by a Pākehā perspective. The literature of the Māori Renaissance often tells the history from a very different perspective, highlighting other events than Pākehā are likely to mention, or reinterpreting the impact or significance of the same events.

Despite the impact which the Māori Renaissance had for Māori, it is a largely forgotten part of New Zealand's history. This is partially due to the fact that the Māori Renaissance is in some sense still ongoing. There has been no official designated "end point" (Kennedy 278). A generally accepted end point is somewhere during the late 1990s (Williams 212), because that was the time that the Renaissance really flourished (Williams 208). Other critics argue that the Renaissance is ongoing as concerted efforts are, to varying degrees of success, still being made to revive Māori culture. Another reason for ignoring the Renaissance is that New Zealanders in general do not consider it important. Although the Treaty of Waitangi is an integral part of the school curriculum, the

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Renaissance is not represented at all. If taught at all, it is usually taught at university level, within the context of social work. Unfortunately, it does not really participate in the dominant narrative of New Zealand's history. Finally, the activism of the Renaissance confronts Pākehā with their own guilt and responsibility in perpetrating and perpetuating Māori marginalisation and trauma. The Renaissance, and especially the art and literature of the Renaissance, confronts Pākehā with their own guilt and responsibility for this marginalization and their implication in the exclusionary and traumatic practices of their forefathers. This motivates Pākehā to look away from and ignore Māori activism.

The verbal explanations given to Māori during the signing of the Treaty became very significant much later after the event, when the Waitangi Tribunal investigated claims. The Waitangi Tribunal was established in 1975 in response to the Waitangi Tribunal Act, which was passed into law in that year. Māori can register claims that the Crown has breached the terms and principles of the Treaty with the Tribunal. The Tribunal then investigates the claims and makes recommendations based on their research. The Tribunal cannot enforce or create new laws; it can only recommend certain actions. Usually, these recommendations are followed. Claims are not limited to the land lost or stolen, but can be invoked on the breaking of any treaty principle. The Waitangi Tribunal also has exclusive rights to interpret the Treaty, which they do on basis of both the English and Māori versions, as well as the intentions behind the treaty and the explanations and discussions that were had surrounding the signing of it. It is still currently considering claims.

Still today, Māori and Pākehā, on a cultural, communal scale, have an uneasy relationship. That is not to say that there are no positive interactions, especially on a personal level. But on a political, cultural level, a tension still exists. There is a growing recognition for the trauma Māori experienced due to colonisation and the generational disadvantages which result from it. But it is limited and both Pākehā and Māori can be quick to judge each other. The sense that Māori should

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'just get over it' is still prevalent. 'Just getting over it' however is not as simple as it is made out to be, and those who support this view, underestimate the power and effect of transgenerational trauma.

The concept of transgenerational trauma arose out of Holocaust studies where scholars and psychologists observed that the trauma of the Holocaust was being transferred to the next generation. Another term for transgenerational trauma is historical trauma. Historical trauma has had various definitions which Karina Walters sums up here:

[H]istorical trauma is ... not about a single discriminatory experience that's between one or two people but a whole group of people or community that is targeted... Some people talk about historical trauma as an ideological factor ... so we look at things like historically traumatic events causing poor health outcomes. Other folks talk about historical trauma itself as an actual outcome in terms of ... a specific way of manifesting what I call colonial trauma response ... [H]istorical trauma can also be conceptualized as a mechanism or a pathway by which trauma is transmitted. (Walters, quoted in Pihama et al. 250-251)

Although the Holocaust has remained the predominant case study in trauma studies, scholars are beginning to recognize that transgenerational or historical trauma also occurs in other situations, such as racism and colonialism and has since been used by scholars of Native history (Pihama et al. 249-250). This is partially due to a reframing of understanding how trauma works and in particular discussions surrounding the definition of PTSD. Initially, trauma was defined as having arisen from a "founding trauma" (LaCapra 81), with the DSM-IV-TR (American Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2000) manual specifying that "the person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or

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serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others" (467). But as Stef Craps points out, this eliminates the possibility of recognizing the trauma associated with long-term, or chronic traumatic experiences:

[A single] incident alone may not be traumatizing, but traumatization can result insidiously from cumulative micro-aggressions: each one is too small to be a traumatic stressor, but together they can build to create an intense traumatic impact. (Craps 26)

The kind of trauma which Craps talks about is important in understanding Māori trauma because while there are identifiable 'founding events' such as specific forced removals from land, there are also multiple 'micro' aggressions that together have built an "intense traumatic impact". Acceptance of the depth of historical trauma experienced by Māori is limited in New Zealand (Pihama et al 257), precisely because the colonial trauma response is not acknowledged as traumatic, or at least not traumatic enough. Māori literature of the Renaissance elucidates just how bad this trauma was. Especially today, there is a fragmented understanding of the trauma, and collectively, New Zealanders do not understand just how bad this has been and still is. Māori literature goes to great length to show how this is done. The trauma experienced did not always result in physical harm, but also in psychological harm. There are also generations of Māori who did not experience the 'founding event' themselves, but who do have to cope with the intergenerational consequences of these events as well as the multiple micro aggressions. Intergenerational consequences include not only the loss of culture and identity, but also inheriting the trauma from a previous generation. The process of transmission of trauma and traumatic memory across generations and the role different media play in this process has been theorized by various scholars, including James Young ("received history"), Celia Lury ("inherited memory"), Alison Landsberg ("belated memory"), or

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Nadine Fresco (“absent memory”). All these terms can be useful in thinking about how 2nd generation(s) deal with a traumatic history received from their parents. The Holocaust has been the focus for much of second generation trauma study, partially because of the grand scale of the trauma as well as the amount of memorial work undertaken to commemorate and remember the Holocaust in the form of museums, statues, literature and other art forms. Second generation trauma work has also been undertaken surrounding other genocides, such as the French-Algerian conflict (Miller, Knox, Rothberg) or other traumatic events such as the Spanish Civil War (Labanyi, Leggott, Renshaw). What these all have in common is that they are specific events at a particular time period, which makes it in some ways easier to see how a second generation is directly impacted by this trauma. But, as mentioned above, this kind of traumatic memory does not have to be limited to a singular event, but can happen in the context of prolonged traumatic circumstances, such as systematic racism or colonialism, as is the case for Māori and Moriori in New Zealand. Certainly the most widely used term by now is Marianne Hirsch’s “postmemory”. Hirsch conceptualizes postmemory to

[describe] the relationship that the generation after those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma, bears to the experiences of those who came before, experiences that they “remember” only by means of the stories, images and behaviors among which they grew up. (Hirsch, *Generation of Postmemory*, 106)

In other words, postmemory is not concerned with the direct victims of a traumatic event, but with the generation(s) after, who live in the shadow of the trauma. Reacting to the other terms, Hirsch asserts that postmemory is distinct from history precisely because of a “deep personal connection” (Family Pictures 8). The term “received history” creates a distance from the trauma. “Inherited memory” and “belated memory” capture the role of memory more closely than Young’s “received

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history". Hirsch contends that postmemory more accurately describes second generation memory than Fresco's absent memory" because it is "anything but absent or evacuated: it is as full and as empty as memory itself" (Hirsch, *Family Pictures* 9).

The word 'post' is significant for Hirsch. She makes clear that 'post' in this context does not mean 'after' memory. That is, it is not designating the memory as being 'finished' and that the second generation is claiming something that is not theirs. Rather, postmemory "signals more than a temporal delay and more than a location in an aftermath" (Hirsch, *Generation of Postmemory* 106). The 'post' in postmemory should be understood in the same way as 'post-secular' or 'post-colonialism'. Colonialism is not 'finished' or something which we do not need to deal with anymore. Instead, post-colonialism "does not mean the end of the colonial but its troubling continuity" (Hirsch, *Generation of Postmemory* 106). Similarly, postmemory does not demarcate a break between two generations concerning a traumatic event, but precisely its troubling continuity from one generation to the next.

This troubling continuity of trauma occurring between generations is indirect and fragmented. Parents may not speak specifically about their traumatic experiences, but their behaviour, gestures, silences and behaviours indicate that something is amiss. For those who do communicate about their experience, the transmission is fragmented or incomplete. Postmemory work has risen out of an examination of the aesthetics of second generation artistic work of Holocaust survivors, with Hirsch paying particular attention to photography because of its special ability for 'posthumous irony' (Sontag, quoted in Hirsch, *Family pictures* 6). Holocaust photography, Hirsch argues, has a unique ability to "hover between life and death, to capture only that which no longer exists" (Hirsch, *Family pictures* 7). But photographs – and other means of transferring memory – only tell partial, fragmented stories, that have gaps, which a second generation must then

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fill. Postmemory is the actions and memories of recreating – and completing – this incomplete picture. Postmemory, in some ways, functions as a verb rather than a noun. Literature participates in the active work of postmemory because not only does it contend with the experiences of the second generations, but it also contributes towards filling those gaps to make the testimony and story complete. *The Matriarch* is an example of this in practice, as will be shown in the next chapter.

Postmemory contends with the experiences of second generations of victims, but victims are not the only community to have 'post' generations: so too do perpetrators. As *The Matriarch* shows, the perpetrators' post-generations also have gaps in their memories, or have a fragmented knowledge of the past. Stephen Frosch, in his book *Those Who Come After: Postmemory, Acknowledgement and Forgiveness*, engages with the notion of this post-generation. Coming from a psychosocial context, Frosch uses the term 'witness' to identify someone who is called upon to respond to a testimony because they are somehow connected to it" (xiii). This response takes various forms, including acknowledging and taking responsibility for the trauma that occurred, despite not being the perpetrator. The obvious issue here is that not everyone is ready to accept their responsibility because:

In a simple sense, it is likely to provoke psychic and perhaps even political resistance: 'Why should I have to accept responsibility for this thing that I have no connection with, that I even repudiate; yet I am being accused of somehow benefitting from it, or at least being stained by it. Is this not ignoring my own singularity? Why, for example, should I be responsible for what my Nazi/slave-owning/colonial ancestors did so long ago, just because of the accident of the genealogy of my birth? (Frosch 59-60)

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Michael Rothberg goes further than Frosch and theorizes these in-between subjects as implicated subjects. This term refers to a broad category of people who are neither victims nor perpetrators, but are nevertheless connected to acts of trauma and violence. Rothberg's definition of the implicated subject does take into account an individual's singularity. Implicated subjects are not "themselves direct agents of harm; they contribute to, inhabit, inherit, or benefit from regimes of domination but do not originate or control such regimes" (Rothberg 1). Rothberg identifies different ways to be implicated, including diachronic and synchronic implication. Diachronic implication is implication that is rooted in the history. For example, Pākehā descendants who currently live on land that was stolen by their ancestors from Māori are diachronically implicated because they are benefiting from a violent past. There is also synchronic implication which pertains to "people's relationship to events that are unfolding around them but in which they do not necessarily participate directly" (Rothberg 2019, 45), such as an individual's response and position towards racist events happening in the present. Although diachronic and synchronic implication can be analysed separately, these two are of course interrelated. Where you have one, you often also find the other. The implicated subject is not an either/or position. This is further reinforced when looking at the complex implicated subject. Implicated subjects can simultaneously be an implicated subject, a victim and even a perpetrator. An individual can be located in different positions at the same time (Rothberg 2020), a concept which will be particularly relevant when examining *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*.

Implicated subjects are not passive subjects and therefore cannot be considered bystanders. This is not to say that implicated subjects are always conscious of their position and are actively denying their role. Rather, that can be part of the problem: implicated subjects are not necessarily conscious that – or how – they are implicated in trauma, or in perpetuating it (Rothberg 8). The

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power of literature is that it identifies who the witnesses or implicated subjects are, and specifies their connection to a particular testimony or traumatic event. It illustrates how implicated subjects have benefited and continue to benefit from past traumas. Rothberg points out that, “memory can serve as a resource” (11) to make people aware of their status as implicated subjects. Literature, as a written form of memory, can make visible how the implicated subject functions in the present because of its connection to the past. The work of postmemory in particular, can be an invaluable resource because it actively engages with the long-term impact which trauma can have on a community. Again, literature participates in this discourse because it articulates both the trauma of the second generation and how it is preserved by the implicated subject. Further, literature shows how these subjects are interconnected. Neither the postmemory generation nor the implicated subject generation have chosen to inherit their specific history, and yet both must engage with it. Neither generations have a complete picture or understanding of what happened in previous generations and must piece this history back together. And both generations also need to acknowledge and respond to the events and circumstances of earlier generations. Although postmemory and the implicated subject are neatly identified as two separate concepts, *The Matriarch* and *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*, clearly show how connected these concepts are. Especially *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* engages with the messiness and complexity that is involved in being an implicated subject, in combination with being a post-generation trauma subject. Perhaps the power of literature is that it not only acknowledges this messiness, but also suggests appropriate responses for implicated subjects as well as post-generations. Both of the case studies show this clearly. How they do this exactly will be examined in the following chapters.

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Chapter 2: Early Māori Renaissance

Postmemory Anger and Politics

Although there are different opinions in identifying works as Māori literature, there seems to be a consensus on the general characteristics present in this writing, especially on those texts belonging to that of the Early Renaissance. Māori literature in the early Renaissance is characterized as being “bitter, angry and, frequently, hectoring” (Moffat 113) and it “celebrates those who resist and rebel (118). Māori literature had a tendency to assert their identity and establish it as clearly separate to Pākehā culture. More importantly, it argued that it was as valuable as Pākehā literature, and not worthless (Moffat 118, Kennedy 2016, 279-280).

Witi Ihimaera is the quintessential writer of this angry, political writing. Ihimaera is considered one of the forerunners, and most famous representative of the Māori Literary Renaissance. He was born in 1944 in Waituhi to Māori parents, and this place features in multiple of his works, including *The Matriarch*. Like many New Zealand writers – Pākehā and Māori – Ihimaera began his writing career by writing short stories, and continued to do so throughout the rest of his career, publishing several collections, including *Pounamu, Pounamu* (1972), *Dear Miss Mansfield: A Tribute to Kathleen Mansfield Beauchamp*⁵ (1989) and *The Thrill of Falling* (2012). When he published *Tangi* (Mourning) in 1973, at the beginning of the Renaissance, he became the first Māori author to publish a novel in New Zealand. His novel *Whale Rider* (1987) was turned into a film of the same name (2002). Ihimaera's writing engages with challenging preconceptions about the Māori world as well as examining Māori-Pākehā relationships. His sharp, persistent and angry tone in

⁵ Katherine Mansfield was a famous New Zealand modernist short story writer and poet. She travelled to England and became friends with Virginia Woolf. She was one of the few Pākehā writers who included Māori in her writing in a positive way (Orr 75, 76).

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representing these themes is typical for his time period. Ihimaera is recognized as a significant figure in the Renaissance and is respected for his literary contributions to both the literary and non-literary scene (Keown 145, Caffin 49, Kennedy 2011 6).

The Matriarch has an uncontested place in the Māori literary canon, and it is not only because its author was such a visible frontrunner of the Renaissance. That it has a place in the New Zealand canon did not stop Ihimaera from receiving criticism from both Māori and Pākehā. Pākehā complained about Ihimaera's revisionist history of New Zealand. No doubt, some of the criticism stems from the fact that these historical re-interpretations are supportive of Māori actions, and critical of Pākehā actions. In turn, Māori critiqued Ihimaera for "revealing in print, to the profane gaze of Pākehā readers, too much of sacred oral Māori culture (Romaine 34). It was the first work Ihimaera published after a self-imposed ten-year embargo on writing.

The chronological plot of *The Matriarch* is essentially a narration of Riripeti's whakapapa (genealogy) and life, but narrated from her grandson's perspective. As the eldest son of Riripeti's oldest son, Tama Mahana is to become the leader of the Kahungunga iwi, when his grandfather passes away. Destined for this early in his life, Tama has been partially raised, and elaborately taught Māoritanga, by Riripeti. On Tama's return from an overseas diplomacy job, Tama investigates his grandmother's life, recounting her lessons and commenting on and interpreting aspects of her life and seeing what kind of meaning this has or will have for him as he will soon take over the leadership of the tribe. Although the conspicuous narrative is about Riripeti, the layers underneath reveal deeper thematic issues: a contesting of history, an awareness of transgenerational trauma, a piecing together of the past and a direct accusation of Pākehā implication.

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The trauma which Māori have experienced is not at the forefront of the text; rather the piecing together of New Zealand's history is. Nevertheless, the consequences of trauma for Māori is alluded to. Tama and his mother both experience nightmarish dreams; reference is made to Tama's cousin, whose dysfunctional life is a result of feeling disconnected from Māoritanga. There are schisms within the iwi as some members need to participate in the Pākehā world unwillingly. Relationships with other iwi have soured as a result of Pākehā influence. Ihimaera connects the traumas experienced by current Māori to the trauma of previous generations, and insinuates that Pākehā refusal to acknowledge Māori mana is what perpetuates this trauma.

The Matriarch was originally published in 1986, and revised in 2008 as part of Ihimaera's larger plan to revise all of his novels. *The Matriarch* is a large novel – it is about 500 pages long. Despite this length, Ihimaera felt that it “was only half of a manuscript” (495) and published the second half in *The Dream Swimmer* (2000), which expands on themes and symbols encountered in *The Matriarch*. *The Matriarch* encompasses a wide variety of different writing styles, oral storytelling, history lessons, parliament speeches, and interviews. It weaves fact and fiction through each other to create an epic. Ihimaera has sometimes received criticism that he has presented a false history (Romaine 34) by weaving fact and fiction through each other, but he has been clear that this is a novel and not a history text book. Nevertheless, in collecting information from different fields, Ihimaera is creating a comprehensive picture of Māori trauma. Ihimaera is showing that in multiple realms – history, politics, socially, educationally, spiritually – Māori have been marginalized and victimized.

There are three aspects in *The Matriarch* that I want to discuss. The first is its work as postmemory activism that alerts the reader to Māori victimization. Secondly, the nature of this

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postmemory activism is angry and accusatory towards Pākehā. Finally, because it is accusatory towards Pākehā, it questions Pākehā's place in New Zealand and is therefore political.

The style of *The Matriarch* is one of the clearest indicators that this is a postmemory work. The narrative is not presented simply. It is structurally confusing as voices merge through each other, and at times it is unclear who is speaking. The history sections sometimes read as if they are oral storytelling moments; other times they read as if they are a history textbook. Because they are so extensive, it feels at times that these sections have nothing to do with the plot of Tama investigating his mythical grandmother. But that is the point: what seems unconnected, or irrelevant because it is from the past, actually does have an impact in the present. These histories read as if they are oral story-telling moments, creating multiple levels of postmemory work. On the micro level, Tama is doing postmemory work specifically about his grandmother. He is collecting memories and investigating her life, to remember her legacy. On a bigger scale, Riripeti is also engaging in postmemory work by teaching her grandson a complete, Māori, perspective of New Zealand's history. She realizes that her iwi only know parts of their whakapapa, or only parts of violence which Pākehā have perpetrated; her iwi have a fragmented knowledge of the past and consequently a fragmented understanding of the present. But for Riripeti, this history is not fragmented. Consequently, she spends a large amount of time creating one comprehensive storyline, and it is spoken with such authority that this is presented as fact, and as the only correct interpretation of history. On the macro level, Ihimaera is also engaging in postmemory work. He has collected various writing sources and placed them together in order to tell a comprehensive story of Māori marginalization, destruction of mana, and transgenerational trauma.

The opening whakapapa (genealogy) is one aspect that shows how Māori have been marginalized. This whakapapa is significant because it establishes the origin of mana, not only for

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Tama and Riripeti specifically, but for all Māori in general. New Zealand is special particularly for Māori because their ancestors were the ones who made New Zealand appear⁶, and therefore this whakapapa is particularly important. It is from this country, and these ancestors – including gods – from which Māori descended. The Māori are tangata whenua – people of the land – and their heritage provided them with mana. The whakapapa content, then, gives authority and prestige to all Māori iwi. The image the whakapapa suggests is one of Māori pride and strength. The whakapapa draws the reader – including the Pākehā reader – in, and because this is being narrated by Riripeti, it makes the reader feel involved and part of the tangata whenua⁷. This notated oral history feels personal. When Riripeti says, “A thousand years and further back, mokopuna, we had eternity in us” (13), the reader feels proud of their history.

But:

“Then came the Pākehā.”

Bringing this whakapapa to a close, this sentence abruptly and harshly quells any notion that this story has a positive ending. Printed in a line of its own at the end of the chapter it brings the present into very sharp focus and pulls the reader out of their reverie. Māori are not towering figures of strength anymore, but significantly marginalized. And the blame is laid squarely on the Pākehā. In the same way that even Pākehā readers could feel included in the whakapapa despite their European heritage, these same Pākehā readers now feel addressed by Riripeti's reproach, even if they have not directly carried out acts of violence against Māori. This reproach illuminates

⁶ According to Māori myth, the half god, half man, Maui Tikitiki a Taranga went fishing with his brothers, where he caught a very large fish – the North Island. The resting place of Maui's canoe is what is now known as the South Island.

⁷ *Tangata Whenua* literally translates into “people of the land”, and refers to Māori. Pākehā are called “tangata ti tiriti” - literally, people of the treaty. These terms provide the legitimacy of these peoples to live in New Zealand.

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diachronic implication. The sharp distinction between a long-winded Māori whakapapa narration and the single line at its end carries the full weight of Pākehā destruction. In writing this whakapapa, Ihimaera is collecting facets of Māori culture and bringing them back together.

Another discipline which Ihimaera draws on for his postmemory work is history. However, instead of merely unearthing forgotten stories, Ihimaera, through Rirepti's voice, puts forward a different version of history. This counter-history contests the dominant Pākehā perspective on significant events and in doing so presents the reader an alternative way of looking at history, as well as at Pākehā and Māori identity. *The Matriarch* chips away at the established foundation for Pākehā identity as well as their claim to New Zealand. An example of this is when Riripeti recounts the arrival of James Cook:

All New Zealand schoolchildren are taught about Captain James Cook's discovery of New Zealand and his historic landfall at Poverty Bay in the *Endeavour* on October⁸ 1769. They are told that the event was quite glorious – that a lad at the masthead shouted 'Land Ahoy!' at 2 p.m. on that day, a curly-headed youth after whom the land from that he had sighted, Young Nick's Head, was named... Ah yes, the stuff of romance indeed!

But what the schoolchildren are not told is that Cook's first landing was marked by the killing of a Māori called Te Maro, shot through the heart by a musket bullet, Monday 9 October 1769. Then on the morning of Tuesday 10 October 1769, another Māori called Te Rakau was shot and killed, and three others were wounded. During the afternoon of that same day a further four Māori were murdered in the bay merely because they had showed fight when molested, and three of their companions were taken captive. (47)

⁸ Ihimaera does not mention the date specifically in this quote; this is not a typo.

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In *The Matriarch* readers receive a more complete picture of what happened in this significant historical moment. What is often “forgotten” is added back into New Zealand’s history discourse. Tama’s education in Māoritanga is a strong theme in the novel. Riripeti is aware of the dangers of not teaching Tama his heritage. Riripeti knows that Tama will receive a Pākehā education at school and so she becomes assertive in teaching him the Māori perspective. This contrast between Māori and Pākehā education shows how Pākehā across generations are complicit in Māori loss and marginalization. How come school children are not taught that six Māori were killed at this historical moment? Considering that most government officials and educators were – and still are – Pākehā it is easy to see why this part of the history was ‘forgotten’ or glossed over. This is one of many examples where the negative impact on Māori is ignored and by ignoring this incident, Māori marginalisation is legitimized in other circumstances. This enables racism to occur across generations. By identifying the forgotten facts of this event, *The Matriarch* highlights traumatizing events for Māori. Further, as this piece of history is forgotten, Māori are not given the room to mourn the loss of this. Frosch writes about the necessity of mourning traumatic events in order to be able to move on or beyond the trauma (20-23), acknowledging that it may be impossible to mourn under some circumstances, especially “in the absence of acknowledgement of what has been damaged and of the responsibility for what has happened” (22). Forgetting that six Māori were killed on the first few days of establishing a British colony, the birth of a new nation, and refusing to take responsibility, much less even acknowledge that it happened, insinuates that Māori are not important. This is exactly the kind of ideology that has been perpetuated in New Zealand for generations. That Māori are not able to mourn their loss, results in the trauma to be passed on from generation to generation, and with additional racist, and therefore traumatic incidents occurring, this trauma is only compounded. Māori generations are inheriting trauma from a previous

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generation, which then is perpetuated by Pākehā refusing to acknowledge their complicity in perpetuating it, by forgetting significant details of founding events. By forgetting this, Pākehā are implicated in not allowing Māori to grieve their loss. Christopher Isherwood argues that *The Matriarch* “can be read as part of a larger campaign against Pākehā to acknowledge and compensate for historical injustices” (120). This is why texts like *The Matriarch* are so important: it alerts the readers, especially Pākehā, of this forgotten part of history. It reframes the incomplete memories which Pākehā have of their past. If school children are not being taught this, then literature can play a role in bringing back these memories and facts to the forefront of New Zealander’s minds.

The Matriarch is not merely about creating awareness of forgotten facts; it is not just about telling people that Māori have been and continue to be marginalized. Rather, there is a strong tone in the way Ihimaera presents this new information. Reviews of *The Matriarch* “all categorize *The Matriarch* as a novel which ... is openly antagonistic towards Pākehā” (Kennedy 75). Ihimaera himself has said in an interview that Riripeti “is at war with the Pākehā” (Ihimaera 2004). Since it was published, *The Matriarch* has been recognized for being accusatory towards Pākehā; there is a sense of bitterness present.

One of the ways in which the bitterness presents itself is through sarcasm. The narrator is informing the reader about the Treaty of Waitangi and how Pākehā and the British had different views on the legitimacy of the treaty legally:

The Treaty has therefore been praised for its High Mindedness, its Attempt at an Honourable Solution to Accommodating the Needs of the Pākehā (and Māori), its Integrity. The trouble is that the Treaty has never had any status in domestic or international law. The Pākehā signed it knowing it was worthless. (86)

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The capital letters identify this as having a sarcastic undertone. The capital letters turn it into a title, which a reader reads differently, at a different pitch than they would have done had these words all had lower case letters. The second and third sentences reveal what was really the intention: signing the treaty was worthless. Putting “the Māori” in brackets also reveals that the Māori were not really considered in the treaty. It was made for political gain, because, “now we belonged to you” (Ihimaera 87). The “high mindedness” has a double role: it can mean “marked by elevated principles” (Merriam-Webster) – which is how the Pākehā were putting it forward here. But it also can mean “pretentious”, which is clearly what the second and third sentences of this quote reveal as being the real meaning. Ihimaera puts it so bluntly that there is no escaping, or worming out from this fact and Pākehā are forced to acknowledge that *this* is something they benefit from. This is part of their history, and Māori have had very little input or power on how this nation came to be. This example has become one of the founding examples to be copied on how to deal with Māori, and this principle operates still today. Māori are an afterthought – put in brackets in political policies as a side note, all the while that Pākehā are patting themselves on the back for their “High Mindedness”. The politicians with their policies are of course implicated – or perhaps even perpetrators – here. But the general Pākehā public who benefits from these policies, are also connected, and should have the courage to acknowledge this.

Another way in which the angry tone comes to the foreground is in the direct address which Ihimaera uses. Ihimaera does this on multiple levels. Initially, the narrator addresses a character in the novel directly: “Let me address you, my Pākehā ancestor, Thomas Halbert” (71). This is direct language, and a clear delineation of race is made here. Throughout the novel, Māori mana is elevated partially through diminishing Pākehā mana. Tompkins recognizes that “echoes of this passage and its harsh tone linger throughout the novel, contrasting the gentler greetings to the

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narrator's Maori readers and long-dead relatives" (488). Whenever a clear distinction is made between Māori and Pākehā usually the Pākehā is not referred to positively, such as at the end of the whakapapa. This is again the case here, where the Pākehā is not seen in a positive light, but it is a reproach highlighting the consequences of Pākehā action. Later in this section Halbert is sarcastically called "Pro-Māori", because he apparently aided the cause of the Māori, by providing them with guns but then sold his Māori son's land to Pākehā without his iwi's permission. He killed the family he married into by supplying them with guns to kill each other, as well as by stealing their land and removing a part of their heritage. Riripeti claims that it is Halbert's 'Pākehā-ness' which caused him to act the way he did. The specific case of Halbert functions to build up towards accusing the collective Pākehā community. Halbert is used as an example to depict what Pākehā have done, and continue to do, for generations. Although Halbert is mentioned specifically, he functions as a representative of the Pākehā community – past and present – and as such, this community is being addressed at the same time as Halbert. This is articulated more clearly several pages later, when *The Matriarch* addresses the Pākehā reader directly again when talking about the treaty. This time the narrator does not talk to a single, direct ancestor, but to the Pākehā as a whole:

The British Crown has consistently broken its contract (and all you Pākehā lawyers can argue until the cows come home that the Treaty wasn't a legal document but we believe it is) ...
 For most assuredly you, Pākehā, began taking the land from us as you were signing your worthless Treaty. You, Pākehā, began taking away our culture. You said at the time that we were now one people, he iwi Kotahi tatou. What you really meant was that we now belonged to you. (86-87)

There is directness in the word "you". It is repeated several times so that there is no chance that the reader misses this cue. The word "you" suggests a personal address from the author to the reader;

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the reader cannot deflect the reproach to other characters. Isolating the word “Pākehā” in between the commas underscores who this reproach is directed towards. Although the current reader is not the one who has perpetrated this – the book was written years after the treaty was signed – the emphasis on *You, Pākehā*, reiterates that Pākehā are still complicit in Māori trauma. In both instances – Halbert specifically, and the Pākehā community – the key accusation is that Pākehā have stolen Māori land and in doing so, have taken away their culture.

Ihimaera is direct in accusing Pākehā of perpetrating Māori transgenerational trauma by addressing them directly. He also does it by asking pointed questions. He does not use euphemisms or tread carefully when discussing the loss of Māoritanga, or Māori land:

What contentment is there for Māori, knowing how our forefathers fought and died last century to rectify the inconsistencies and injustices that the Treaty embodies? Are we to continue to ignore, in these modern times, the struggle they endured to prevent land from being swallowed up by the greedy Pākehā speculators, and to prevent our customs and traditions from being trampled on by the Pākehā? (87)

The vocabulary is at times academic and formal instead of sentimental. It posits questions directly and in doing so contends that Pākehā have trampled on Māori customs and traditions. In doing so, Pākehā have broken the treaty which they created. Māoritanga was stolen and has not been returned since then – largely as a result of Pākehā impeding the way. This is another way that Pākehā are implicated in perpetuating Māori transgenerational trauma. With the direct *You, Pākehā* in the next paragraph, modern Pākehā are grouped together with the “greedy Pākehā speculators”, a very uncomfortable place to be for the reader. As long as the goal is assimilation, Māori continue to experience transgenerational trauma, and Ihimaera places the blame directly on Pākehā for that.

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Further, the whakapapa and history, remains important for Māori culture, which is why they cannot forget, in these modern times, the struggles of trying to keep their own land. This land has not been returned and therefore for many Māori, their identity remains fractured. By using this direct language, Ihimaera shows how transgenerational trauma is directly connected to Pākehā as implicated subjects. This is not to say that there would be no transgenerational trauma if Pākehā did not continue to act as implicated subjects, but the extent of the trauma would be much less. Reconciliation under these circumstances is near impossible because Pākehā refuse to accept how their behaviour and their status as Pākehā perpetuates Māori transgenerational trauma.

The angry nature of Riripeti's, and by implication Ihimaera's, accusations do more than illuminate how Māori have been marginalized; it has strong political implications too. They show how Pākehā are implicated in perpetuating Māori trauma. *The Matriarch* does this not only by rejecting Pākehā glory, as was seen in the Cook story earlier, but also by justifying Māori scandals by turning them into moments of Māori mana. One of the strongest examples is the retelling of the Matawhero massacre, where Te Kooti massacred this settlement. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this event is generally seen as a black spot on the Māori history, because of its violence. Tellingly, the narrator does not call it the Matawhero massacre, but the Matawhero *Retaliation*. The Matawhero retaliation, where Te Kooti massacred a Pākehā community, is described in extensive and violent detail. *The Matriarch* takes the time to inform the reader of what happened before the Matawhero massacre occurred: how Te Kooti was exiled to the Chatham Islands for crimes he did not commit; how he wanted to avoid war but was ignored by the Pākehā; how he warned the Pākehā that their actions would have serious consequences. Ihimaera does not shy away from describing how violent the deaths were; he details at length how each victim was killed. He is ensuring that the memories and stories that both his Māori and Pākehā audience have are

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absolutely complete, that there are no more gaps. He also uses Māori concepts to justify Te Kooti's actions. He explains the concept of *utu*, which Pākehā have simply translated into 'revenge'. However, as *The Matriarch* is at pains to explain, *utu* is much more nuanced than this. It is not simply the act of hurting someone because they have hurt you. It can also be used in a positive sense: if someone has been given a gift, reciprocating with another gift is also a form of *utu*. Usually, however, *utu* is used in a negative sense. Most importantly, the action of revenge must be fitting of the original sin, otherwise the code of honour will still not be upheld. In calling the Matawhero event an appropriate form of *utu*, *The Matriarch* indicates that the response was an appropriate measure. The retaliation was violent and a serious loss for Pākehā. This in turn demonstrates the extent of trauma inflicted on Māori. The trauma and injustice Māori have faced and are still facing is deep. By rewriting the Matawhero retaliation as a massacre, Pākehā refuse to acknowledge the trauma that has been inflicted on Māori. Further, by not being able to recognize that this trauma has been inflicted by Pākehā, Pākehā will struggle to acknowledge other traumas inflicted on Māori. Neither are Māori able to recover from their trauma, but it is passed from generation to generation. By renaming the Matawhero event, and removing significant background information Pākehā have contributed to creating the gaps that post generations have accrued.

Another point which *The Matriarch* brings up is the reaction to this event:

The second thing you notice about the small settlement is that nobody likes to talk about the Matawhero Retaliation... When you ask Pākehā people they, also, begin to shift from the left foot to the right foot. It's almost as if, in the asking, you are challenging their right to be there. (175-176)

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Ihimeara is right that there is an intentional silence surrounding this event. There is a taboo about the Matawhero Retaliation, and so *The Matriarch* shows how the fragmenting of the past comes into being. It is because of this communal silence that New Zealanders do not have a complete picture of their past, and subsequently a proper understanding on how to deal with the transgenerational trauma experienced by Māori. More importantly, Ihimaera refers to the political implication of this event. Despite framing this event as the Matawhero Massacre, Pākehā are aware that this was done in retaliation to violence perpetrated and applauded by Pākehā. Since their arrival, Pākehā persistently have perpetrated violence, and, as a community, Pākehā have not acknowledged their collective participation or responsibility. Pākehā legitimacy for living in New Zealand has been peppered by violence and broken promises, and *The Matriarch* fiercely reminds Pākehā of the way they have callously broken Māori mana.

Ihimaera is political in his writing in content, but also in the style of writing. The strongest way of bringing this across is through code-switching. Code-switching is defined as “an individual’s use of two or more language varieties in the same speech event or exchange” (Woolward 73-74). New Zealand literature often inserts te reo into the text. There are various ways of integrating the languages in the text. Lourdes Torres identifies three different ways in which authors use code-switching. The first way is by borrowing words from a second or third language that are common knowledge to the reader. Te reo words such as *haere mai* (welcome), *mokopuna* (grandchild), *iwi* (tribe), and *moko* (face tattoo) appear regularly throughout the text, without a translation. There is also no glossary explaining the terms elsewhere. It is expected that the reader knows what they mean, and in the case of *The Matriarch* indicates that New Zealanders are the intended audience. A second way to employ code-switching is to use the second or third languages more extensively but providing a translation, either in the form of a glossary, or integrating the translation into the text:

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“Kumea mai, te waka,’ the group chanted. ‘Toia mai, te waka. Haul the canoe. Drag the canoe. To the anchoring place the canoe” (40-41). Ihimaera also does this when quoting Italian opera aria lyrics: “*La luce langue, il faro spegnesi ch’eterno scorre per gli ampi cieli. Notte desiata, provvida veli la man colpevole che ferira.* Light weakens, and the beacon that eternally courses the far-flung heavens is spent...” (99). Again, it takes little effort on the reader’s part to understand what is being said. The third way of using code switching is by using the second or third languages without providing a translation at all:

E hine tangi kino, kati ra te hakari. Whakarongo a tai ka rongo na tuau, he toro taua ra, he whakahakari an nga waho i, e ngarue ra. I rite pea koe, te rere a te kahu I whano, a, i whakatopa ki te uru, kit e rangi te taumata ra. Koe pure i hau-ariki, ko te puke i noho ai nga manu o tane. E kore pea koe, e manakohia mai. Ka mimiti nga tai, ka ngaro te tangata noho kau ake nei... kia uhia koe kit e kupu o te tikanga a koro kia tutuki, kati ra hoki mai. (Ihimaera 212-213)

This is merely an excerpt of this passage. It goes on for several lines longer, all in te reo. This makes it harder for the reader to follow what is happening; they actually have to make a concerted effort to discover the meaning of the words by looking up translations outside of the text. Various critics agree that “code-switching is an artistic choice with political ramifications” (Torres, Ashcroft et al.). Code switching, especially in literature (as opposed to every day speech), is intentional. Especially the more extreme forms of code-switching work to alienate the Pākehā reader from the Māori world and this is intentional. Like the use of direct address, Ihimaera is deliberate about separating the Māori from the Pākehā. But also, many Māori did not speak their own language. By incorporating so much te reo into his text, Ihimaera is revealing how much Māori have lost; how much Māoritanga has disappeared. As part of not being able to understand their own language, Māori have lost a key

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part of their identity. The next generations feel this loss, but do not have the vocabulary – literally, because they cannot speak their own language anymore – to articulate what has gotten lost. Code-switching here highlights, and pieces together, this part of their heritage by unapologetically using te reo within the context of an English text, and giving it the same value as the English text. A reader, especially a Pākehā reader is likely to skim over these passages because they do not understand what is being said anyway, which is representative of what Pākehā have been doing to Māori all along: not even making an attempt to understand Māori culture.

Using the various forms of code-switching reveals the extent of Pākehā implication. There is an exotic feel to the code-switching with translation. It makes the reader feel cultured because they are ‘learning’ about a culture. They can feel included in the readership because they can still understand the meaning of the text. But the code-switching without translation destroys that sentiment. These sections are frustrating, especially because some of them are quite extensive. It makes the reader aware of how much they do *not* have a command of the other cultures. The use of code-switching in *The Matriarch* shatters the illusion that Pākehā are well-informed, cultured people who care about the Māori. They cannot even understand a New Zealand novel without needing the text to be translated.

Another way in which *The Matriarch* refers to a larger context is through biblical references. The first time a Biblical reference is made, is in the whakapapa Riripeti recites at the beginning of the novel. The beginning of the whakapapa is reminiscent of the Pākehā-Christian Bible: “At the beginning was Te Kore, the Void. Within the Void, the Nothingness, there came Te Po, the Night” (8). Except, instead of telling the Pākehā narrative, Ihimaera narrates the Māori story. This whakapapa functions to remind both Pākehā and Māori of Māori myth and history. Often, neither Pākehā nor Māori audiences have a comprehensive knowledge of the Māori creation narrative and Ihimaera is

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at pains to provide a story that is as complete as possible. In doing so, it establishes, especially addressing Pākehā, what kind of heritage and mana has been destroyed in the assimilation of Māori. Although this is clearly a Māori story, the Biblical references are used to legitimize the Māori story and give it equal footing to the Pākehā narrative. Like the Biblical account, where humanity is given God's breath to start life, humanity is born when the god Tane breathes life into Hineahuone (10). When Riripeti describes and shows Tama the land that he will inherit, it echoes the language that God uses to show Moses and Joshua the land of Canaan to the Israelites (12). Romaine stresses that "the basis for Pākehā sovereignty is grounded not just in bibles and muskets, but also in presumed spiritual superiority" (46). In using the same biblical background as Pākehā, Riripeti rejects the notion of Pākehā spiritual superiority, but declares that Māori spirituality is just as legitimate as Pākehā spirituality. It implies that Pākehā spiritual superiority is spiritual haughtiness. On no grounds are Pākehā superior: not spiritually, and certainly not politically.

Biblical imagery remains a strong motif throughout the entire text. A key image is comparing the Māori to the Israelites of the Old Testament in the land of the Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Drawing parallels between Māori and the Israelites highlights several things. One is that it makes the parallel that the Māori are God's chosen people for New Zealand, and the Pākehā, as Egyptians, are seen as God's enemies: "the Pākehā hardened their hearts against [God] and would not see his goodness even when the vision was given unto them... [Te Kooti] worked for Pharaoh, in the bush and on the farmland. He was a fine horseman and, like Moses, was well respected" (148). By making the claim that Māori are God's chosen people, it implies that the Pākehā who oppose Māori – or marginalize or mistreat them – are also against the Christian God. For a Pākehā, with their heritage rooted in Christianity, this is a serious offence. Anyone who is not for God is against God (Matthew

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12:30), and so anyone who is not for the Māori is by default also against God. Moreover, like the whakapapa, it lays claim to Māori spiritual superiority over Pākehā spirituality.

Another parallel between Māori and the Jews is that both have experienced many traumatic events. By drawing the parallel between the Māori and the Jews *The Matriarch* is arguing that the depth of their trauma is very extensive – as significant as the trauma and damage which Jews have experienced. Remembering Jewish trauma opens up space for remembering Māori trauma, as well as understanding how Māori trauma has functioned, which is what Rothberg would call multidirectional memory (2009 11). By using this analogy, Ihimaera puts out into the open the traumatic experiences of the Māori. They have been living under a hardened Pharaoh who should not be their master. Ihimaera does not shy away from arguing this and he does so both directly as in his direct language, but also through the use of imagery, especially Biblical imagery. *The Matriarch* legitimizes the Māori right to live in New Zealand, in the way that they envision, not the way that Pākehā want them to. In Māoritanga, Māori do not need postmemory work, because their whakapapa and their Māoritanga is not alienated: their history is such a large part of their identity, that it is not fragmented.

The Matriarch employs a variety of techniques to illuminate Māori transgenerational trauma, not necessarily through emphasizing the trauma itself, but by reframing New Zealand's history. In doing so, Pākehā are identified as being perpetuating this trauma in the way that history and politics have worked to diminish Māori mana. Reflective of the style of the Early Renaissance, a sense of anger is present in the tone. Ultimately, this anger is a political statement about the injustices which Māori continue to face. As the Later Renaissance began to take shape, this anger began to fade away but, as the following chapter will explore, the political implications did not.

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Chapter 3: The Later Renaissance

Nuanced but no less Political

As we have seen in the previous chapter, Māori writing in the Early Renaissance stemmed from an angry reaction to colonisation by Pākehā; these writers were claiming their voice and their story instead of acquiescing to the Pākehā narrative. It was a political response towards Pākehā refusal to appropriately acknowledge and respond to this past. In the Later Renaissance a shift in Māori writing can be seen: although it continues to address the same political issues which Early Renaissance writers addressed, it takes on a much more nuanced, inquisitive and less angry tone. Because the Later Renaissance builds on the postmemory work of the Early Renaissance, this writing is less angry, but no less politicized. The work of the Early Renaissance created a space for Māori writing and perspectives to enter the mainstream social world. Later renaissance writers added to this discourse through continued engagement in postmemory work: writing about their heritage and imaginatively filling in the gaps by writing about forgotten or taboo subjects as well as articulating what it meant to fill in those gaps. Paula Morris' novel *Rangatira* (2011), for example, tells a story that is often ignored or glossed over in the New Zealand curriculum – that of Paratene Te Manu's 1863 trip to England and the exploitative way he and his party were treated during this trip⁹ - but it also emphasizes many 'good' Pākehā who aided the Māori in returning to New Zealand. The tone is therefore more sorrowful than angry at what happened. The novel remains clear in its critique of

⁹ Paratene Te Manu was a real figure in New Zealand history, and was one of the last people to fight alongside Hongi Hika a Māori chief who has the reputation for being bloodthirsty and heartless towards Pākehā and Māori. Paratene had, by association with Hongi Hika, a lot of mana. In 1863 William Jenkins, a Wesleyan preacher, organised a trip to England for a Māori party. The Māori party were told they would meet Queen Victoria – which they did – but were not told that they would be paraded in front of audiences as objects to fundraise money for Jenkins. Jenkins exploited them, and made them stay in England much longer than they had originally agreed to. Other missionary figures in England raised money for the Māori party to pay for their trip back home to New Zealand.

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Jenkins' degrading behaviour and links his actions to the suffering which Paratene's iwi is now experiencing, especially in terms of their land loss. Paratene Te Manu is Morris' ancestor, so although she is imagining the scenarios in the novel, there is a personal connection to the subject matter. Similarly, the subject matter of Tina Makereti's novel is rooted in her personal history – and interestingly, was until recently also a taboo topic. *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* engages not only with Pākehā and Māori heritage, but also Moriori heritage. According to family tradition, Makereti has a Moriori ancestor.

Makereti is a well-established New Zealand writer, who currently teaches at the English and Media department at Massey University. She is engaged with Māori and Moriori literature activism and works together with other Māori authors, including Witi Ihimaera. In 2017 Ihimaera and Makereti published *Black Marks on a White Page*, which is a collection of short stories written by Māori and Pasifika authors. Makereti is of Māori, Pākehā and Moriori descent and *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* features characters of similar heritage. Makereti won the inaugural Ngā Kupu Ora Book award in 2011 for her first published work, a short story collection *Once Upon a Time in Aotearoa*. The stories from this book originate from her studies for her MA in Creative Writing. She later won the same prize for *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* in 2014, which was her first novel. She gained her PhD in Creative Writing from Victoria University in 2013 where she analysed how Patricia Grace's *Baby No-Eyes* and Kim Scott's *Benang* "[changes] our personal, cultural and national understandings of ourselves by re-imagining the accepted historical stories or national myths" (Makereti 2020) through Indigenous perspectives. Similarly to her MA, the creative writing component of her PhD study resulted in a published book: *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*. Where there is literary criticism on *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*, it is usually a part of a larger discussion concerning more general subjects within New Zealand or Māori literature. Michaela Moura-Kocoglu's article *More than*

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Unfinished Business – Transgenerational Trauma and Indigenous Storytelling in Tina Makereti's

Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings is an exception to this. This article discusses at length how transgenerational trauma is played out in the novel, focussing on the trope of haunting in perpetuating systemic transgenerational trauma. But it sidesteps the question of how Pākehā and Māori are implicated subjects in this history. Furthermore, although it alludes to the novel's work in reconstructing indigenous identity, it does not delve into how this functions as postmemory activism.

Postmemory clearly occurs in the two main plot lines of *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*. The first plot, set in the early 20th century, concerns Mere, a Māori woman, and Iraia, a Moriori man. As a Moriori, Iraia is the slave of Mere's family. However, Mere and Iraia fall in love; when caught, they run away from the South Island to Wellington. During Mere's pregnancy, Iraia dies from the Influenza epidemic¹⁰. Mere then returns to her family on the South Island, where her relationship with Iraia is not talked about. Later, a Pākehā comes to work on the farm, and she eventually marries him. The second plot is set generations later, and concerns Mere and Iraia's descendants, Lula and Bigs. They are twins, but Lula is white and Bigs is dark-skinned. Lula identifies as Pākehā for most of her life, but cannot shake the feeling that something is incomplete, especially when her Māori mother, Tui, refuses to talk about her past or heritage. After a three-year overseas stint, Lula returns home, like Tama Mahana in *The Matriarch*, to find her identity. Bigs, however, seems not have any problems with his heritage, and finds it easy to reject his Pākehā and Moriori heritage, fully embracing his Māori side. When Lula and Bigs inherit property on Rēkohu, they need to renovate the house, Lula embraces the project wholeheartedly, whereas Bigs finds it much less momentous.

¹⁰ The Influenza Epidemic the novel seems to be referring to is the Influenza Epidemic in 1918 which killed about 9000 people in two months; it is the largest event that claimed so many lives in such a short time. It disproportionately affected Māori and by extension Moriori.

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There is a third significant narrative, which is told from the perspective of Imi. It is later revealed that Imi is Iraia and Lula's ancestor, who was eaten by Māori during the Moriori massacre. This massacre is a key catalyst for some of the resentment between Māori and Moriori. Imi lives on in the figure of a semi-omniscient ghost and can enter his descendants' bodies without their awareness. In this way, he is acutely aware of what is happening both in the Mere/Iraia narrative and the Lula/Bigs narrative. As Imi follows these various characters he provides a commentary on the present events, by reflecting on the past and foreshadowing the future. He is aware that he does not know everything and needs the work of his characters to make his memories more complete. Unlike *The Matriarch* where events are not told in chronological order, in *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* each plot line is told in chronological order: if one read only the Mere/Iraia plot, the text would read chronologically. The same would occur for the Lula/Bigs plot. However, these two plots are broken up and woven through each other resulting in constant switching between time periods. Further, because Imi follows both plot lines, his narrative is not chronological.

Hence, although the individual plots are told chronologically, the novel is not structurally linear. Rather, the novel is a complex medley of stories that weave through each other. The novel's structure reflects the complexity of coping with trauma, postmemory and the different positions of implicated subjects. The reader is called upon to piece together the whole picture, as far as is possible. The fragmented structure of the story is felt especially at the beginning when the reader has very little understanding of what is going on. Events happen that indicate to the reader that they are missing information but initially they cannot articulate what information they require. An example is when Mere, as a toddler wants to play with Iraia, but is initially forbidden to do so. The reader knows there is a gap in their understanding concerning why Mere's family do not consider Iraia a suitable playmate for Mere, but initially cannot place that this is because Iraia is Moriori. This

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is only hinted at when Imi finds Iraia and recognizes him as family. The novel makes no indication that Mere's whanau (immediate family) was directly involved in the massacre. However, it is likely that Mere's grandfather's generation were as the novel hints that Iraia's mother, who was the same age as Mere's mother, was forcibly removed from Rēkohu – presumably during the massacre. Regardless as to whether Mere's whanau participated in the initial violence or not, they certainly participated in subjugating and exploiting the Moriori through slavery. Like Mere, the reader is never told directly that Iraia is Moriori. No one talks to Mere about the reason behind this, and at first she is not aware that Iraia is Moriori, nor the significance of that identity. Because of this silence, Mere and the reader initially only have loose fragments to construct a narrative as to why Iraia is treated like a slave. This manner of structuring the novel and leaving out important information models for the reader the silences that exist between generations and that remain throughout the novel, as Lula clearly struggles to put her various heritages together in the aftermath of her mother's death. Both plots leave the reader with unanswered – and at times, even unasked – questions, which, when they are mixed through each other is an unsettling experience. The effect of this kind of structuring is that the reader has a quasi-experience of what it is for Māori and Moriori who are dealing with missing pieces of information.

But weaving the two plot lines together serves a deeper purpose than imagining for a Pākehā reader what it is like to be part of the post-memorial generation: it also demonstrates how transgenerational trauma is passed down from generation to generation, and what the consequences are when communities do not engage in postmemory work. In writing the two plotlines next to each other, the reader has a side-by-side impression of how the impact of a single traumatic event, such as the Moriori massacre, is evident in the two different generations. A symbol that represents how generations are connected to each other is Mere's rēwena (sourdough) jar. It

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was her mother's dough, and she uses it to feel connected to her mother, who passed away when she was little. With this old dough, Mere can make new bread. The 'past' dough is integral to making the new dough, and it cannot be separated from the new bread. In other words, this old dough is passed down to the next generation and the next generation. When Mere forgets to take her mother's dough with her when she runs away with Iraia, it is symbolic of the loss Mere and Iraia face. They lose not only their iwi and home, but also the stories and whakapapa that was an important part of their heritage. Not only are they physically cut off from Mere's iwi, but also emotionally and spiritually. After Iraia's death, Mere returns to her iwi, and to her mother's rēwena jar. However, the rēwena jar does not become a way to retell stories from the past, but becomes an element of a fragmented past that represents a taboo subject. At the end of the novel, when Mere has remarried, as she puts away "her flour and shelves the rēwena jar she thinks of a day at the end of the last summer of her childhood, a tall boy who shadowed her, her mother's jar in his arms, safer even than it was in hers" (270), but she does not articulate the feelings she still has for Iraia out loud. Rather, "she never speaks of the years before her marriage [to Jack], in case their careful union comes apart" (270). As a matter of self-preservation, Mere is unable to speak about her marriage to Iraia, perpetuating a system of transgenerational trauma. Because Iraia is of Moriori descent, Mere's elopement with him is a scandal – Iraia is a taboo topic. It is convenient for Mere's whanau that Iraia has died, because Iraia can now be forgotten. In eloping with Mere, Iraia had to be recognized as fully human and consequently Mere's whanau is forced to recognize that they have been implicated in marginalizing Moriori. In Iraia's death, Mere's whanau can silence Iraia's legacy. For Mere, keeping silent about Iraia allows her to live in peace with her family. When Mere is little, she knows that Iraia is different, but she does not know what the reasoning behind the difference is. Iraia is the family slave, and he must do everybody's bidding, including Mere's. Iraia, however, is much more aware of

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these things because he is experiencing abuse and the trauma of the massacre is being perpetuated onto him by other members of Mere's family. The treatment which Iraia experiences makes him feel not like a real person, a human being, but as "a shadow of one" (20). Iraia comments that he is not aware of how he came to the awareness that he was a shadow: "He did not know where he got these strange thoughts, did not remember ever hearing them" (20). Direct words were not necessary to make clear to him that he was a lesser person. The victims of the massacre are aware of the story somehow, also across generations, but the post-generations of the perpetrators are not. This makes Mere and her family implicated subjects because they are suppressing the story of violence.

The implicitness inherent in transferring transgenerational trauma does not end with Iraia but is further passed down from generation to generation. Consequently less and less knowledge reaches each generation and resulted in a void felt by the characters in the novel. Moura-Koçoğlu comments that "this void translates into the pattern of transgenerational trauma easily recognized in the spirit's descendants over more than a century, symbolized by silencing, voicelessness and, most importantly, by the lack of stories" (Moura-Koçoğlu 26). This can be seen most clearly in Tui's behaviour. Tui, Lula's mother, is a descendant of Mere and Iraia, not Mere and Jack. As a result, Tui has been bullied by her iwi and it became so bad that at a point Tui decided to leave her Māori community. Traumatized, Tui is unable, or at least unwilling, to talk about her heritage, and so certain subjects, or parts of subjects become taboo. Consequently, Lula and Bigs are disassociated from their Māori heritage and do not meet the Māori side of their family until Tui's tangi (funeral). Tui was fragmented within herself. After Tui's death, Lula's father tells Lula "There were things your mother didn't like to say. Even to me. But she did say when the time came, she had to go back. She was sure about that" (88). Tui's relationship to her iwi is complicated because despite the pain and

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trauma that stemmed from their behaviour, Tui could not let it go completely, stipulating that she be buried on the marae. Tui's behaviour shows how the fragmented self copes with trauma. More significantly, Tui's behaviour illustrates the impact this has on the next generation.

The next generation is aware that there is a void in their lives, but due to their mother's silence, Lula and Bigs cannot articulate what this void is. They make attempts to look into this void, but are unsuccessful:

It was often like that. She knew her questions were not unreasonable, and that her mother was reacting to something else beyond her knowledge, so that eventually the questions began to be about something else rather than her strange twinning which, after all, wasn't so strange once you got used to it. Mostly the questions went unanswered until they also became unvoiced. Once Lula and Bigs became teenagers, the questions were not just unvoiced but unrecognised, submerged in the morass of anxieties and problematic social hierarchies that ruled Lula's life. Between her and her mother a space existed that Lula didn't know how to cross. (37-38)

Lula's questions become suppressed by her mother's silence, and it seems as if they have all but disappeared. The unreachable space between Lula and Tui is there because the emotions and trauma behind Tui's silence is beyond words or rational understanding. However, even if her mind can no longer recognize the questions, it does not mean they have disappeared: Lula's body remembers. Lula's surprising longing for home while in London shows this. When she sees a carved Māori male figure in a British museum, she feels a "denseness in her chest [that] carried a sorrow she didn't recognise as her own" (69) and that she had "an ache she couldn't reach" (69). Lula does not understand her reaction as she never been interested in Māori carvings before, but this time she

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is so affected that within a month she has returned home. Lula's body has harboured the longing and pain of her unanswered questions. Like Lula, Bigs also noticed his mother's reluctance to talk about their Māori heritage. When Bigs goes to university, he studies to become a te reo teacher and consequently must learn his whakapapa. He must ask his mother for this whakapapa: "Yeah, she didn't want to tell me anything either... So I had to keep asking her until she gave me something. Finally she told me our iwi. Not even our hapū¹¹, not even our whakapapa beyond her parents" (102).

Breaking the silence is important for completing Lula and Bigs' identities. Imi accurately comments that "the line is cut, not by death or slave-work or deaden spirit, the line smudged and lost because they take the stories" (218), and it is by reconstructing the stories that the line is connected again. Both Lula and Bigs find peace and wholeness by engaging in postmemory work. For Bigs, this is kickstarted by his te reo studies. Bigs, like Lula, has struggled with his identity, but like his mother, did not talk about this with Lula. Engaging in postmemory work through his university studies, Bigs observes that

when I got to uni, it was like the whole world opened up. When I learnt te reo, and our culture, things started to make sense. You know I got in trouble before that. I almost dropped out of all of it. All of it, Lula. Not just school. *Life*. Then something just clicked. I took Māori because of Jen, and look what it did. (248-249)

This active work in reconstructing the narrative of Bigs' identity pays off when he attends Tui's tangi. Bigs is able to actively participate in Tui's funeral by reciting karakia (prayers) and understanding the protocols at the tangi. This is in contrast to Lula, who not only does not

¹¹ Sub-tribe

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understand the language, she also needs to be told what the protocols actually are in the first place. Whereas for Bigs the tangi is the confirmation of his identity, for Lula it becomes the catalyst for her to reconstruct the silenced narrative. Despite Lula not understanding what is happening on the marae at her mother's tangi she can still feel the power of the haka, of the community that lives on the marae and in turn, this makes her feel more complete. Simply being at the marae is already filling in gaps for her, not only about her mother, but also about her heritage. This is because, in understanding her mother, Lula understands herself better. Since having set foot on her mother's marae, Lula works to make it feel her own, engaging in postmemory work: "[Lula] had been reading, watching, trying to understand her place between cultures since Tui died" (167). In engaging with postmemory work, Lula begins to feel more complete, and grounded in her identity, as represented by the way she feels more at home when she returns to Waimua for Koro Eddie's tangi. Upon her return, Lula notes that "the land was hers in a deep way that no legal deed of ownership could convey... People gave her stories freely, if they had them" (167).

Stories form an essential part of postmemory work and Makereti's novel is a part of this postmemory activism. As mentioned before, the later Renaissance set a less angry tone than previous writers. This is partially because these writers recognize the complexity and "messiness" inherent in transgenerational trauma and colonial interaction. But as *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* shows, it is not any less political, precisely because it engages deeply with this messiness. The most important figure in this regard is Imi, who provides a lot of historical background knowledge, voicing it in first person so that it feels personal, for example about the Moriori massacre. Imi is thus the vehicle for Makereti's own postmemory work. In the novel, Makereti draws on a host of different sources, including popular literature that has shaped New Zealand's political understanding and response to Māori issues. Makereti's postmemory work thus consists of piecing together different

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fragments in New Zealand's collective memory. She references texts such as Michael King's *Moriori: A People Rediscovered* thus also showing her awareness of other authors engaging in post memory work, and in turn providing people with various avenues for them to continue their own postmemory work.

An interesting text Makereti refers to is Alan Duff's novel *Once Were Warriors* (1990), which revolves around a dysfunctional, violent, urban Māori family that lives on the dole. It was a popular text when it was published, although it was controversial. In the Makereti's novel, Lula's mentor on Rēkohu, Molly, argues that Pākehā are implicated in racism because they are interested in texts like *Once Were Warriors* where Māori and Moriori mana is destroyed and not in other, empowering texts. As Molly dryly jokes, "I guess *Once Were Peaceful People Wiped Out by Tribal Invaders, Slavery, Disease and Native Land Court Rulings* isn't quite as catchy" (263). Although *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* does not have the above title, ironically, this novel is precisely about this peaceful people that has – nearly – been wiped out by tribal invaders, slavery, disease and Native Land Court rulings. What Molly does not mention is that this Once Peaceful People was also nearly wiped out because there were no stories being told. Molly rightly laments the fact that New Zealand is not interested in Moriori mana; *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* rectifies this by contributing a story that upholds Moriori mana.

Makereti could have limited the plot to Lula and Bigs being of mixed Pākehā and Māori descent, eliminating the Moriori element from her storyline. In this way, the novel would have been much less politically complex. However, not only does she choose to add this previously taboo subject to her novel, she makes it the focus. In fact, for white Lula, it is recognizing her Moriori heritage that makes her feel complete again. The Moriori narrative problematizes much of the rhetoric in the Māori vs. Pākehā debate because in this story, the Pākehā are not the main

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perpetrators, but the Māori are. Further, the Māori are not the main victims, but the Moriori are.

Rather than separating each of these peoples and setting them against each other as Ihimaera does in *The Matriarch*, they are united in the figures of Lula and Bigs. Their father was Pākehā, and their mother was Māori and Moriori. This messiness where identities are mixed rather than separated makes the response political as it requires a response from both Māori and Pākehā. The Moriori heritage is an important component of Lula's identity because it complicates her Māori identity and positions Lula and Bigs as a complex implicated subjects. Her Māori heritage implicates her towards the Moriori as the Māori massacred the Moriori on Rēkohu. When grappling with her different heritages, Lula brainstorms with Bigs about the place their Pākehā heritage has, wondering whether in thinking about her Māori and Moriori heritage, she is betraying her Pākehā heritage. Bigs notes that their Pākehā heritage will not become forgotten when engaging in Māori and Moriori postmemory work because they "can't help but know it. It's all around us" (172).

Bigs has a different response to learning about his Moriori heritage. Rather than mourning the loss of this heritage, Bigs chooses to focus on his Māori heritage, as if acknowledging the trauma experienced by Moriori means betraying his Māori heritage. Bigs assumes that by acknowledging that the Māori were perpetrators he must also reject the legitimacy of his Māori heritage – it creates new gaps in an identity that Bigs has already pieced together, and now he will need to reconstruct it if her were to invite the Moriori story into his world. As Bigs positions himself as a Ngāti Mutugna, he does not seem to struggle to reconcile their actions towards the Moriori the same way Lula does, because he chooses to regard it from only his Māori cultural view:

And now this place wants me to feel guilty about what our Ngāti Mutugna ancestors did to the Moriori? No. They could have fought. I told you that. Fair's fair. So, we have Moriori

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whakapapa. That doesn't mean I'm going to be ashamed of my tupuna Māori. They did what they had to do to survive. (249)

Ironically, while Bigs wants Pākehā to acknowledge their implication in Māori suffering, Bigs denies his own implication and minimizes the suffering of the Moriori. This is exactly the kind of denial strategy that perpetuates trauma and silences; his mother's silence and his own experience as a Māori testifies to that. Although Bigs says that the Moriori could have fought back to make the fight fair, he does not see the parallel to Māori fighting Pākehā, and the repercussions of losing this fight. For Bigs, denying his implication as a Māori reflects how he has built up his identity. Acknowledging his implication, tears apart his carefully curated Māori identity. As a brown Māori, Bigs' identity has been shaped by prejudice in a way that Lula's has not. Lula can pass as Pākehā, Bigs cannot. Because of the actions of other people – children who mock Bigs for being Māori, or do not want to play with him because of his skin colour – Bigs does not have room for his Pākehā heritage. Early on in his childhood, Bigs had to choose between identifying as Pākehā or as Māori because he was “never brown enough. Not white enough” (260). In Bigs' case, identifying with his Pākehā heritage would also mean rejecting his Māori heritage, because it would be ignoring the trauma that he had experienced through being Māori. Embracing his Pākehā side would mean that Bigs has to “let go of everything that's guided me” (259) because he doesn't “know how to be both” (259) Pākehā and Māori. He does the same with his Moriori heritage; he does not know how to be both Māori and Moriori. He is unaware, however, of the potential of multidirectional memory: that acknowledging his Moriori and Māori heritage is an enrichment for *both* of these heritages.

When the descendants of perpetrators – in other words, implicated subjects – continue to silence the past, the survivors and their descendants do not have the resources to feel complete. Bigs points to this when he recognizes that his poor behaviour was due to feeling that something

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was missing in his life. He does not, however, draw a parallel between the Moriori/Māori relationship and the Pākehā/Māori relationship. Whereas, according to Bigs, Māori should be able to speak openly about their marginalisation, Moriori should leave theirs in the past. Bigs suggests that the best way to deal with the Moriori massacre is to ignore that it ever happened, and to just get on with life. He purports that the Moriori currently living on the Chatham Islands have moved on from their past and living their lives well. Bigs is observing what can be seen on the surface, but as Lula points out, 'moving on' is not necessarily moving forward, or that *everyone* has moved on: "I haven't moved on. Mum hadn't moved on. She was so stuck she had to pretend none of it existed" (249). Both Bigs and Lula recognize that the people on Rēkohu do not want to talk about the massacre because of the pain it has caused. Bigs' solution is to keep it that way, but he forgets what his own experience tells him: burying trauma does not make it die, but only allows it to be passed on from generation to generation, which the following generation then has to do extra work for, and feels lost for a long time, before being able to not feel lost. Although Bigs is right that reparation cannot be made; the problem will never be solved. But, as Lula points out, this does not absolve them of the issue. It does not mean that they need to ignore and forget what happened. Further, ignoring the event does not make them any less implicated – the facts still remain, whether they are acknowledged or not. Acknowledging is important in order to deal with transgenerational trauma, and to be able to get closer to reconciliation. Part of not knowing how to be both is that at different moments a different heritage was repressed. Tui did not speak to her children about their Māori heritage; it was a trauma that was silently passed down to her children, and in reclaiming that heritage Bigs is able to process that trauma and deal with it.

The differences between Lula and Bigs' reactions to learning about their Moriori ancestry is exemplified in their preparation for their trip to Rēkohu. Both Bigs and Lula engage in reconstructing

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their heritage; they fill in the gaps that their upbringing has created. Lula predominantly focusses on her Moriori heritage, but struggles to find information about them, observing that “[p]ublications on the Chatham Islands were curiously limited” (171). Bigs dives even further into his Māori heritage, wanting to know more “about the Taranaki origins of their Picton whanau” (171). Although he has been busy the last several years with reconstructing the past and understanding it well, it continues to remain partially fragmented, and reading about it is one way to reconstruct the parts that are still able to be found. Bigs seems to be aware of this fragmented nature of their history, and that it is near impossible to put it all back together. He jokes to Lula that “You cover that side and I’ll cover these, and we’ll get *everything* sussed” (171). But as Bigs notes, “You won’t find our culture in a book, sis” (171), and so for all their research, which will go a long way to filling in gaps, it will not cover everything, and they will always have to deal with parts that are unknowable.

Makereti seems to be aware that literature is not able to piece all the fragments of a silenced heritage back together. The question then becomes, what is the point? Historical fiction is a way of introducing a previously taboo or unknown topic to the reader so that they become aware of a repressed or forgotten history. To present the most complete picture, issues such as implication and transgenerational trauma must be addressed. Makereti personifies implication and transgenerational trauma through her various characters. Perhaps more importantly, bringing Māori and especially the Moriori to the forefront of the novel means that they are no longer a “shadow people” (20), as Iraia and Imi are. Imi is representative of this shadow, as he is a ghost and not a real person. He personifies the traumatic Moriori experience and because he is a ghost he can go between generations and thereby illustrates that the trauma is passed on from generation to generation. In the end, Imi, the ghost of the past, the shadow of a person, is able to come to terms with the trauma, and be at peace: Lula honours and commemorates Imi at the marae on Rēkohu,

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and Imi states: "I see through her eyes, I see my name, I hear the voice in her head. I exist. I am one of the dead, remembered. *Nga Raumahara...*" (267). Because Imi is remembered, he is no longer a shadow, hovering between life and death, but is finally able to move on to the "world that exists on the other side" (268). In its fragmentary structure and through its complex characters, *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* is a deeply political text because it forces its audience to see the Moriori, not as shadows haunting generation after generation, but as powerful inhabitants of Rēkohu, worthy of their mana.

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Conclusion

In *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* the shadow of the past is finally laid to rest. It seems as though there is closure for Imi, Mere and Lula through the recognition and reconstruction of past traumatic events. Reconnecting with her cultural heritage is also significant for Lula to feel whole again. However, it is important to recognize that closure does not happen for everyone, nor is it the same thing as reconciliation. Riripeti, the woman who lived and breathed Māoritanga, does not have anywhere near the same sense of closure as Lula. Instead, her fight for Māori mana is unfinished as Māori continue to be marginalized. This is partially reflective of the time period the novels were written in. The Early Renaissance was not focussed on closure, or having a redemptive arc, but on showing Aotearoa (Māori name for New Zealand) the problems it has but is ignoring. Aotearoa's historical narrative has large gaps as a direct result of Pākehā interference and interpretation of key events. *The Matriarch* works to close many of these gaps in different ways: through drawing on different fields – such as politics, Māori (oral) history, Biblical narrative – or by producing a new account of how events happened. But closing these gaps is not enough because it does no justice to the injustices Pākehā perpetrate. Consequently, the tone is angry, sarcastic and accusatory to make Pākehā aware of their role in perpetrating the events or as implicated subjects in creating the gaps. The point is *not* to create closure, but to open up the discourse, with all of its political implications. *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* actively participates in this discourse. It speaks about the passing of trauma by looking at different generations. This novel shows how, as more and more generations pass, the active knowledge of the trauma becomes more and more fragmented and eventually the lingering knowledge translates into feeling lost. The remembered knowledge becomes passive; it becomes only felt in the body, as represented by Lula. *The Matriarch* identifies the fragments which have been lost; *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* shows what it does to a person when so many

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connections and fragments are missing, and what it does to a person when those fragments are pieced back together again. *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* focuses on the silences imposed on indigenous people, as represented by Tui and Iraia. Both of the novels recognize Māoritanga as a fundamental instrument to curb marginalization of indigenous people: without being connected in some way to Māoritanga, resolution is not possible. It is important to realise, however, that a knowledge or a connection to Māoritanga does not guarantee a sense of closure. Tama grew up connected to his cultural heritage and does not have closure; Lula only connects to her Māori and Moriori heritage much later in life, but ultimately has a stronger sense of peace than Tama. The difference between Lula and Tama's situation is recognition. Tama, alongside Riripeti, is constantly fighting for recognition of Māori traumatization and marginalization and never receives it from the Other. In contrast, Lula, and especially Imi, do receive recognition from the Other – from the Rēkohu community honouring Imi, from Tui's whanau (family) reconnecting with Lula, and from her father's Pākehā side accepting new aspects of Lula's identity.

In other words, both novels show how New Zealand's implicated subjects need to recognize their role in perpetuating Māori transgenerational marginalization and trauma. This is a deeply political statement for a country that downplays the violence it has perpetuated for generations. It is a political statement which neither *The Matriarch* nor *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* shy away from. The political nature is more coded in the Later Renaissance because the anger of the Early Renaissance appears absent. The anger has disappeared in this writing not because it is no longer legitimate, or because New Zealand's problems have been solved since the Early Renaissance. Rather, new subject material – such as the Moriori story – has entered the discourse, which has politicized the Pākehā-Indigenous discourse in a different way. The Later Renaissance seems to be more nuanced than the Early Renaissance as a result.

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Rothberg's term, the implicated subject, is immensely useful because it concretely points to a key figure in the resolution of the Māori-Pākehā conflict which Ihimaera identifies in *The Matriarch*. Without implicated subjects acknowledging their role, Māori and Moriori generations will continue to be marginalized. Māori literature, in engaging with the complex concepts of the implicated subject and postmemory, urges its readers to think about their contribution to Māori-Pākehā relationships. Through its anger, sarcasm, and especially through code-switching, *The Matriarch* directs its attention to the loss of Māori mana, resulting in transgenerational harm. *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* directs its attention on regaining Māori (and Moriori) mana. Regaining mana is done by recognizing the faults of Pākehā and Māori, by engaging with Māoritanga, and through postmemory work: an unfragmenting, as it were, of the past. Postmemory work, then, is imperative for a Māori-Pākehā or a Māori-Moriori resolution.

Employing the concept of postmemory in the New Zealand context, rather than in its original context – that of the Holocaust – allows for a broadened understanding of how postmemory can work. Postmemory is an excellent framework with which to understand violent perpetration such as the Holocaust, but can also be used to understand more hidden, and long-term forms of violence such as colonialization and its aftermath. It aids in understanding the depth of the trauma faced by Māori. Further, postmemory, as used by Hirsch does not refer to post-generations of perpetrators, and Rothberg also refrains from doing so (Rothberg 2019, 14). However, in the light of *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*, this practice can be questioned. To engage in postmemory work is one way in which Lula accepts her role as an implicated subject. This can be seen when considering Bigs and Lula's positions: as a Pākehā they are implicated in Māori marginalization; as Māori they are implicated in Moriori marginalization. Their fragmented identity is not only rooted in not knowing about their traumatic past, but also in their own practice as implicated subjects. Part of their actions

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as implicated subjects – such as Lula initially passing as white – is due to having a fragmented understanding of the past. And it is only when Lula accepts her role as both victim and implicated subject that she finally finds peace for herself. The examples of Lula and Bigs show how interconnected the implicated subject is to postmemory.

Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings and *The Matriarch* are not the only Māori texts that address postmemory, transgenerational trauma and the implicated subject. This thesis only looks at two individual texts of a much richer corpus, and thus further analysis can and should be done on a wider range of texts, to study how these other novels collectively contribute to postmemory work, and to shed more light on how Pākehā are implicated. More importantly, looking at *The Matriarch* and *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* as well as the theoretical concepts of transgenerational trauma, postmemory and the implicated subject would have significantly benefitted from an indigenous framework. This thesis has been written from the perspective of a privileged Pākehā, and not that of Māori. That is not to say that Pākehā cannot analyse Māori literature credibly, but it certainly brings with it certain perspectives and biases that I as a Pākehā have because of my position. Due to a lack of access and resources, there has been no input or contribution from Māori or Moriori people. Where possible, scholarly literature written by indigenous scholars, such as Moura-Koçoğlu, has been used. Despite this, informing the analysis and theoretical concepts through a concrete indigenous framework such as Moura-Koçoğlu suggests would allow for a more sensitive understanding. As mentioned before, there is very little literature available on postmemory and the implicated subject in connection with Māori literature; the purpose of this thesis is to open up different frameworks that will enrich New Zealand's insight of Māori literature.

For Māori authors, literature is a way to reclaim identity. Postmemory work collects fragments of this broken identity and pieces much of it back together. In forgetting specific parts of

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New Zealand's history, Pākehā have been implicated in keeping Māori identity fragmented, with dire consequences. Perhaps then, one day, New Zealanders will be able to acknowledge their implication in Māori and Moriori trauma. It is my hope that new literature continues to be written, by Indigenous and Pākehā authors, that support postmemory work, and that it will continue to be studied. In doing so, Aotearoa's history – for Pākehā, Māori and Moriori – will no longer be fragmented, but whole.

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