

MAORI WAYS OF KNOWING:
The Politics of Knowledge Surrounding *Taonga* and the Charles Smith Collection

By

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ABSTRACT

This research considers material culture, the politics of identity, and the role knowledge plays in a Maori community in relation to a nineteenth century historic collection held abroad. The Charles Smith collection came from the Nga Paerangi community in Whanganui, New Zealand. The importance of historic collections to Maori are described through the concept *taonga*, or treasured objects, which have been theorized in terms of kinship relationships to a certain class of social valuable. This research acknowledges that *taonga* uphold the continuity of historic relationships, but departs from other analyses in its focus on a previously unknown collection, introduced to the source community through photographs in an exploration of ways *taonga* interactions are historically and circumstantially informed. Visually focused research endeavors often present diverse responses in a meeting of the social life of objects and the politics of knowledge. Similarly, divergent responses to *taonga* arose that referenced the colonial contexts in which such *taonga* left Maori control, as well as losses to knowledge bases in the community. Endeavors to reclaim lands and cultural heritage through language and education initiatives operate at a local level of regeneration, but these goals become pertinent to larger issues of placing knowledge within a rights-based framework grounded in personal socializations of knowledge. The recognition that knowledge is *taonga* emerged as the framework for understanding ways Maori assert their authority over land, their language, and museum collections based in particular dispositions to knowledge. The control enacted over cultural representations in museums, land courts, and other political forums, asserts self-determinative positions, and also claims Maori knowledge as a scarce resource. Community speakers who have access to this powerful knowledge must therefore act on behalf of their communities as guardians of knowledge and *taonga* treasures, to redress historic losses, outsider appropriations of culture, and prevent further social disadvantages.

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CHAPTER ONE- Introduction

A brief overall description of the topic and thesis

In my research on a nineteenth century collection of Maori artifacts, or treasured objects known as *taonga Maori*, I used photographs of the Charles Smith collection in a project of photo-elicitation to explore perceptions of *taonga* and its significance for its source community Nga Paerangi in the area of Whanganui, New Zealand. In recent academic and political discourse, *taonga* is a concept widely stretched to accommodate all the treasured aspects of culture such as the land, knowledge considered traditional, historic objects like cloaks and *pounamu* (greenstone), flora and fauna, and many other things connected to ancestors and their remembrance (Henare 2007: 49-50). My research acknowledges the tribal perspective asserted in the writings of Hirini Moko (Sidney) Mead (1984, 1986) on *taonga Maori*¹ and their spiritual power especially within carvings. Paul Tapsell's (1997, 2000) extensive writings on the issues surrounding *taonga* have also analyzed the underlying importance of *taonga* within contexts of the kinship structures they uphold for Maori society. Considerations of *taonga* in these writings come from tribal perspectives outside of Whanganui and concentrating on a specific type of object, 'which does not have the same properties as other kinds of valuables' (Thomas 1991: 23). In using the Smith collection as a visual stimulus in Whanganui, I aimed to explore specific socio-political contexts within which perceptions of *taonga* were made, and what different reactions to images of *taonga Maori* would tell me about the issues of history and identity inscribed in individual perceptions. There were multifaceted approaches to ways Maori interacted with their material heritage in Whanganui in connection to the Smith collection and other *taonga* in personal collections and museums. Responses to photographs outlined the heterogeneity of ideas in connection to different *taonga*, with a focus on a frame of knowledge from which people in Whanganui were negotiating their relationship to cultural heritage. Knowledge became the focus of my research as a basis from which perceptions about the colonial losses of identity informed both cultural and political actions in attempts to regenerate Maori knowledge in the community. This emergent theme also brought the diversity of knowledge into focus, and the personal endeavors within a community that

¹ I have been informed that the proper term to describe museum objects, and other artworks and treasures, is *taonga Maori*, but there are other instances when the concept of *taonga* encompasses land, knowledge, genealogies, and other aspects of heritage (that will be explained in more detail) where the gloss *taonga* is appropriate. I will only use *taonga Maori* in instances where I am specifically talking about objects and historic photographs of importance.

make it difficult to talk about any uniform understanding of *taonga* from an outsider perspective. This research attempts to examine Maori ways of knowing and a perspective on knowledge as *taonga*, which underpins ways a community seeks to appropriate their past and identity through continuous efforts to assert *tinio rangatiratanga* (self-determination and empowerment) in various ways.

My theoretical interests focus on settler nation politics, issues of identity, and material heritage. I started my research in this area after I was informed about the Charles Smith collection in the Pitt Rivers Museum, and its source community of Maori descendants from Kaiwhaiki, a *marae* (community gathering place), located on the Whanganui River near the town of Whanganui, New Zealand. In 2006, Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi (tribal affiliation of family groups along the Whanganui River) sent representatives to conduct brief research on the Smith collection in Oxford (see description of objects Appendix 1). At the time the objects were unavailable for research, but before I began doctoral work in 2008, I assumed that the collection might become a good foundation for initiating points of contact in New Zealand to work with *taonga Maori* and a Maori community.



Figure 1.1 Map of New Zealand, highlighting Manawatu-Whanganui region

Charles Smith collected the *taonga* mainly around the Whanganui region from various *hapu* (sub-tribal grouping) in the 1860s-1870s during and after the New Zealand Land Wars.² Smith was born in Wiltshire in 1833, educated at University College School

² The Land Wars took place from 1859-1870s, and were integral to European and Maori relationships and issues over the control of the land. For a more in depth look at this history see James Belich's *The New Zealand Land Wars* (1986).

London, and emigrated to New Zealand on the *Hastings* as a young man in 1859 after becoming a lawyer. He bought a large piece of land named Te Korito across from Kaiwhaiki *marae*, where he settled to become a farmer ('Smith, Charles' 1897: 1451). While maintaining a relationship with the Nga Paerangi community living on the west side of the river at Tunuhaere and across the river at Kaiwhaiki, and he was gifted with and purchased many objects from the Nga Paerangi *hapu* living at those sites. He recorded the names and stories that accompanied the objects, such as information about former owners or genealogical narratives. He also collected natural history items, popular postcards, and a few of his own personal photographs. When he died in 1908 unmarried and without any family ('Obituary', *Wanganui Chronicle*, 4 January 1908), his possessions went to his sister Susan living in Wiltshire, whose son A.T. Collier in 1923 sold the collection to the Pitt Rivers Museum for £50 (Related document file for Charles Smith collection, Pitt Rivers Museum). There are 290 objects in the Smith collection of Maori traditional carvings, textiles, weapons, specimen of natural history, and various life implements of nineteenth century New Zealand. There are also 79 historic photographs from the Smith estate in the Pitt Rivers Museum collection.



Figure 1.2 The Whanganui region, Photo credit Horwood and Wilson (2008)

When I began research, my intentions were first to understand what the Nga Paerangi community hoped to gain from this research, so I could initiate a collaborative research goal. My intentions were to conduct a photo-elicitation project that would lend itself to the production of knowledge within the community, and tell me more about how Maori and specifically people in Whanganui connect with their material culture. I was put in touch with one of the tribal representatives who also came to the Pitt Rivers in 2006 through his own personal interests in Nga Paerangi *taonga*. Ken Clarke became my main informant and introduction into the Kaiwhaiki *marae*. He was a farmer who had taken on years of tribal research to establish the land sites of importance for Nga Paerangi, and over time had also become heavily involved in the research of *taonga* and affairs at the Whanganui Regional Museum.

He introduced me the heritage affairs going on in the Kaiwhaiki community and what people were seeking out, which was clearly focused on more immediate issues of reclaiming dispossessed lands through the Waitangi Tribunals (more later) established in 1975. The Nga Paerangi *hapu* (sub-tribal grouping of families) was still involved in ongoing trials during my research. Ken warned me that people would be very interested in *taonga* and the Smith collection, but that did not mean that many people knew much about *taonga* in the community. Since I had been reading about the continuous production of Maori art traditions in the Whanganui region (McEwan 1966, Mead 1986: 64), I had assumed that when I arrived in Whanganui such material culture or images would be very familiar for many in the community, but many people I encountered had never known that there were *taonga* in connection to Nga Paerangi in Oxford or anywhere else.

Instead the situation opened up to what people said about the importance of control over *taonga* and the underlying intent of those assertions. Most people in Kaiwhaiki and the other associated *hapu* in the area professed at least a relative interest and concern in museum objects, although most popularly these ideas were asserted in conjunction with some framing reference of ways that European colonialism had adversely affected the present Maori situation of land dispossession, loss of the language, and losses of family centered knowledge bases on the *marae*. The Whanganui situation of material culture should be recognized as distinctive, not that all other Maori innately have a widespread knowledge of their material heritage, but that most of the literature surrounding the relationship Maori have to *taonga* (Tapsell 1997, 2000; equating knowledge as *taonga*-Salmond 1982: 82-83; A. Weiner 1985, 1992; Mead 1984, 1986, specifically on *taonga* and gifting- 2003: 181-187; Henare 2005a, 2005b; and early writings on exchange- Mauss

1990 [1950]), indicate the proliferation of an established significance of *taonga*. With the Smith collection as a platform for various issues, I began to explore ways that the photographs would enable me to learn about this particular local context of community identity and particular meanings of *taonga*, in relation to the importance knowledge was given during conversations and interviews I had with community members.

I started to re-form my main research questions around issues of identity and history, and how *taonga*, specifically the Smith collection, could be contextualized to discuss contemporary dispositions to knowledge. Though I recognize the long-standing critiques of ideas surrounding 'localized cultures' in favor of an emphasis the globally interconnected actuality of cultures (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, Wassman 1998, Niezen 2003), I use this stress on the local to situate a particular contextual history and situation in relation to *taonga* as it was described to me by people in Whanganui. In regards to explaining diverse opinions in the community on the current goals for Nga Paerangi land claims, Ken explained the main issue, as 'We're not all one people. We want our identities' (Fieldnotes, Ken Clarke, 17 September 2009). These issues of the local community can also be discussed within their significance in the global arena, but for issues of knowledge in a Maori community, I must assess the representations of the particular that people conveyed to me.

Furthermore, the title of this research might imply 'ways of knowing' as a sort of reification of Maori identity, but on the contrary, what I intend to emphasize is the diversity of knowledge that emerged, the importance of histories that underpin current conflicts within and outside of a community, and the issues surrounding Maori knowledge culturally and politically. These issues relate to the larger trend of indigenous claims to sovereignty over representation in various ways, but this research speaks of these issues from the framework of the relevance of *taonga* from a museum abroad that the Whanganui community was facing. Though the repatriation of lands was the main community concern, issues of *taonga* also correspond to these interests. Many people had an interest in the ancestors identified by Smith in the collection and learning more about the ancestral narratives, or *korero* (narratives) that Smith recorded in connection to the *taonga Maori*. People also specified an interest in connecting the *taonga* to the land sites surrounding Kaiwhaiki and those histories. My experience with the Smith collection did present situations that showed the major significance of a biographical connection to the narratives connected to the *taonga*, but also demonstrated that a *connection* to *taonga* is not just a unanimous phenomenon. There are different levels of Maori connection based on many

factors. Kinship and familiarity played a decisive role, and especially the level of one's personal knowledge and community involvement also factored into responses to *taonga* as a 'treasured object'.

Knowledge was revealed as an important category for measuring the contemporary meaning of an indigenous identity. The way of knowing one's Maori self and relating narratives to identity acted as a main qualifier for one's position in the Maori community, and also defined the amount of social capital one accrues towards having a recognized Maori persona (see Bourdieu 1984). The amount to which one seeks out this knowledge, upholds the rules that correspond with it, and safeguards it, is equal to the ideology surrounding *taonga* in literature (see Salmond 1982; Mead 2003: 312-314; Tapsell 2006: 18-19).

The separation from the previously unknown Smith collection, factored into a lack of familiarity with the *taonga* objects and ancestral portraits, but reactions still spoke to an agenda of engendering more community knowledge about ancestors and history. In this way, the knowledge *taonga* offers mirrors other aspects of regeneration being strongly emphasized today like *te reo Maori* (Maori language), *whakapapa* (genealogically ordered histories), protocols on the *marae* and knowledge as *taonga* itself. Unbeknownst to myself when I initiated this research in material heritage, I encountered ways that knowledge of history were debated in connection to *taonga*, assertions that certain knowledge needed to stay within the community, and an overarching set of goals that I had not recognized before – the issues of *matauranga Maori* (Maori knowledge) challenging western models of knowing and *kaupapa Maori* (combination of values both spiritual and social as applied to modes of learning, education, research, and ethics) (Henry and Pene 2001). Issues of research within these parameters of a specific Maori way of knowing and controlling knowledge stemmed from a history of cross-cultural interactions that were seen as inherently one-sided, and so also integrally questioned my position in this research. This also relates to current knowledge practices and regeneration endeavors in a Maori community.

Part of my analysis will address ways historical knowledge is remembered and recited within Maori communities as a way of identifying and connecting with ancestors and the land. The current political situation of land losses has developed out of conflicts with Europeans from the 1800s onwards, the lack of the fulfillment of democracy goals, and have culminated in contentions being brought before the Waitangi Tribunal courts today. The appearance of the Waitangi Tribunals in 1975 was established for the petition of land

claims to be brought forth in the form of more recent grievances against the Crown (Belgrave 2005). Many claims were brought to the tribunal, and still are, in reference to the Treaty of Waitangi signed in 1840 (Sissons 1993). These contemporary land claims based on interpretations of history is more inclusive of contemporary interpretations of rights and concepts such as *taonga*, which have come to include any aspect of Maori cultural heritage considered important. The Whanganui District claims have been ongoing for a long time, with claims being made to the tribunals in the 1990s, land occupations, and the final stages of the land claims being made during my fieldwork in 2008-2009. The type of evidence used in these cases involves the use of oral histories, remembrances of important ancestral sites, and memories of the landscape, which also connect with the narratives attached to *taonga* in the Smith collection. In Whanganui, this history of cultural losses and current implications for history in sociopolitical affairs underpins reactions to the Smith collection *taonga*, and the ability of an outsider to be privy to all aspects of Maori knowledge. Though my research emphasizes *taonga* and Maori identity, I will attempt to represent a community in the way they represented themselves to me in an understanding that the politics of getting what you want in New Zealand has become a serious life endeavor, and therefore such representations must acknowledge the control that Maori assert over their cultural heritage, histories, and identity (cf. Hau'ofa 2000).

Overview of Kaiwhaiki and Whanganui Maori

Today, Nga Paerangi *hapu* live on one side of the river at Kaiwhaiki *marae*, which is located on the lower end of the Whanganui River. The resident population of Kaiwhaiki fluctuates as people work seasonally in the area, while others work more permanently in the town of Whanganui and commute. Kaiwhaiki is located about 18 kilometers north of Whanganui. There are approximately forty families (around 150 people) living around the *marae*, in comparison to most *marae* on the Whanganui River that are largely unpopulated and used only for ceremonies. There are five *whanau* (extended family) groups that make up Kaiwhaiki 'drawing descent from "tupuna" [ancestors] Tomairangi, Rangitokona, Wharara, Tutamou and Te Uira' (Simon 1991: 28). The town of Whanganui itself has about 42,000 residents, of which about 9,000 are Maori from various *hapu* of Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi *iwi* (tribe) or other *iwi* (NZ census 2006). My interviews included the adult population that I spoke to at Kaiwhaiki (with about 35% of residents being under 18 years old), and various *iwi* members in the town of Whanganui of different *hapu* affiliations.

Whanganui is the major urban center with a population of about 39,700, but half of these people live outside of the urban center. The majority of the region's land is relatively rural, and agriculture is the major industry outside of the Whanganui urban center, with manufacturing being the major industry in the city. In Kaiwhaiki, the resident population is heavily involved in agriculture production as farm hands and managers in the nearby rural farming areas surrounding the *marae*, but many are also unemployed, work seasonally, or commute to jobs in town. In town, many people work at government or local council agencies, in business centers and shops, along with the freezing works that have several locations in major cities along the river.

Many people in Whanganui do lots of outdoor activities, because of the proximity to the North Island's mountains and the water activities available on the Whanganui River. The Whanganui River is 260 km long, and many lives revolve around this river as a source of economy, tourism, and leisure. People work at boat hiring points as tour operators, especially higher on the river from the point of Pipiriki and above where the water is more consistently deep. During fishing seasons, the river also serves as a major source of recreational fishing. In Kaiwhaiki, the whitebait season is highly anticipated, with people meeting up to go fishing to stock up for their families on the *marae*.

Of the residents in Whanganui that I met, many enjoyed going to the Sarjeant Art Gallery, to music nights held in various bars in the city, and taking part in outdoor activities like rowing on the river. Many of the Maori people I encountered took part in these activities too, with there also being a key cultural component to many people's additional activities. There were many group meetings to discuss cultural affairs in town, as well as many gatherings for Maori living on Kaiwhaiki *marae*. On the *marae* there was a much more intensive schedule of meetings, birthday parties, and gatherings at the actual *wharepuni* (meeting house) at Kaiwhaiki.

Within the larger *iwi* grouping of Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi, there are many *hapu* groups, and each with their own histories and *whakapapa* (genealogically ordered narrative) knowledge. Though *hapu* frequently live dispersed throughout nearby urban centers (or farther away), the center of community life is the *marae*, which is an integral familial and political focus of village life. The *marae* is the place where meetings take place, visitors are greeted, funerals are held, and other activities occur to gather the community in a central point.

As for how Maori came to be in New Zealand, there are differing stories relating to the original inhabitants the Great Fleet migrations. The first explorations were said to be by

explorer Kupe with Ngahue in about 900 A.D. from Hawaiki (the homeland) who spotted a white cloud ahead, and so named the land Aotea, meaning white cloud, and later it became Aotearoa, the land of the white cloud (Best 1924: 41). In Whanganui traditions, Kupe landed near the Bay of Whanganui, and paddled up the river. Some narratives say he found 'only the tiwaiwaka, tieke and kokako bird, with no people, yet when questioned closely the old men [of Whanganui] admit the existence of tangata-whenua [people of the land] in the valley of Whanganui. These were the descendants of Paerangi-o-te-Maungaroa whose ancestor came from Hawaiki five generations before the arrival of Captain Turi in the "Aotea" canoe' (Smith 1905: 132). For this reason Nga Paerangi trace their descent back to the ancestor Paerangi who is said to have flown to Aotearoa with his *atua* (spirits, gods). Therefore the traditions of the Nga Paerangi descendants predate the migration date of the fleet of six canoes, which has been approximated anywhere within the range of 900 to 1350 AD, with a high level of debate about the exact year. In a lecture given by Nga Paerangi community *kaumatua* (elder) and *tohunga* (knowledgeable priest), Morvin Simon, he was asked about the fires reportedly seen by Kupe in his early explorations and if they had been spontaneously started. Morvin answered 'We mustn't only believe what our finite mind can comprehend' (ALW, 'Morvin Simon at Davis Lecture Theatre', 1994), alluding to the belief that indeed Whanganui Maori feel their ancestors were living in Whanganui much earlier than the canoe migrations.

Due to intermarriages within the Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi group, Nga Paerangi also genealogically situate their lineage to the canoe 'Aotea' as well as the 'Kura-haupo' canoe. People from Nga Paerangi often explained that the tribal grouping of Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi was traditionally divided into three sections on the Whanganui River, which were each cared for by a *taniwha* (spirit, guardian, monster) as well as one of the three children of an important past chief and his wife, Tamakehu and his wife Ruaka. The upper section of the river, from the Whanganui River's source at Mount Tongariro until Retaruke, was under the guardianship of Hinengakau, the daughter of Tamakehu and Ruaka. The middle of the Whanganui was guarded by Tamaupoko, the eldest son, and stretched from Retaruke until Koriniti. The bottom section of the River extended from Koriniti until Putiki, where the river meets the sea, and was guarded by the youngest Tupoho. The children of Tamakehu and Ruaka are said to have often had their conflicts, but on the whole acted as "Te taura whiri a Hinengakau", the plaited rope of Hinengakau' (WRM, Whanganui River

Settlement folder, 'Local History' 1984),³ or as the woven strands of Hinengakau's braid, who defended each other and came together in the face of outsider attack (Simon 2003: 4).

The understanding that the ancestors of Nga Paerangi were some of the oldest in New Zealand is also supported by *korero* of their residence in another part of the country at Arapawa Island before settling in the Whanganui region.



Figure 1.3 Godstick, Akaroa Museum

Archaeological cases present evidence that the country had been inhabited by the present population of Maori 'at least 600 years before Abel Tasman became the European discoverer of New Zealand in 1642' (Hanson and Hanson 1983: 11). Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi *iwi* are able to *whakapapa* (to recite genealogies) and give their ancestry at least eight generations before the canoe migrations to Aotearoa establishing their great oral traditions as well as knowledge of ancient heritage. In Waitangi Tribunals evidence, at least 1100 years of ancestry can be recounted (Young 2007: 33). Archaeological evidence is not necessary for Maori populations who know their histories of ancient migrations. In connection to these histories, *taonga Maori* often uphold ancient narratives and add to the group's status and prestige, or *mana*. Especially old *taonga Maori* that indicate the continued artistic traditions of Polynesia and the long term presence of Maori on the land become especially useful for adapting the cultural knowledge that Maori must employ in Land Courts through a legal framework of recognized land occupations.

At the Akaroa Museum on the Banks Peninsula, there is a godstick that is dated to at least 1400 AD, but the curator Murray Thacker explained that it is most likely much older, because it is an early Easter Island artistic style, meaning it could be dated to at least 900 AD or older (Murray Thacker, personal communication, 17 November 2009). An example of a more substantial and significant *taonga Maori* connected with to the histories of Nga Paerangi is the *pounamu*

³ It is common practice in New Zealand writing and legal discourse to use *te reo Maori* words and phrases without writing them in italics. In my quoting many New Zealand texts, there are places throughout this paper where I have not italicized these words within quotes to reflect this trend.

mere (a short flat weapon of greenstone) 'Whakarewarewa' whose age and *korero* have been brought it back to the community at Kaiwhaiki.

The possession of 'Whakarewarewa' is connected to its other twin *mere* counterpart 'Te Maro Taritari'. The two *mere* were given to ancestors of Nga Paerangi *hapu* when they left Arapawa Island to go back to Whanganui, and their kin gifted the pair of special *mere*. In an oral history given for the recording of Nga Paerangi history in Waitangi Tribunals evidence, community genealogy expert Haimona Rzoska tells the story of 'Whakarewarewa' connected to his ancestral lineage, and described how the *taonga* 'were buried at Waitahinga, on the Tokomaru Block', but were later uprooted by a farmer who 'wanted to sell them back to the Kaiwhaiki people, who chose not to buy them from him because they were [the *hapu*'s] already' (Young 2007: 11). The group did eventually purchase 'Whakarewarewa' back, and such *taonga* today stands to support *korero* about the ancient settlement of Nga Paerangi alongside the continued importance of such objects to the community.

The elements of Maori identity partially linked with *taonga* are ideas around spiritual beliefs and the importance of the ancestors in daily lives. Histories, beliefs, and ritual practices are focused on defining and shaping correct relationships between Maori and the *atua* (gods) surrounding them (Hanson and Hanson 1983: 14). Those in society who were most able to control such customs and knowledge involving spiritual matters were the *ariki*, 'the custodians of all ancient knowledge' who were usually eldest in their families and from high-ranking families with their rights to such knowledge preceding them by generations (Hammond 1899: 90). In his early writings on Maori traditional designations of knowledge, Hammond interpreted the knowledgeable social counterparts of Maori knowledge as the *ariki*s, and their counterparts as *tohungas*, who were responsible for *karakias* (incantations), where the interactions between such holders of knowledge and lore held responsibilities for knowledge on behalf of their community (1899: 91-92).

The influx of colonialism after 1769 when Captain Cook first arrived in New Zealand, did not immediately change the cultural tenets through which Maori practiced their beliefs and interacted with one another, but living with Europeans who were intent on making New Zealand a colony of Britain, meant Maori were put under a series of adjustments. The Church Missionary Society had been active since 1815, the Wesleyan Missionary Society since 1822, and a steady increase of settlers coming from European countries to permanently settle also aided changes (Elsmore 1989: 16). Maori being educated in new literary and religious practices, as well as interacting with Europeans with different

customs influenced Maori who eventually sought inclusion in the Pakeha (European) culture through the control and collection of material goods, economic prosperity, and seeking out European education and literacy (Elsmore 1989: 21). Other traditions such as the ritual of warriors receiving full *moko* (face tattoos) were diminishing due to missionaries disregard for it, alongside the less frequent intertribal warfare that made such warrior criteria ambiguous (Hita-Brown 2006: 60).

Christianity was received with varied acceptance by Maori populations, which eventuated in hybrid understandings of the religion that was practiced variably. Various Maori religious movements appeared which incorporated elements of Christianity that lent themselves to distinctly Maori interpretations. Many of these early religious movements were positive about the influence of Christianity (Elsmore 1989), but that would also change as people become more distant from their traditional practices. The early encounters with European culture were a period of adjustment for Maori, but were also the beginning of a self-nationalizing project that would set out the differences between the cultures as two opposing forces (Metge 1964, see also Freidman 1992, Wassman 1998, Tsing 2007). As Maori populations began to see the effects of encounter such as prevalent disease, loss of knowledge, and unfair acquisition of ancestral lands, people began to seek a way to distance themselves from ideas of Christianity and partnership in the settler nation, when the partnership was seen as mainly serving European agendas. Mission intrusions have had similar effects throughout the Pacific in terms of indigenous populations attempting to use their traditions in compelling ways to create improved access to resources of economy and knowledge (see Keesing 1982b, Burt 1982).

As Maoris in Whanganui were being further alienated from their lands, multiple resistance and anti-settler movements cropped up, such as 'Pai Marire, Ringatu, Parihaka, and a minor response in the Wairarapa district' (Elsmore 1989: 175). An atypical *maramatanga* (spiritual movement) at Parihaka was a passive resistance movement led by the prophets Te Whiti-o-Rongomai and Tohu Kakahi. People from all over came to hear the words of the prophets who urged passive resistance to the Pakeha land surveyors, since much of the early violence in the Land Wars throughout the country had not been a deterrent for European settlement and the advancing capture of lands (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009). In the 1870s, people from Kaiwhaiki and the surrounding *marae* on the river gathered together and went to hear what the prophets had to say. A Maori understanding of these movements likened prophets like Te Whiti to '*tohunga*, or those who had held conversations with *atua*' (Elsmore 1989: 173-174). The Kaiwhaiki

community, whose *tupuna* (ancestors) journeyed to go and listen to the prophets at Parihaka, is still deeply fixed within knowledge and traditions from those teachings. As the Parihaka movement was burgeoning, the prophets' message of peace was conveyed through use of 'scripture and using mainly the signs of David as the basis from which they were drawing their substance' (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009). This collapse of the borders between what was a distinctly European religion and Maori traditional culture still enabled the creation of something distinctly Maori in nature, that employed Maori perspectives to interpret new information they were being inundated with. People stayed in Parihaka until the prophets told them "*Hoki atu koutou ki o koutou kainga*"- return to your own abodes. "*Kei reira wakaparihaka ai*" -there to follow the philosophy of Parihaka as you heard it here'. So the *tupuna* brought back the traditions of peaceful resistance preached by the prophets (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009).



Figure 1.4 Te Kiritahi marae Kaiwhaiki, Photo credit Ken Clarke

At Kaiwhaiki the teachings of the prophets Tohu and Te Whiti are reflected in the construction and names of the Christian church, 'Te Rongo o te Poi', meaning the sound of the *poi* (performance art using balls attached to flax strings), and the *wharepuni* 'Te Kiritahi', which was renamed 'Whakahawea'- despise ye not the teachings of Tohu and Te Whiti (Simon 1991: 27). The river communities returned in the late 1880s and 'Te Rongo o te Poi' was built in 1897. The *poi*, which can now be seen being twirled by dancers in a

different context of *kapa haka* cultural performances around New Zealand, have a religious significance to the area of Whanganui and Taranaki. Kaiwhaiki elder Morvin Simon described the church 'Te Rongo o te Poi' being built to the beat of the *poi*, which he explains is '*kaikawe o te wairua*...the mode by which the spirit was able to traverse all distances', and so the *poi* took prayers to 'the author of all things' (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009).

Ideas pertaining to 'Te Kiritahi' and a more modern outlook can be perceived in the quote about the house explaining '[m]y carved figures should not be hidden away in the house, but exposed to all on the *marae*. These are our grandchildren. Don't clutter the *marae* with these carvings. These carvings are in the hearts and minds of people.' (*Waka Huia*, 25 October 2009). The ancestors and connections to the land might not need to be blatantly on display as evidence of their existence, because the spiritual ancestors are ever present and constantly reminding Maori of their connections to the past, where there is no time limit on the spirits of the old people or the land (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009). When meetings, gatherings, and ceremonies are conducted today, people still give a *karakia* (prayers, incantations) to give thanks to their ancestors, and state their connections to the land and its features before the sharing of experiences and knowledge occurs (Rangitunoa Black, interview, 21 August 2009).

This history of interactions with the teachings of prophets, along with the continuous habitation of Kaiwhaiki, has underpinned the portrayals of history and identity that have been used to claim back the lands considered important to community history. Sites of importance such as Puketarata, Te Wakatauranga (from the Tokomaru Block sale), or Kaimatira (that was an ancient settlement that had a road built through it without permission) have become key elements of cultural acquisition not only in the sense that they will strengthen the community seeking to gain their land bases back, but that they will strengthen land-based community knowledge. For Maori culture the mountains, rivers, lakes, and land features have names, 'and become symbols of identity so that the name of the chief and of the tribe or sub-tribe is associated with a mountain' (Mead 2003: 67). Knowledge related to key land sites, aspects of traditional protocols on the *marae*, great oratory skills, and participation in culture are today sought out as a means of engaging in cultural identity. These attributes of knowledge are cultivated within specific *hapu* settings, similar to Sahlins' (1985) explanation of ways social structure runs in conjunction with 'the New Zealand landscape of tribal and clanic ancestors, leaving their respective traces in the local set of geographic features named from their doings' (58).

Thus ancestor derived attributes are passed on in the knowledge of the land, *whakapapa* connected to it, and Maori names of sites, which form the backbone of ways people relate to one another, and also position their rights based stance of authoritative knowledge in connection to the land. The protection over such reinforcing knowledge in connection to ancestors must be maintained for the benefit of knowledge preserved in its correct form, and also relate to a history of interactions Maori have had with outsiders from their culture (see Hakiwai 1991; Smith 1999: 172; Mead 2003: 3-4, 317). In this research, issues of Maori identity and social relationships with the land and *taonga* are focused around the regulation of Maori knowledge in Whanganui, and how these engagements facilitate different objectives within and outside of the community. First I will give some indication about the types of *taonga* Smith collected and then discuss my theoretical position in this analysis.

Overview of the Smith collection and narratives attached

Through my contact with Ken Clarke, my key Nga Paerangi community informant with interests in this project, I sent a Pitt Rivers document containing information about the 290 objects and 79 photographs for the community to think about. There was a *hui* (important ritual event) in Kaiwhaiki to discuss the objects that would be of interest to the group, and around forty *taonga* were chosen based on the interests of the community. These were mainly historic photographs and objects that had narratives and named ancestors connected to them, which the community wanted to learn more about. From those 40 *taonga* chosen, I began researching comparative and biographical information in connection to the pieces in Oxford.

While I was in Whanganui I showed photographs of the objects, and I also gave copies of photographs to participants in the research to use for their own purposes (aside from publishing). The photographs I took were very categorical and institutional in character. Many people found it hard to connect with the object images, perhaps because of the technical way the images were photographed, and perhaps because having copies of photographs of objects was slightly more difficult for participants to connect with in comparison to the copies of historic photographs. There were a few *taonga* in the Smith collection that sparked more personal responses having to do with ancestral connections and the narratives associated with objects, the ancestors, or to the objects themselves as ancestors. The *taonga* photographs with the most successful responses were the copies

of historic photographs that acted as history and memory texts for those who could reconnect with images of their ancestors, the information people knew about ancestors already, and other knowledge they wanted to know. In the course of this study, *taonga* objects seemed to be most connective when people could actually see and be near the objects. In the following chapters, I look at these interactions and reactions to *taonga* in the context of how *taonga* and its relational elements connect to issues of history, land, and identity within contemporary and historical struggles.

The Smith *taonga* were collected between the 1860s and early 1900s just after Smith arrived in New Zealand and until before his death as he continued to travel and collect. The collection in the Pitt Rivers Museum does not contain objects from his travels, but instead mainly his collection from the Whanganui region where he names many previous owners from the Nga Paerangi *hapu* across the river from his home in Te Korito. Though one cannot be sure of how Smith obtained all of the *taonga* in the collection, within the narratives he recorded and his exchanges with those at Kaiwhaiki, namely with leader Te Oti Takarangi and his nephew and later leader Tamati Takarangi (through lineage, as several Maori scholars corrected this information in Smith's narrative, although he was possibly also called the son), Smith accumulated a rich collection of historic importance during a time of upheaval in the 1860s and 1870s in the war torn Whanganui region.

I make the assumption that these *taonga* were given or sold to Smith freely because of the character and stories that emerge about Smith and his life in Whanganui. Though he was one of the earliest settlers of Whanganui, he was also one of few settlers living outside of town near Maori settlements on the Whanganui River. He established a sheep farm at Te Korito, though he hired other men as farm managers and workers who also lived nearby. In his free time, Smith traveled extensively to the Pacific Islands for long periods (*Wanganui Herald*, 18 November 1902: 5), as well as to India.

Though Smith was well known, he was most likely a very quiet and unassuming character as his obituary describes him as 'a typical English gentleman- a "gentle man"' ('Obituary', *Wanganui Chronicle*, 4 January 1908: 1). In an pamphlet called 'Wanganui Old Settlers' in 1902, there was even the complete omission of Charles Smith's name, which the writer later corrected and apologized for the oversight (see *Wanganui Herald*, 24 March 1902: 1).

Others also observed Smith's good relationship with his Maori neighbors as evidenced in his obituary where the writer recalls that during the war between 1863-1868

Mr. Smith not only did his share of military duty as a volunteer, but also stuck to his place 'Te Korito', although surrounded as it were by natives, many of them openly hostile, at Kaiwhaiki and other Maori pāhs, both above and below that settlement. Mr. Smith trusted these natives all through the trying, critical period mentioned, and they never deceived or turned traitors upon him. His staunchest and truest friend at Kaiwhaiki was the late chief Takarangi, who although himself a turbulent and troublesome fellow all through the war, kept faith with Mr. Smith, nor would he allow any injury from his countrymen to befall him. To the natives' credit residing at Kaiwhaiki and further up the river be this recorded ('Obituary', *Wanganui Chronicle*, 4 January 1908: 2).

Such trust and alliance during the warring period between settlers and Maori who themselves were divided as to their opinion on British settlement, at least showed Smith to be someone the nearby Maori groups seemed to trust.

In the writings of early land surveyor George Fredrik Allan, he writes about his experience of trying to do a survey in Kaiwhaiki when he hired a canoe and was accompanied by soldiers. Allan describes how he and his crew

were going up the bank, [and] we were stopped by a Maori sentry with fixed bayonet. Angry expostulations, only caused him to call out the guard so we retired in good order. In the evening Mr. Chas Smith sent his man Martin with me over to the Pa, where after being introduced to old Te Oti Takarangi, the chief, I was rather grudgingly, allowed to be present at a meeting in the Kiritahi whare runanga. About two hundred men women and children were assembled, and the place was intensely hot...Each speaker marched up and down the central passage, speaking at the top of his voice, and occasionally indulging in a song. The meeting got very much excited, and curses against the Pakeha authorities were numerous (WRM, *Reminiscences of George Frederick Allan (1857-1928): Prepared for Meeting of St. Andrews Kelwinning but not used*: 9-10).

Allan was reassured it was safe, but he felt it was better to go back to Smith's side of the river. Allan also describes Kaiwhaiki as a place where in the 1860s Maori assembled to fight together in the Taranaki region, and once there were enough numbers, they headed out together marching through Charles Smith land, but 'keeping inland from other Pakeha settlers' (10). From these expositions it is likely that the collection came into Smith's hands in relatively uncomplicated ways due to his relationship with the Maori in the area.

Though Smith lived in Te Korito across from Kaiwhaiki and bought or was gifted *taonga* from his neighbors, he did continue to make donations to the local Whanganui Regional Museum, in the form of books concerning Cook's travels (WRM, 'Museum Annual Report', 30 June 1897), and also objects. In the Whanganui Regional Museum his donations seemed to consist of mainly adzes, a large canoe from Rarotonga, fishhooks, and kitchen implements from his travels in the Cook Islands. He also donated natural history specimen such as coral, shells, fossils, feathers and animal bones from around the Pacific, including a variety of eggs from New Zealand (WRM, 'Museum Annual Report', 30 June 1898; 30 June 1899; 30 June 1903; 30 June 1904). Other than a recorded *toki*, or adze blade,

donated in 1895,⁴ the Maori objects Smith collected remained with him until his death when he bequeathed them to his sister in England. Smith's recording of the narratives he received with the collection is different from other nineteenth century collectors,⁵ speaking to the recognition of respect and *mana* surrounding *taonga*. A brief description of the Pitt Rivers objects chosen by the source community for this research can be found in Appendix 1, but I shall briefly summarize some of the provenance information and the responses I received below.

Objects of weaving, such as the *korowai* (cloak) (PRM 1923.87.159) from Nga Paerangi ancestor and community leader Wi Patene's daughter, were of interest for many women to examine the quality and weaving patterns, and see the styles that were used in the nineteenth century. Others looking at the *korowai* focused on the story Smith had written down. The outside of the flax cloak had a mixture of twisted black strings and a border of feathers from multiple birds. In a letter to his family, Smith explained that he had obtained the cloak from Pehimana, a chief at Wareroa, who had heard of him and had come to meet him. Smith explains how the next day Pehimana returned with: 'a Maori tomahawk taken on the East Coast lately & said to have belonged to Te Kooti. He then told me that on saying he was going to make me a present, a little girl over there, daughter of the chief Wi Patene said she should like to give me the mat I mentioned before, so he handed that over too' (Related document file for 1923.87.159, Pitt Rivers Museum). Smith comments on how the 'mat' was getting more rare and it was nice to have such a sample. A curatorial reaction to the photographs of this *korowai* in Whanganui, commented on how the stylized *korowai* with ornaments of feathers was mainly a nineteenth century invention and the previous styles had been much plainer in order to accentuate the weaving prowess of the women who made them (Michelle Horwood, personal communication, 16 December 2009). When Ken and Haimona with genealogy and *taonga* interests looked at the *korero* and *taonga* image together, they began to connect the missing *whakapapa* information, such as Wi Patene's only daughter being named Ngapera Pikia, but also being known as Te Aue. Haimona explained that people were given a name, a *tupuna* (ancestral) name, and depending on circumstances, if a significant event occurred 'during their life, they were given another name' (Haimona Rzoska, interview, 4 November 2009).

⁴ A canoe paddle was also found while I was conducting fieldwork in the Whanganui Regional Museum, which had been unrecorded, but was in the 'Te Mata o Hoturoa' canoe on display in the Maori Court with 'Charles Smith' carved into the paddle blade. See Appendix 2 for the WRM Smith collection.

⁵ There are similar situations of colonial settlers who received *taonga Maori* gifts that are well documented in New Zealand, such as the Gilbert Mair collection, which is now held in the Auckland Museum (Tapsell 2006).



Figure 1.5 Korowai PRM 1923.87.159, Photo credit Pitt Rivers Museum

Within Smith's collection was a *mata tuhua* (PRM 1923.87.46), or obsidian flake, which Smith had recorded as being owned by Te Maramara, the brother of Kararaina Pukeroa (Kaiwhaiki). When the WRM curator saw the picture of the object, she commented that she was surprised to see that the flake was so small and had a name attached to it (Michelle Horwood, personal communication, 30 July 2009). When Ken, a Nga Paerangi man of extensive land and museum *taonga Maori* interests, saw the obsidian flake image with a label that says 'formerly belonging to Te Maramara, brother of Kararaina Pukeroa of Kaiwhaiki', he went to go get a large piece of obsidian from his house and explained that people used to take a large piece for trade, peacemaking, or just for use. People used to name the big piece and every piece after would also be used for trade or tools; the pieces would also have corresponding and different names additionally. The *korero* would be attached to all the pieces. Adzes produced and tools like the *mata tuhua* were of high importance because they kept people alive – people used them to cut food or make things – key life implements (Ken Clarke, interview, 17 October 2009). Firth also notes the importance of obsidian which 'was used a great deal for minor cutting operations, delicate carving, and the scraping of woodwork, and was a favourite object of exchange' (1959: 406). Firth also notes that Best recorded it as being used at Paekakariki. The Smith *mata tuhua* piece was accompanied by the *korero* that Te Maramara, had 'Picked up [the obsidian] at his old kainga [village] at Toutawai [Tautewai]. Te Maremara [Maramara] was killed at Momimomi; his head preserved and his body eaten' (Related document file for 1923.87.46, Pitt Rivers Museum).

When asking people who saw the photograph about this *taonga*, most people could not recognize the names associated with the story, nor the places. If Smith had collected it, and Te Maramara's brother was from Kaiwhaiki, it had to be feasible that the place name 'Toutawai' that Smith recorded could have been a misspelling of the hill opposite Kaiwhaiki *marae* named Tautewai, which led to issues that many had with the spelling of ancestor names and places in the Smith documents.

When interviewing Te Papa staff about their *koiwi tangata* (human remains) repatriations that are of key importance in New Zealand today, one of the repatriation officers became very interested in the *mata tuhua*. He drew the others' attention to it and its *korero*, namely that Te Maramara's head had been preserved, in the sense of a *toi moko* (preserved head), which museums around the world are being urged to repatriate back to New Zealand. Being able to put a name to one would be very difficult and Te Arikirangi was gathering possible clues (Te Arikirangi and Te Papa repatriation team, interview, 9 October 2009).



Figure 1.6 Mata tuhua PRM 1923.87.46

Researching in Ken's Native Land Court records archive, I also came across a few notations about a Te Maramara in the Kai Iwi Land Block case that stated a man named Te Maramara had lived at Tunuhaere, and had been killed in a battle with insurgents from Kai Iwi, who had come in order to take away the twin greenstone *mere* 'Whakarewarewa' and 'Te Maro Taritari' (WH. MB 16, 11 July 1889), both of which now are placed in the care of the family who possess it at the *marae* in 'Te Kiritahi'. It is very possible that Smith's possession of the *mata tuhua* is an example of the kind of *taonga* that had been given away with reason, namely pertaining to bad *mana* and stories relating to the death of Te Maramara or cannibalism; such objects are things that people in Kaiwhaiki might have

felt ready to let go of and so gave or sold them to Smith.

Another life implement in Smith's collection was the fern root pounder that he bought on 24 May 1889 and recorded as a 'patu' (PRM 1923.87.77). This *taonga's* related documents say the pounder was bought for '10/- from a man named Tuatua', who had inherited the *taonga* from his father, Te Kiri Tuatua, and from his father before him, Moetahora (possible correct spelling is Maetahora), and noted that the *patu* was 'rather dear, but [Tuatua] wanted money for the feast and he brought Indian corn too and borrowed the rest. The Patu is a very good one...it is a thing for beating fern root for food, or flax for making mats, and has been used in his family for three generations' (Related document file for 1923.87.77, Pitt Rivers Museum). In Augustus Hamilton's book *Maori Art* the terminology he sites for this kind of fern beater is a *paoi* (Hamilton 1972 [1901]: 198). Not many people had seen this type of pounder before in museums or in surrounding communities either, but the WRM curator recognized it and explained that the pounder was used to beat the rhizome of the fern root. Then the softened root is chewed to soften it further, and then is roasted. She mentioned that this trend occurred more after some of the animals that had been food sources died out (Michelle Horwood, personal conversation, 16 December 2009).

Local genealogy expert Haimona then mentioned perhaps the Whanganui name for the pounder was a *paopao*, and that his great grandmother's sister had a *paopao*, but had buried it. He explained the burial as something that happens normally after someone



Figure 1.7 Hinaki PRM 1923.87.84.1

passes away. It was the choice to keep *taonga* safer, unless former owners 'could see that there was someone up and coming and they might carry that sort of thing on, they might give it to them' (Haimona Rzoska, interview, 4 November 2009). He also explained that if retrospectively someone appeared who was the right person to take responsibility of the *taonga Maori*, then they would be eligible to do so.

The widespread use of *hinaki* (eel traps) on the Whanganui River remained consistent for a long time, and Smith does not have examples of them in his collection despite being key aspects of river life in the late 1800s, but he does have one small basket labeled as a trap for lampreys (PRM 1923.87.84.1). It is possible that this lack of such a distinctive *taonga* in Smith's collection, speaks to the items which communities felt ready to part with and those they did not.

Another piece connected to ancestors in Kaiwhaiki and historic narratives was the canoe prow 'Tunuhaere' (PRM 1923.87.12) given to Smith by Tamati Takarangi, a nineteenth century Nga Paerangi leader. The 'Tunuhaere' prow once belonged to Te Oti Takarangi, uncle of Tamati Takarangi, after the leader was involved in a dispute between another related, but warring party, where the party came down the river to settle their quarrel. Once the dispute was over one of the warring party members, the notorious Matene Rangitauira, and former owner of the prow, gifted it to Kaiwhaiki leader Te Oti Takarangi. I will discuss this pivotal piece more in Chapter two in regards to knowledge and its regulation in the community.

Another *taonga* that Smith was given by a possible Nga Paerangi descendant was the *tata* (PRM 1923.87.14), or canoe bailer. Smith recorded the *taonga* as a *tata*, but pieces in Whanganui are usually called *tiheru* in the regional dialect (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009). Smith notes that the wooden canoe bailer shows a 'more modern style of carving, [with] the under surface being also carved. This belonged to the large war-canoe "Taringamotu"' (Related document file for 1923.87.14, Pitt Rivers Museum). Ropiha gave the bailer on 30 November 1886, and Smith connected it to the war canoe 'Taringamotu', said to be from Paekakariki. Paekakariki is a town just outside of Wellington and quite far from Kaiwhaiki, so it is interesting that this *taonga* would have ended up in Whanganui and given to Smith.

Smith also collected a few examples of the trolling fish lures used to fish for *pa kahawai*. In particular, one from the collection with the name 'Te Pa o Hinematiaro' (PRM 1923.87.121) had a particularly interesting story, which brought to light some historical information about chief Te Oti Takarangi, and his involvements during the nineteenth century uprisings and rebellions in the area (see Binney 1995: 193). Along with this



Figure 1.8 'Te Pa o Hinematiaro' fishhook PRM 1923.87.121

taonga, Smith documented the accompanying *korero* of how Takarangi had taken this fishhook from a prisoner. The prisoner happened to be a wife of the notorious anti-settler outlaw, Te Kooti. Te Kooti was partially responsible for the Pai Marire anti-settler campaign across much of the North Island. Though Smith does not specify which wife of Te Kooti's was captured of the eight (documented) women. He does describe that its name 'Te Pa o Hinematiaro' refers to Hinematiaro, the wife of famous chief of Ngati Poeru, Takani Atakirau (Related document file for 1923.87.121, Pitt Rivers Museum). Smith also says in a letter home about the *taonga* he plans to later send along:

This present among Maori is thought much more of than the others as it is an heirloom which has descended from a remote ancestor. I won't trouble you with a full account here, but will put it in when I send it. I mean it for Harry. These fishhooks are too large for enclosing in a letter, being wooden backs, as large as your middle finger with a sort of mother of pearl face and a bone hook attached. When drawn through the water they glitter like small fish. The natives tell me there would be great lamentation over the loss of this hook. It was name Te Pa o Hinematiaro from the name of the wife of the ancestor who was the great chief of the tribe. I explained to the warrior donors that I wished to send the thing home. As they were going to "the family" it was quite satisfactory to them, in fact rather a compliment... (Related document file for 1923.87.121, Pitt Rivers Museum).

The *kumu kai kauri* (PRM 1923.87.138) that Smith collected is a carved top, which is used on a calabash (*taha*) vessel for storing food. These *taha* vessels were where pigeons

were preserved in their own fat. It had been passed down from Te Oti Takarangi's grandfather, to Te Oti, who then gave it to Smith. The description of the *taonga* says it is a *kumu kai kauri* or *matai*. When talking to people about this object a few distinctly told me that matai might refer to a very hard wood from a New Zealand tree or the kauri tree, but that the *kumu kai kauri* was special (Ken Clarke, interview, 4 November 2009). When local Ngati Rangi leader (with connections to Nga Paerangi and other *hapu*) Che looked at the *taonga*, he immediately identified it as being from Whanganui because of the carving patterns. He explained it as a 'spaghetti pattern' that is unique to the region, and that it was non-symmetrical because symmetry is not the goal. Then he pulled up his trouser legs to show me the tattooed patterns on his own legs that went from his ankles to his knees. He said that it was a related design, but that each side was different because symmetry is not the goal, much like the carvings on the *kumu kai kauri*. He thought it was possible that the lid had been carved in the Utiku Mohuia School of carving in the 1840s because of the style, and because carvers of the Whanganui River often used the *haihai* lines, symbolizing the flowing of the water. The goal for carvers was to take cultural oratory and put it into their physical art (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009).



Figure 1.9 Kumu kai kauri PRM 1923.87.138

A *taiaha* (warrior's spear) is a very well known Maori weapon, and can be seen being held in many historic photographs as well as existing in museums collections around the world. Smith collected a few examples, but one *taiaha* (PRM 1923.87.1) he recorded as being connected to some famous historical figures that everyone recognizes in Whanganui. This *taiaha* was passed down from the leaders Titokowaru to Hori Kingi te Anaua – then to Taitoko te Keepa te Rangihuihinui, who then gave it to his cousin Te Oti Takarangi. At Takarangi's death, this *taonga* was given to Charles Smith. The *taiaha* is

decorated with the red feathers of the kaka parrot,⁶ and tassels of the white haired *kuri* dog, which went extinct after European arrival. The links that this *taonga* has to famous warriors involved in pivotal moments in settler and Maori interactions in history makes it a special *taonga* with a great deal of *korero* that could be extracted by a knowledgeable community member.



Figure 1.10 Patuki PRM 1923.87.8



Figure 1.11 Awheto hotete PRM 1923.87.209, Photo credit PRM

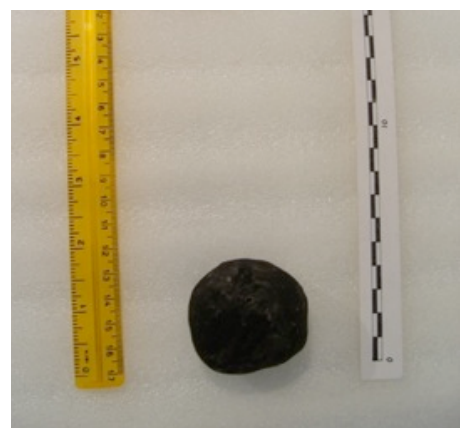


Figure 1.12 Tattooing Pigment Ball PRM 1923.87.190

⁶ See Firth (1959) on the kaka parrot as native and special to the Whanganui region, but also a source of exchange outside of the region (404).

The *patuki* was also important to Maori warfare before it fell to disuse in the nineteenth century. The *patuki* (PRM 1923.87.8) in Smith's collection is shaped like a *mere* or a short club. It is made of wood, with carvings on both sides, with halloitis shells also inlaid on both sides.

The *awheto hotete*, or mummified caterpillars (PRM 1923.87.209), and the ball of tattooing pigment (PRM 1923.87.190) also gained many responses, as people had not seen the *awheto hotete* before in a collection. According to Smith's notes, these caterpillars were used once they ate sporous plants underground, from which grew a plant above ground that could be collected, burnt, and once turned to coal, was used to make the pigments for tattooing (Related document file for 1923.87.209, Pitt Rivers Museum). The pigment ball was one of the products from this process of tattooing preparation and was stored in a pumice box, which could be kept many years buried underground. The Pitt Rivers Museum entry for the pigment ball says that it was given to Smith by Takarangi, and was made by burning the *kauri* resin off of a basket and turning the soot into the pigment. Several people connected to the tattooing implements because of the importance that tattooing once had, which is now making a strong resurgence in Whanganui and other parts of Maoridom as well. When local leader Gerrard saw the tattoo implements, he told me how his grandmother had told him that when she wanted to make the pigments, they fed the *awheto hotete* to the dogs, whose excrement was then burned and turned into the soot that was used to make the tattooing coloring (Gerrard Albert, interview, 1 October 2009). Later another person commented on his surprise to see that the pigment ball had been given to Smith, when tattooing was so important to Maori communities and pigments would have been *tapu* (sacred, prohibited, restricted, set apart). He also commented on how dog *tutae* was used in the process of making the pigment and how different foods were used to make different pigments (Te Papa repatriation team, interview, 9 October 2009).

Smith also collected many of the cartes de visite, postcards, and studio photographs that were being reproduced in mass during the time period. He had photographs of many of the famous chiefs and warriors from the area, river landscape images, as well as the 'Maori beauties' photographed and disseminated widely. Amongst these photographs, he also had a small assortment of personal photographs that he seemed to have taken either himself or by other photographers visiting his house during his interactions with his Maori neighbors. One photograph in particular the 'Group at Kaiwhaiki Pa' (PRM 1998.243.18.1) photograph, pictures fourteen people including Charles Smith, his neighbors from whom

he received some of his *taonga*, Te Oti Takarangi and his nephew Tamati Takarangi, as well as others. The ancestor identification from this photograph became important as a part of naming the ancestors, but also led to insights on the contemporary pursuits of knowledge in the community, as losses of images such as this one in the Smith collection was connected to other kinds of knowledge losses felt. Concerns over *taonga* became quickly linked to issues for the need Maori ways of interpreting history and control over representations that were related to their ancestral *mana* to safeguard future community well being.

Theoretical positioning of the research

The concept of tradition has become very political in its use and connotations. For Maori, tradition is a concept that can sometimes be glossed as *tikanga*. *Tikanga* is a word that encapsulates a wide range of a 'Maori way of doing things', and can also mean culture, protocol, mannerisms, etiquette, customs, and other associations depending on the context (Mead 2003: 6). A typical response to questions of Maori culture and identity or cultural protocol on the *marae*, usually mentions *tikanga* as the way culture is managed. This term also inherently refers to the historic traditions of the community, and is accompanied by a notion that contemporary *tikanga* (the traditional response to new situations; e.g. repatriation cases, Land Court cases), must also incorporate approaches to the ideals of tradition. As Sahlins (1985) remarks in his initial comments on history in the Pacific (though concerned with the structural constitution of different 'modes of historical practice' [p. 34]), there is something different between the enactment of convention, and the pragmatics of that knowledge in the community, which creates 'a synthesis in time of reproduction and variation' (ix). Such a view on historic traditions in a community in the sense of their 'construction' (see Wagner 1975, Hanson 1989, Linnekin 1990), does not intend to imply an inauthenticity of identities (Linnekin 1991), but instead relates to how culture is reproduced through the 'processes of social and political change, colonialism, and hegemony. Moreover, the notion of cultural construction points to a mode of discourse that includes, rather than excludes, non-scholarly voices.' (Linnekin 1992: 250).

In the academic climate of theorizing convention and tradition in indigenous societies, it is commonplace to acknowledge the variability of traditions. Poyer (1990) described the self-conscious ideas of Sapwuahfik ethnic identity within the islands of Micronesia as a process of creation, where identity is understood as differentiating characteristics of social

actions, behaviors, values, relations, and the participation in local and national politics. Poyer discussed the element of social construction as important for Sapwuahfik identity, where customs and traditions such as sharing feast goods, became a means of legitimating valid identities in contrast to other Micronesian populations. Both Poyer (1990) and Linnekin (1990) express the belief that these socially constructed identities serve as the basis for political relationships where the constant reflection on social identity in the Pacific causes its ability to fluctuate and change. For both authors, indigenous identities are processual, and Linnekin draws a connection to re-emerging traditional concepts 'as the basis for a collective identity', where such 'artifacts and customs are not inherently icons of the past, however, but are dynamically infused with such meaning in the present' (Linnekin 1990: 159). Borofsky concludes in his analysis of historic production in Pukapuka, that anthropologists and Pukapukans alike alter traditions. Pukapukans creatively interpret their traditions and by doing so change them, while anthropologists 'overstructure' them in response to their own contextual orientation (1987: 145).

In looking at the concept of *taonga* in Maori society, identity is not structured around the objects themselves, but in relation to the knowledge that can be culturally interpreted within specific Maori understandings of *tikanga*, and Maori ethics of *kaupapa Maori* 'research with, by and for Maori' (Henry and Pene 2001: 234). *Kaupapa Maori* focuses on the ability for Maori to exclusively be the most proficient to speak about, represent, research and disseminate knowledge about their own identity. Aside from varying notions on the prerequisite of Maori heritage that enable one to 'come to know the past' (Smith 1999: 34), those seeking out knowledge within these goals must also be working towards the objectives and benefit of Maori communities. Within these communities different dispositions and views on knowledge come to encompass the navigation of politics within competing knowledges between *hapu*, or the competing frames of knowledge between *Maoridom* (the interconnected general Maori population) and the west. The epistemological precedence of Maori knowledge, comes to define not only the way Maori relate to issues of *taonga*, politics, and identity, but also how a researcher must come to prioritize this understanding.

Knowledge as an 'understanding that is definite and lineated', and knowing as an 'understanding that is more fluid and flexible in character' (Keck 1998: 10), relates to this research in its analysis of a Maori relationship to *taonga*. While a context of knowing in a community might have a 'social life' and face fluctuations in its perceptions of loss or renewal (see Rubinstein 1981), *matauranga* as Maori knowledge of history, ritual

procedures, incantations, and *whakapapa*, is ultimately an aspect of ancestral *mana* that is passed on through intergenerational transmission, and this careful and regulated diffusion also keeps the original tenet of the knowledge (Parkin 1985: 49, commenting on Salmond's [1982] discussion of Maori knowledge).

Though knowing might evoke a sense of loss through restricted orations of it, or the actual loss of *taonga* connected to historic narratives, the sustained aspects of knowledge or *taonga* can resurface, as has been documented in Tapsell's book *Pukaki* (2000). The return of the carved ancestor 'Pukaki' repatriated *korero* to the community that was of great significance (146). Similarly, in the Mewun community of Malekula, Vanuatu, Larcom notes that her initial visit to the community to study their use of the slit gong in 1973-74, proved difficult, despite her predecessor Deacon's enthusiastic notes on the instrument (working in the 1930s) where he noted the gongs, "were spatially as well as symbolically central to village life" (1982: 331). Conversely, the community did not have an interest in gong rhythms at the time of Larcom's research, but when she returned in 1981, the gong rhythms had been 'excavated', much in the same way that the Mewun were using instances of revitalized *kastom* (Melanesian culture and tradition). These newly reintegrated traditions were being used as evidence in court cases to decide land holdings by what ancestral gong rhythms said about familial land settlement and historic land rights. The resurgence of interest in forgotten community traditions marks the 'fluidity and incompleteness in which *kastom* was conceived not as tradition but as new knowledge' (Larcom 1982: 336), and the pursuit of this knowledge became a new way that people identified themselves as traditional adherents of *kastom*.

Though most Maori historians and scholars that I encountered did not attempt to seek out a 'new knowledge' akin to newly informed *kastom*, the incorporation of *matauranga* as Maori knowledge into a local basis for what the community previously knew was part of the process of re-inscribing histories to the landscape and community memory. This occurred mainly by specific members of the community who had a recognized level of knowledge that had been passed on from their ancestors, also having a reputation of distinguished *mana*, or their personal research. This passing on of knowledge is heavily related to a Maori way of knowing, or *tikanga* in a sense, where knowledge must be amalgamated from multiple sources through personal archival research, as well as the gathering of local knowledge from one's family and surrounding *hapu*. The ability to collate these sources, with a special focus on listening to elders, defined the way an individual's ancestral power

came from the knowledge of 'cosmological and ancestral histories' as *wananga* knowledge, and *matauranga* as 'reliable knowledge' (Salmond 1985: 240-242).

The cultural tenets of acquiring these types of knowledge to understand the underlying importance and interpretations of *taonga* denote an element of risk for the person seeking out knowledge because of its great power in Maori society (Walker 1986: 73). Maori scholar Ranginui Walker (1986) has explained how the cultural narratives surrounding the dispersion of knowledge is connected to the gods, which makes it *tapu*, but also creates a relationship between young people seeking the knowledge from its older custodians. In the Whanganui case, it is not such a simple matter of young and old, but the control and dissemination of knowledge does underpin the kinds of knowledge available to a researcher from a culturally appropriate standpoint. From an alternative outlook, many believe that *matauranga* has hereditary requirements further from familial controls of knowledge that must keep *matauranga* restricted within Maori communities for political reasons (Smith 1999: 186-187), based on a long history of Maori being the subjects of scientific and social research projects by outsiders (Hakiwai 1991: 116). Ranginui Walker explains in a metaphor that draws on the lack of reciprocity in the one-sided gifting of Maori knowledge to researchers, that "Nau te rourou, naku te rourou, ka ki te kete = An offering from you, an offering from me and we will fill the basket" (1986: 75).

For the last couple of decades Maori material culture literature has focused on *taonga* being the actual embodiment of the ancestors (Tapsell 1997, 2000). The ongoing power of *taonga* has been described by Leach (2003) as the ability to creatively perceive tribal customs through contexts of repatriation, but also through the creativity within relationships with *taonga* that elicit responses of a cultural or political nature, similar to the sense of *kastom* in Melanesia (132).⁷ Leach equates *kastom* to a referent that exists for Reite people as *turum meliemung* meaning 'gathering things together', which also 'describes a process in which work and produce are given form in order that they are acceptable to others' (2003: 126). In the same sense that Strathern (1988) speaks of the production of knowledge through eliciting responses, Leach describes this phenomenon through *kastom*, where claims to objects are more strongly connected to their preestablished value

⁷ Henare (2005b) criticizes Leach's (2003) take on the creativity of *taonga*, as cultural property issues usually focus on what has remained continuous and not what is new. The objectification of *taonga* that Henare argues Leach observes is an objectification operating "according to different registers of significance and effect" (Henare 2005b: 124). Henare chooses to focus on the ancestral element of *taonga* as something continuous that has been underplayed in studies that discuss the socio-political responses to issues of *kastom* and *taonga*.

that had been created and recreated through exchanges and display, which in the end leads to the binding of social agents to one another.

Responses elicited through *taonga Maori* in the Smith collection with known connections to ancestors or unknown histories, corresponded to patterns of remembering the ancestors, upholding knowledge connected to them, and feelings of needing to use this knowledge to advance the position of Maori seeking rights to the land and resources. The more recent theories emphasizing the ancestor/object/descendant connections as a major facet of indigenous identity is largely grouped within traditionalist approaches arising out of the recent dialogue between Maoris seeking their land rights, and having to present a coherent indigenous identity through the courts.

My position is that through the continuous cycle of knowledge accrual, retention and restriction, loss and regeneration, culture endures through external changes, while perceptions of knowing being deficient stimulate endeavors to reclaim knowledge. The variability and dynamism of Maori culture makes it difficult to pin down. Some Maori prefer to seek restitution from the Crown while others seek a more *iwi*, or tribal, fundamentalism (Ward 2000: 417-419). The appreciation of these specific and divergent Maori needs, as well as different historical constructions, must be understood as the modern Maori identity. Post-colonial indigenous descendants who have been brought up with European cultures for several centuries will not only reflect the influence of their cross-cultural interactions in social behaviors, but might also find that the ascription of an indigenous identity does not always suit their dispositions to knowledge. Within this understanding it also becomes difficult to ascribe a singular definition to the concept *taonga*, except through the contextual reactions to the Smith collection. Concerns were voiced by community members about their own issues with gathering knowledge for the Waitangi Tribunals or personal endeavors, the need to reconnect with kin, and also the history surrounding the current Maori political situation.

By looking at what knowledge was displayed to me with the things that people explained as restricted, issues of disquiet over the incorrect spellings of words, losses of visual familiarity with material culture, and a divergent range of opinions on *taonga* and *matauranga* that emerged, an entangled web of understandings of *taonga* was presented. Although there were many who professed a lack of knowledge and interest in these museum objects, among Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi *iwi* members interested in this kind of well-provenanced *taonga*, most interests stemmed from the ability of this knowledge from *taonga* to fill in gaps in community histories and serve as a talking point about connections

to ancestors. This way of knowing one's Maori self within history and relating narratives to identity, also acts as a qualifier for one's position in the community based on the amount of social recognition accrued through orations about this kind of knowledge. Within these more cultural and historically grounded concerns over *taonga*, the political issues of the control of knowledge also surfaced, where access to knowledge and *taonga* of Maori communities is restricted from outsiders.

Eminent scholar of Maori and Pacific art Hirini Moko Mead (2003) has written about *tikanga Maori* and its relationship to research as seeking 'to expand knowledge outwards (te whanuitanga), in depth (te hohonutanga) and towards light (te maramatanga)' as the correct goals that reference current Maori needs and draw upon the realm of knowledge of the gods where important knowledge transcends from (318). Projects become suitable to Maori endeavors when they expand Maori knowledge, benefitting the community. In terms of an outsider pursuing knowledge, there is an innate bias against their research goals, as the descriptions and historization involved in defining aspects of Maori knowledge subvert them into a form never intended (Tau 2001: 70-73).

Within these political issues of restriction, as an outsider I also must balance the issues of being an unsuited conveyor of and recipient for knowledge, which I try to illuminate in the chapters as an underlying aspect of some reactions, but not a complete prevention from doing research. I will attempt to describe the ways personal reflections and assertions of control over different aspects of Maori knowledge, including *taonga Maori*, relate to ways culture concepts come to order political interactions through a Maori understanding of knowledge. By correcting the spelling of names connected to *taonga* and land sites, using *taonga* to support the age and ancestry of a group, and positioning individuals and groups within hereditary rights and knowledge of the land in conjunction with *taonga*, Maori knowledge becomes the basis for locating political arguments over past infringements on the rights to make such self-representations. This work is largely done by those with particular specializations of knowledge that also differentiates speakers and listeners in the community, but binds kin through the sharing of knowledge. The materialization of the agency of Maori of knowledge is seen when specialized and linguistically encoded speakers can effectively communicate Maori goals in relation to the land and *taonga Maori* in political forums to assert goals of self-governance.

Methodology and visual research projects

My initial attempts for this to be a project of collaborative anthropology has proved to be a difficult task as within a research project about a Maori community as an outsider looking in, there must be a singular cohesive voice of expression. The original ambitions stated by the community were just to be involved in the aspects of knowledge from the Smith collection, and so I attempted to engage the source community at Kaiwhaiki in a study of history, identity, and material culture. My core questions surrounded issues of identity and ways the narratives connected to the Smith collection underpinned contemporary indigenous identity and the politics of material heritage. Also, considering that the community was in the midst of debates over land, the control of resources, and different means of gaining sovereignty, I wanted to see how a relatively unknown collection would add to the knowledge of *taonga* for Maori, and ways introduced knowledge from museum collections is being changed, re-appropriated, and re-integrated into a sense of cultural history.

The pre-research phase of this project included establishing relations with Nga Paerangi community members interested in the Smith collection and *taonga*, identifying relevant museum and academic staff in New Zealand, and sending Smith collection information and materials to community members to initiate a research focus for the collection. The pre-research also included liaising with museum staff in Whanganui at a distance, in order to determine previous research done on another Smith collection in existence at the Whanganui Regional Museum (WRM). More information on my WRM interactions will be detailed below.

My fourteen months of fieldwork took place over two phases starting in December 2008 and lasting until February 2010. In phase one (December 2008-June 2009), I was looking at *taonga* chosen by *iwi* members from the Smith collection while in Oxford, and started to assemble 'biographical' information about the objects, while also analyzing the process of museum research on collections. Starting July 2009 until February 2010, the second phase of this research began in New Zealand by drawing on my previous work and researching in the areas of Kaiwhaiki and Whanganui. I lived in Whanganui, but also stayed in Kaiwhaiki to fit with the research and people's schedules to talk to me. I conducted photo-elicitation interviews with *iwi* members to re-establish genealogical links through a visual re-engagement with *taonga*, while supplementing this data with archival research at the Whanganui Regional Museum in Whanganui over seven months. I spent

the bulk of my time researching *taonga* and other issues related to history and genealogies in the WRM archives, and the museum staff helped put me in contact with Nga Paerangi community and individuals from other *hapu* with *taonga* interests. I also conducted research in archives in Whanganui and the National Archives in Wellington. In my interviews I tried to re-establish genealogies and histories connected to *taonga* through photo-elicitation, but this proved difficult most of the time as people stated they did not know much about *taonga*. From that point my topic shifted more towards the politics of knowledge in the community, but I kept using the same methods of photo-elicitation within a flexible standpoint shifting from informal conversations and interviews, especially regarding those who just did not want to talk about *taonga* when looking at images of *taonga*, and archival research.

At times, people asked that I not record their extensive interviews for their privacy, but allowed me to take notes. Some of the more traditionally taught community members asked me to refrain from taking notes as well and just listen. Also, there was an overall lack of people in the community with a breadth of knowledge they considered to be expertise. They did not want to be the voice of the community on issues of cultural heritage in connection to *taonga Maori*. While I tried to ask people about the objects, I soon found that only a select few people had knowledge in relation to *taonga*, genealogy knowledge, and the history of the area. Many more people had been motivated towards an interest in my project because of my inquisitiveness about what had been happening in the Waitangi Tribunal trials, as this was an experience that could be readily explained by those who had been involved in the process. When I did set up specific photo-based interviews with a person or group, I also made them a copy of the book of Smith collection images to reciprocate to a small measure, the knowledge they were providing me with.

Photo-elicitation has been used in anthropology for a long time, both as an indirect and direct method of research, and has received attention as an important aspect of visual methodologies that produce fruitful information. By using a visual stimulus, photo-elicitation enables informants to respond according to the images they see, which allows for recalling events, personal memories, family histories, and a wide range of other responses and emotions connected to the photograph (Brown and Peers 2006). Often the memories generated in these prompted remembrances related to the ongoing connection and continuity between generations, while also documenting 'the enormous social and economic changes that have transpired' (Oberholtzer 1996: 71). In Cath Oberholtzer's project to bring back photos of clothing from museum collections to Cree communities, she

found that very little could be unanimously agreed upon between the east and west coast communities about the names and uses of items she had photographed due to the social changes that has occurred in the past. In this way, photo-elicitation becomes not just about the objects or people in the photographs, but also about what responses the images say about history and contemporary culture. These photographs become a way to gain insight into anthropological concerns about history and current social and political issues as they become illuminated through the way photos are valued, handled, exchanged, viewed, cared for, and used as material culture (Kaplan 1990). As back-ups to informant interviews, photographs lend themselves to the project of eliciting information (Geffroy 1990), but also speak to a renewed philosophy of anthropology that uses photographs as stimulants for information that can be controlled by informants and beneficially reconnect people with historical ancestors or object images (Brown and Peers 2006).

In relation to issues of power in visual research projects, Sandra Niessen (1991) described how she used photographs of textiles in Sumatra to learn more about these historic objects in connection to Batak culture. She found that amongst various responses to her visit and project, very often her informants wondered how someone not from their culture had access to such deeply important cultural objects, and she was met with 'a mixture of surprise and suspicion, admiration and envy, a bit of wonder' (421) due to their own lack of such cultural resources. Within such issues of photo-elicitation, another focus on how photographs and objects came to be separated from their source community arises from research objectives. The salvage paradigm was the typical mode of operation under which many photographs or objects ended up in museums and indigenous groups were separated from their material culture (Gosden and Knowles 2001: 17, 78). In projects of photo-elicitation these issues come to matter for the researcher and informant alike. In Niessen's (1991) study, the lack of material culture for Batak people affected their perception of Niessen as a researcher, but also connects to ways that the return of these photographs stimulates a different kind of cross-cultural engagement with visual resources and non-indigenous researchers.

Roslyn Poignant (1996) compiled an archive of photographs of Aborigines in Arnhem Land taken by Axel Poignant in 1952, and her return of such information to the community resulted in a re-engagement with these ancestral images that developed an overarching narrative very different from what had originally been envisioned by Axel Poignant. His original photo-documentation project was about salvaging images of the Arnhem Landers, their rituals, and daily lives, and upholding the past as the most important aspect of cultural

circumstance that needed preservation. Understanding that these past images speak not only to history, but also to the social agency represented by these photos, the underlying narrative reveals a more in-depth depiction of past peoples and their social circumstances. Within a contemporary context, Arnhem Landers gain from the interplay that occurs between knowledge of the past and memories that may validate historic knowledge, but these engagements also give rise to alternate interpretations of the past.

In the Maori context of photo-elicitation, when Binney and Chaplin (1986, 2003) took back early twentieth century photographs to the old Maori community of the prophet Rua Kenana Hepetipa, they found that the photos contained an active social life that was reactivated when presented to the community. The pictures unlocked memories that had been stored away and silenced in the European versions of community history. Contestation of the past occurs frequently within the encounters between the state and indigenous groups when objects or symbols are misappropriated, and memories are subsumed within the national rhetoric of history. I faced many similar issues with the use of photography to provoke memories and understand the discourse of social relationships to *taonga*, land and identity. In the position of an outsider, I was met with divergent responses to the kind of knowledge I was asking for, which I feel helpfully creates a more substantial picture of the diversity of opinions in a community, and concerns over the cultural representations of Maori identity that are portrayed and have real consequences for a community's future.

Chapter overview

In the following Chapter two, 'Historic and Cultural Contexts for understanding *taonga*: perceptions of the loss and scarcity of knowledge', I will first take a closer look at the religious, historical, and education losses that people in Whanganui highlighted as significant to their Maori identity, and reasons the pursuit of lost knowledge helps mend this disjuncture. The history of Pakeha intrusion, from a Maori perspective, has served as a catalyst for the loss of the language, knowledge of traditional arts, the lands, and other aspects of colonialism, which today are being battled over in the Maori Land Courts. Within these politico-legal battles, *taonga* also become a partial contributor to the knowledge that supports historic *korero* and knowledge of the land. In the current politico-legal context for Whanganui, I will discuss the specific aspects of the cultural and political control exercised over *taonga* that were perceived in responses to the Smith collection. Such regulations of

knowledge relate to ideas about the social structure of the family and group, and ways knowledge can be a familial possession that denotes certain speakers of the community in relation to the listeners. This chapter serves as the framework for my discussion of knowledge and its cultural and political understandings in relation to *taonga Maori*. In the current situation of bringing Maori knowledge bases forward to reclaim land and other cultural losses, many who are excavating community memories and archives to present evidence in courts are developing their own roles as speakers and knowledge holders of the community. Such processes are engendering stronger kinship ties between community members through knowledge, and interests in the protection of *taonga* are underpinned by the arduous task of compiling knowledge seen as a scarce resource. The dispersion of knowledge in a Maori community is varied and diverse, and perceptions of 'knowing' can suffer losses and revivals that add to it as much as make it adaptable to specific social circumstances. It is within these understandings that the tenets of Maori knowledge, or *matauranga Maori*, as knowledge of history and ancestors, are asserted as a specific means of self-representation necessary for indigenous sovereignty claims.

In Chapter three '*Taonga Maori* reactions to the Smith collection and *taonga* in Whanganui', I will expand on the different ways *matauranga Maori* is conceived as a treasure itself. Within its abilities to collapse time and space, and bring ancestors into the present so long as their *korero* remains attached to them (Tapsell 1997: 332), *taonga* also have present day concerns surrounding them. As people reflected on the Smith images, issues were presented about the disenfranchisement of specifically Kaiwhaiki from their historic *taonga*, remembrances of ancestors or experiences, as well as the need to regulate the knowledge stimulated from significant *taonga* so as not to release knowledge that could be exploited (Tapsell 1997: 330). Rights over cultural heritage are being fought for at the same level as rights to the land, though often within different claims. *Taonga* become party to these claims for land, as they act as historical markers of identity and hereditary rights to an identity based on the *whakapapa* knowledge the community upholds, and the *korero* attached to objects and photographs. Both knowledge and *taonga*, therefore, follow the same restrictions within the community as will be discussed in depth in Chapter two. Controls of knowledge also relate to efforts of *kaupapa Maori* research goals that intend to expand the knowledge through the potential history drawn from *taonga*. I will be talking about the responses connected to the Smith collection in respect to the authority and control exercised over such knowledge, as well as issues of the return of knowledge, which at times surfaced as concerns over repatriation. As people

explained the repatriations of human remains being a top priority to literally bring the ancestors home, elements of control over other cultural heritage like ancestrally connected *taonga*, also factored into Maori critiques of inappropriate western ownership. By returning the *ancestors* and *taonga* to the land, *taonga* move beyond symbols of identity and place, and are reordered through Maori informed knowledge that demands a level of care and protection over *taonga* through the responsibility to knowledge and ancestors.

In 'The political significance of *taonga Maori* in relation to education, identity, and politics', I will continue to look at the commitments to promoting the control over *matauranga Maori* in the Whanganui community. Developments have been made through grassroots education initiatives, language revitalization programs, and a means of re-building *matauranga* knowledge bases from which Maori can assert their rights to land and resources through a more effective Maori way of knowing. Knowledge bases must consist of being able to orate one's culture and aspects of identity through the Waitangi Tribunals and to the wider Maori community. Within this more politically informed perspective, *taonga* represents aspects of identity that have been infringed upon through their physical removal from communities and containment in museums in far away lands (Hakiwai 1991: 115). Within this undertaking of intellectual and philosophical decolonization through a focus on Maori frames of knowledge that defend indigenous identity, such movements also compare to the wider politics of indigenous identity where groups seek to re-possess elements and symbols of culture such as the land, monuments, museum objects, and other resources that can be connected to the entire estate of both tangible and intangible cultural possessions. Though pursued divergently by many people, a focus on *matauranga* as a bridge to the past has enabled Maori to pursue their rights to lands by translating their knowledge, concepts of kinship, and powerful *mana* into a separate discourse of indigeneity in the global arena.

From the politics surrounding Maori identity, I will then be looking at the specific cultural expressions involving *taonga* (as treasured objects, land, and knowledge) in communities. In 'Claiming Maori cultural space and performances of identity: rights over *taonga*', I will look at ways *taonga* represent Maori knowledge and identity in specific contexts of cross-cultural interactions. In the museum context, specific ritual performances surrounding *taonga* inscribe the cultural values Maori are communicating, while also positioning their rights over the protection of ancestrally related objects. By ritually acknowledging *taonga Maori* in museums, giving incantations in courts before evidence is presented, or acknowledging the continued ancestral presence on the land through different cultural

encounters, Maori knowledge becomes a defining and guiding principle under which negotiations of cultural heritage are made. Museums and courts of law become prominent platforms for these performances of identity to display an ever-present connection to Maori ancestors in a public forum. By furthering analogies of hereditary precedence on the land, Maori also position their responsibilities and rights to *kaitiaki* (guardian) over the land. The same claims of *kaitiaki* relate to *taonga* in museums and have long been asserted. Cultural ideologies become powerful because they inscribe a specific set of behaviors and responses from viewers of the cultural rituals, which tests the restrictions of an institution's process and knowledge. Such efforts strongly focus on the creative and continuous pursuit of sovereignty, asserted through a Maori way of knowing that forms the basis of many Maori interactions with their *taonga*, knowledge, or outsiders in relation to such formative aspects of identity.

In conclusion, I discuss the limitations that research on *matauranga* knowledge in relation to the Smith collection can offer to a Maori community in pursuit of more land-based goals. Despite responses existing in a moment of political upheaval where issues of repatriation may readily surface, the return of *taonga Maori* was not as large of a concern as the return of lands. As I will discuss, the loss and regeneration of capabilities of knowing and perceptions of knowledge in the community are in flux, and therefore, ancestral connections and histories may resurface, as perceptions accorded to *taonga* emerge in different circumstances. Keeping in mind the issues of *kaupapa Maori* research that benefits community *mana*, I will look at ways the future of this knowledge, but also the knowledge bases the Whanganui community that are built up through the Waitangi Tribunals, will factor into new frameworks of cultural representations in relation to New Zealand governance beyond biculturalism and land claims.

CHAPTER TWO – Historic and cultural contexts for understanding *taonga*: perceptions of the loss and scarcity of knowledge

My research was intended as a project of photo-elicitation, where photographs of the Smith collection *taonga Maori* were returned to the community and information would be generated. The objectives to promote the value of Maori working with their museum collections and examinations of knowledge concerning the *taonga* itself were my own. Such projects with photographs have their own complicated history in anthropology, and especially in visual research or projects of photo-elicitation in the Pacific (Binney and Chaplin 1986, 2003; Poignant 1996; Bell 2003; Wright 2004). Photo-elicitation projects explicitly help a museum or researcher understand the connections between historic material culture and the present lives of descendants. The use of such photographs in projects of history and memory has opened a pathway for new academic discourses, but has also reframed the knowledge available in museum collections and archives (Brown and Peers 2006). In the wider region of Whanganui where Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi groups reside on *marae* located on both sides of the Whanganui River, community understandings of knowledge and *taonga* were revealed through the platform of the Smith collection images. Most people directed me to the community speakers and leaders who had gained a certain prominence of knowledge to discuss *taonga*, or to familial ‘owners’ of knowledge in connection to pieces in the collection with named ancestors. The project was received with interest in Kaiwhaiki with the Nga Paerangi *hapu* where Charles Smith had collected most of the objects from the 1860s to early 1900s, but there was little knowledge about its previous existence. Once it was established that provenance information could not be directly explored because of issues of a lack of familiarity, as well as cultural and political controls over knowledge connected to *taonga*, the research turned more towards the contexts of the potential for *taonga*, and the politics of knowledge in Whanganui.

I was sometimes told in the course of showing people photographs of *taonga Maori* in Whanganui that knowledge connected to museum objects was unfamiliar, but that people were interested in regaining that knowledge. Many of the older generation in Whanganui said that they had been disenfranchised from their Maori knowledge, or *matauranga*, through Pakeha (European) oriented education initiatives and historic land losses. The loss of *matauranga* connects to the loss of community histories, genealogies, and abilities to represent the community and openly orate these aspects of culture. Peoples’ references to the past and colonialism also explained these losses, and inabilities to talk about

taonga. Understandings that community speakers lead ritual ceremonies, stand as the voice of their community, and are referred to for advice on specific aspects of cultural heritage is typically expected for Maori elders, or *kaumatua*, who have an accumulated knowledge supported by ceremonial practices, community histories, and oral expression. This expectation is not always the case in Whanganui, and many have endeavored later in life to take on personal pursuits of learning family history and *te reo Maori* language in order to engage in their cultural heritage and community politics. For those who have taken up leadership roles, many are younger individuals (from twenties onwards) getting involved in cultural politics and heritage affairs much earlier. This is due to the shift of focus in recent decades on cultural revitalization through initiatives of Maori based language schools, Maori-oriented education, research, and reclaiming the knowledge connected to ancestors and identity, which has helped interested younger generations become more familiar with principles connected to Maori identity.

This chapter looks at the historical framework in which knowledge and its perception of scarcity in Whanganui affects the cultural contexts for responses to my interviews on the Smith collection *taonga Maori* and general perceptions of *taonga* within Whanganui. There has been an ongoing cultural diffusion in the socialization and interactions between European and indigenous cultures, which indicates a long history of enduring changes that the Maori community has faced. The effects of initial Pakeha attempts to suppress Maori culture and subsequent land losses, have affected a notion that regaining knowledge through personal/local efforts will help mend the past disjuncture with cultural identity (for a commentary on Auckland based kin groups and the Kotare community, see Metge 1964: 259-261) and also lends itself to more political actions of land repatriations.

In the process of regaining linguistic, social, and spiritual aspects of the past, there has also been a great emphasis placed on the need to reclaim the physical survivals of the past. Land, *matauranga Maori*, and *taonga Maori* are seen to contribute to such survivals that underpin cultural identity. *Taonga* existing in the community, or re-introduced in the case of the Smith collection, serve as a platform for thinking through issues of Maori knowledge such as its distribution, cultural principles connected to *taonga*, and ways history becomes significant to contemporary situations. Maori continue to uphold reverence for ancestors, kinship relations, and *aroha* (love, affection) for the land as important aspects of knowledge and identity. Such feelings towards the physical markers of identity, express identity from a point of view of its having historic precedence, and also

the means through which rights over cultural heritage are argued to promote both social and political agendas.

Maori social structure is regulated by the kinship and the system of *whakapapa* (genealogically ordered histories) that speaks to the connection with one's *whanau*, or extended family, and from that one's connection to the wider group (*hapu* and *iwi*). In the 'Southern Whanganui Cluster traditional history report #903' filed on behalf of claimants for the Waitangi Tribunals, David Young explains that *whakapapa* is the root of *mana* (2007: 5),⁸ and *mana* relates to one's place within the social group. Those holding great *mana* in the community are often in leadership roles as speakers on behalf of the group, and can 'draw their prestige and power from their ancestors (*mana tipuna*)' (Mead 2003: 29-30). This *mana* comes from Maori knowledge being passed on through the generations, and through understandings of '*tapu* (the state of being set apart), *mana* (prestige), *noa* (neutrality), *manaakitanga* (hospitality), *take* (cause), *utu* (reciprocation), [and] *ea* (satisfaction)' (Mead 2003: 13). Maori identities are defined by *whakapapa*, not the land based boundaries of the *hapu* (Young 2007: 39).

The power of *matauranga* and *taonga* also corresponds to this kinship value system of *mana* and the ancestors. In the writings of Paul Tapsell (2000) on carved ancestor 'Pukaki', the Ngati Whakaue carving was repatriated from the Auckland Museum to the group in 1997. It was a very significant and emotional moment when the ancestor returned (Tapsell 2000: 146). When 'Pukaki' came back it was not put in the museum, but sent to the District Council 'so when the rate payers go to pay rates they can be looked upon by Pukaki and remember that their lands were a gift from Te Arawa' (Shaloh Mitchell, personal communication at Ohinemutu, 23 October 2009).⁹ Pukaki held great *mana* for the community and needed to return to bring the community together and restore their *mana* (Paul Tapsell, personal communication, 11 November 2009). The continuation of ancestral *mana* and power progressing throughout time with both *matauranga* and *taonga* movements, became relevant to the kinds of issues that arise when dealing with Maori knowledge, which is still regulated by the politics of knowledge in a community.

In the exhibition catalogue for 'Ko Tawa' (2006) of *taonga* gifted to Captain Gilbert Mair,¹⁰ Tapsell writes that such a well documented ancestral *taonga* transfers elements of

⁸ *Mana* used in the sense of Firth's use signifying 'authority', 'prestige', 'influence', 'psychic power' (1959: 255).

⁹ Shaloh Mitchell is the grandson of Hamuera Mitchell, who originally asked Paul Tapsell to embark on the return of 'Pukaki' to Rotorua. In the book *Pukaki*, Tapsell quotes Hamuera Mitchell similarly reiterating what Shaloh said during my conversation with him (see 2000: 20, 150).

¹⁰ A key figure in New Zealand colonial history who received *taonga* gifts from chiefs from 1865 to 1923.

the *mana* it possesses to its recipients, which also relates to the *tapu* (in this case, spiritual protection) rendering the objects continually powerful and requiring protection through *karakia* (rituals and incantations) (Tapsell 2006: 17). In this understanding of the living spirit, or *mauri*, within *taonga*, the access to collections sought by interested parties in the Maori community are just as concerned with the protection of *matauranga Maori* as the kinship associations and power related to the *taonga*.

Before discussing the historical framework from which reactions to colonialism affect present day cultural and political endeavors in Whanganui, I must turn to a closer look at *matauranga*, or Maori knowledge, in relation to *taonga Maori* as these connected themes continue to be important throughout this analysis. *Matauranga* is not, and was not historically, uniformly distributed throughout a community (Salmond 1985). Sharing *matauranga* about ancestral relationships and history is a way of constructing relationships between speakers and listeners through the exchange of knowledge. Some leaders throughout the Whanganui community share the characteristic of having learnt their traditional knowledge through previous *tupuna*, or ancestors, who in sharing knowledge helped bestow a sense of their *mana* on their pupils priming them to become future leaders. Ancestral knowledge in a Maori community is thought of as a gift, or prized element that might be considered a personal family treasure, but it also encompasses the idea that one's personal essence is transferred with the passing on of knowledge (Salmond 1985). This denotes only certain people as eligible to receive knowledge, much like the relationship to the passing on of *taonga Maori* in relation to *whakapapa* principles. Both knowledge and *taonga* exist in a paradoxical relationship of bestowing *mana* on those who receive it, but also eroding the power of a speaker who gives away his/her knowledge, alluding to its finite nature (Salmond 1982: 83). The restricted nature of the circulation of knowledge, also associated with some *taonga*, relates to ways that a Maori community regulates their own knowledge distribution, while also reacting politically to issues of outsider access to such powerful knowledge.

Restrictions on knowledge come from the cultural ideals linked to *tikanga Maori*. *Matauranga* and *tikanga Maori* are entangled because the practice of *tikanga Maori* implements ideals of a correct way of feeling, understanding, and being empowered by accumulated *mana* through the generations (Mead 2003: 7). The built up prestige of the Smith objects being quite old, having passed through the hands of multiple famous ancestors, and their physical loss from New Zealand alludes to an awareness of other *taonga Maori* removed from Whanganui due to colonial interactions. This perception of

loss as the result of colonization left Maori feeling victimized and disappointed by their encounters with Pakeha. During my interviews, many were quick to point out that much Maori knowledge was altered after the arrival of European missionaries who changed literacy, education, and religious practices for Maori across New Zealand. The European initiation of a schooling system, along with a push for Maori to assimilate with incoming populations deeply divided Maori and Pakeha based on remembrances of this cultural repression. The losses that came with these changes are reflected in the feelings expressed about the dislocation with culture, knowledge of ancestors, and the loss of the land. With land as the physical focus for Maori repatriation efforts and *taonga* as the support for these claims, research in museums, archives, and from community memories attempts to expose and revive cultural knowledge. Through the long and arduous task of piecing together *korero* (genealogically ordered narratives) about the land and ancestors through community-initiated research, local knowledge is perceived as scarce and this promotes efforts to address other heritage losses.

In 1840, many Maori chiefs or community leaders around New Zealand signed the Treaty of Waitangi proposed by the British government to form a bond between the two nations. This Treaty was intended to bestow the rights of protection on the Maori peoples under the sovereign Queen, and create a partnership whereby the indigenous people of New Zealand and incoming British settlers could co-habit on the land. Within Maoridom, the Maori-language Treaty that chiefs signed bestowed upon them the special rights to their own *kawanatanga*, governorship, *tino rangatiratanga*, full chieftainship of their lands, and *taonga*, their valued things (Ward 2000: 402). The presentation of the Treaty was projected as a means to lull Maori resistance to the idea of receiving European settlers and to quell any uprisings (Steven 1989). Despite the promises of peace that accompanied the Treaty, by 1845 the New Zealand Wars were waged across the North Island until the early 1870s between the British army, settlers, and the Maori of the North. It was a battle for land and the rightful ownership of New Zealand as a homeland (see Belich 1986, 2000). Present day sovereignty issues involve regaining the land and resource losses through the Waitangi Tribunals established in 1975.

I found that the people of Whanganui who were well versed in the type of knowledge sought out as evidence for tribunal hearings were the few speakers of the community. The types of knowledge that were being researched or that community speakers possessed related to the historic occupation of the land, narratives connected to those ancestors, names of sacred land sites as well as events that took place there, burial sites, disputes

historically held with the Crown, and other aspects of knowledge connected to traditional culture. At times, some of this knowledge was restricted within and outside of the community in variable ways.¹¹

When I first became involved with the Smith collection from Nga Paerangi *hapu*, I was introduced to Ken as a key person in Kaiwhaiki who was exploring archival records and community *korero* to research and present evidence of land grievances to the Crown. He explained that his inspiration to take up the pursuit of land claims was initiated through knowledge he found about his grandmother owning a piece of land in an area far from his family lands within Kaiwhaiki, and he was intrigued to find out more about the origins of this. He later discovered that the ownership of these outer lands was based on a series of interactions and interrelatedness that his grandmother had negotiated through the Native Land Court, with other *hapu* members from the region. He found this information through researching past Land Courts records and asking other family members to share their memories, and so he began to rediscover many of the forgotten stories of Nga Paerangi to bring to the court about misappropriations of the land. Neither his mother nor father knew much of the historic *korero* he was seeking. Ken is also the only person in his immediate family doing such historic research with such intensive dedication, but he tries to impart his knowledge whenever he can. He explained that several times while looking for specific land based knowledge he would have to ask the same person who he knew held important knowledge for their help, and would be unsuccessful many times before finally gathering the knowledge he needed. In the end his perseverance and dedication usually led people to release knowledge and help his efforts, but he noted that the journey towards gathering knowledge had been rewarding (Ken Clarke, interview, 19 December 2009).

Ken's research was stimulated by his desire to delve deeper into the past to know more about his ancestors and their lands. Maori contested the initial Maori land dispossessions through the Native Land Courts to regain their losses, appropriately compensate those connected to the land, and challenge European political authority (Steven 1989, Ward 2000). The early courts, established in 1865 gave Maori the chance to give evidence, usually in the form of oral histories to establish their ownership of the land. The inappropriate European ideals of ownership imposed on Maori communal land tenure have historically aided in the fractioning of *hapu*, as people came to Court to vie for land that

¹¹ Though my research was enabled by the current endeavors the community faced in the Waitangi Tribunals, not all the aspects of *taonga* I will be discussing are applicable to issues of politicization of land claims and repatriation and so I will deal with the Tribunals more in following chapters.

may not have been ancestrally connected to them. The overall goals for land claims today are to gain back certain sections of sacred lands, but also to address the economic, social, and political disadvantages that the Whanganui community has faced. The continued hardship and minority status of many rural Maori communities around Whanganui resonates with what community members see as the loss of community *mana*, their traditional *tinio rangatiratanga*, and their cultural knowledge at the hands of colonialism (see Orange 1987: 41-42, Ward 2000: 403).

The Smith collection was often a stimulus from which these issues emerged as a reflection in relation to specific *taonga*, as people would see the images and reflect on the connections between *taonga* and the landscape, or the need to restore these connective elements to Maori control. The use of *taonga Maori* as a point of negotiation to move towards political objectives has been used throughout New Zealand in postcolonial discourse (Henare 2005a: 95). While perceptions of *taonga* at times remain closely connected to personal associations, at the political level *taonga* and their histories of loss, exchange, and yet, continued existence attest to notions that Maori culture maintains its organization and underlying principles upheld through to *whakapapa* and Maori knowledge. The dislocation from knowledge of one's own language, history and within

that, land history, has affected the immediate familiarity required for the community to comprehensively associate with the Smith collection *taonga*, but that did not deter individual perceptions and interests to be linked to named *taonga* pieces.

On the topic of reappropriation of *taonga* as material objects, they are not the main focus of repatriation efforts in Whanganui as land and

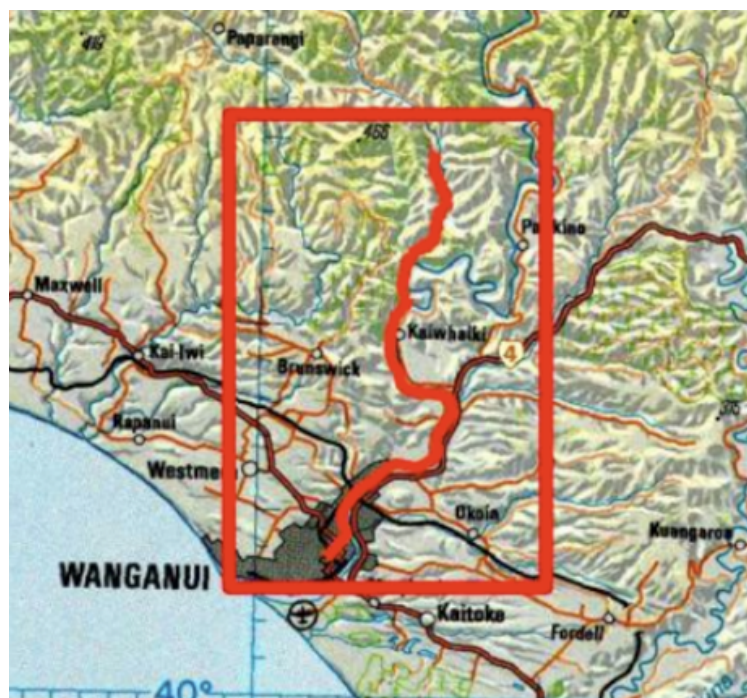


Figure 2.1, Map designating the Te Atihau-nui a Paparangi iwi, Kai Iwi is on the coast to the left of the tribal grouping

other resources have taken precedence, but in the sense of *taonga* as Maori knowledge, reclamation efforts have long been underway and have been a partial gateway to rediscovering past ancestral relationships. In describing the research needed to embark in the Waitangi Tribunals and present historic evidence, local Whanganui genealogist Haimona (Kai Iwi) who was working on the Kai Iwi Nga Rauru/Whanganui land boundaries, and head Nga Paerangi claimant Ken both described the process of going through Maori Land Court evidence from the mid-1800s to gather historic information. They needed information about the land, ancestors, *whakapapa* relations and the relationships between different Whanganui *hapu*. Ken described how in the historic Kai Iwi case ‘they [claimant’s testimony from Early Native Land Court cases] talk about the relationship with the people from Kaiwhaiki, going out there and fishing. And they mention these “Teremoe”, which is the big *waka* at the national museum Te Papa Tongarewa, and another called “Tupuna”, that was based at Kaiwhaiki’. Ken continued to describe how knowledge about *taonga* and inter-community relations was provided in current claims

to establish the close relationship with one *hapu* and another and why we consider we have interest in the foreshore and seabed. It’s just about supplying information that confirms that. Even though we know traditionally everybody on the River used to come down to Putiki, stay there and go out to fish. Just as we all went north to hunt. But all of those sorts of movements would have been by way of consent and approval. You wouldn’t just go there (Ken Clarke, interview, 4 November 2009).

Ken connected these types of land-based histories of the ancestors with special *taonga* like the ‘Teremoe’ *waka* (canoe) held at Te Papa. This is a way of drawing upon the continued importance of ancestral identities and the need to enact control over these aspects of heritage. Gathering the knowledge from historic archives and talking to community members are ways that *matauranga* is pieced together within a Maori way of knowing, specifically germane to the politics of identity today.

Both knowledge and *taonga* are controlled within competing contexts, where some knowledge is restricted in relation to *tapu*, or taboo, surrounding ancestor names, death, or other powerful subjects. Some of these restrictions also endeavor to preserve the form of knowledge and protect others from potential harm. From another framework, due to a history of colonial interactions, knowledge must not be released that may be used towards inappropriate goals. In the Smith collection, some pieces were explained as holding restricted knowledge or knowledge belonging to particular families, which alluded to the way *taonga* are controlled. The knowledge that could not be shared with me as an outsider also exemplifies a complex history of colonial encounters and attempts to control cultural identity. Information gleaned from *taonga* can only be interpreted correctly by those with

the proper access to a Maori framework of knowledge to assimilate the elusive pieces of history into a coherent narrative constructing the elements of Maori sociality (cf. J. Weiner 1988: 14). Through this process community speakers engage listeners to share narratives, spark remembrances of ancestors, and debate aspects of history using references to *taonga* to establish place in connection to history and the land. *Taonga Maori* participate in cycles of loss and recovery that promote the upholding of knowledge connected to the view that such objects are precious resources. Such community regulations of knowledge present a way knowledge is deciphered from a culture perspective, while restrictions to outsiders present a way of protecting such scarce resources (see Rubinstein 1981, Harrison 1999: 241-243).

The idea of restricted knowledge connected to *taonga* denotes that secrecy and control creates insiders and outsiders within a culture, while establishing certain speakers for the community whose power lies in their ability to display or withhold ancestral knowledge. Issues of both political and cultural controls over knowledge affect the ebb and flow in the corpus of Maori knowledge. Though this perception is attributable to both the cultural controls of knowledge as well as historic circumstances, efforts to regain lost knowledge seek to revitalize the sociality of knowledge through public orations (on the *marae*, giving public *korero*) and exchanges in the community. The revitalization of kin relations also occurs when community members gather their knowledge together to make political claims over the land. The physical resources of land and *taonga* are a place where stable knowledge of the past meets the present, although the 'social life' of knowledge can be constantly reconstructed and formulated (Rubinstein 1981: 136). One important part of this process becomes the use of *taonga* as a marker of what has remained the same for Maori culture. This was demonstrated through the exchanges of knowledge about ancestors in connection to the Smith *taonga*, which while varied, related to the continued importance of histories, the land, and ancestors. At the cultural level ancestral knowledge is imperative for Maori identity and participating in heritage endeavors. Such knowledge can also be selectively applied to political and legal efforts, and so becomes intertwined with the evolving politics of knowledge within a community as well as the management of what is released to outsiders.

European encounters and losses of knowledge: a history of education

A history of knowledge loss related to *te reo Maori* language and *matauranga* is deeply connected to colonial experiences of European and Christian religious education from the first missionary schools established in 1816 that attempted to 'civilize' Maori, to the government assimilation policies commencing in 1847. The change from missionary schools that taught in *te reo Maori* about European culture and religion to English-only instruction began with the Native Schools system established in 1867 (Simon et al. 2001: 1). Meanwhile the public schooling system continued to exist alongside Native Schools, and those were mainly based in rural areas on the *marae*. After the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi 1840, Maori were encouraged towards English literacy and religion, and to give up cultural traditions like ritual *tangihanga* (ritual funerals) (Sinclair 1990), *waiata* (songs that commemorated people, places, and spirits in *iwi*, *hapu* or *whanau* history) (McLean 1965), and carving, which recorded genealogical and ancient histories connected to the gods (Hita-Brown 2006: 60-61). Pakeha insistence on separating Maori from their traditions would reach its peak between the 1840s and 1850s as struggles over the lands and sovereignty pushed Maori to leave missionary schools, and the state to consider new ways to re-educate Maori populations (Simon et al. 2001: 8). The enforcement of English only in these schools, coupled with the punishment given to school kids who did not adhere to the language rules, has served as the backbone for ways the Native Schools are a platform for dissonance with Pakeha populations. There is a very complex history of Maori participation in their own learning and language practices in the home, especially after the establishment of Native Schools in the 1870s until the mid-twentieth century, when the focus on the usefulness of English within Maori communities further enabled the continuance of language policies (Simon et al. 2001: 153-168). Regardless of the complicated reasoning behind losses of *te reo Maori* and cultural heritage, the early involvement of Pakeha asserting assimilation policies helped loosen the intergenerational passing on of Maori knowledge, and now serves as a point of contention for Whanganui populations. This section will discuss ways a history of colonial encounter acted as the catalyst for the change in access to knowledge for Maori communities, and how Maori countered these effects.

The early nineteenth century witnessed the dispersion of European religious traditions to Maori populations. Despite mixed reception to conversion by the missionaries, by the 1840s all parts of the country had at least come into contact with Christianity, including the

Taranaki-Whanganui region (Elsmore 1989: 26). The spread of Christianity influenced the character of education and the type of learning that children in Maori communities were given. Institutions were created in the Whanganui region for Maori children to be instructed in English and Christianity. Nga Paerangi elder Morvin Simon explained how 'the Anglican and Catholic churches operating in the area knew that the older people spoke *te reo Maori*, and so they pinpointed children as an access point for cultural change' (*Waka Huia*, 25 October 2009).

Education plays an important role in the sentiment that one's indigenous Maori identity has not been fully realized. Maori educator Penetito (2010) argues that educating Maori children in European school systems denies ways of being Maori by promoting more European cohesion against alternative ways of expression integral to Maori identity. He describes ways that a system of education incorporating Maori inclusiveness must 'take into account Maori ways of knowing (language, organisation), ways of thinking (evaluations, accountability), and ways of doing (pedagogy, reciprocity)' (Penetito 2010: 69).

During the period of the Native Schools from 1867- 1969 (Simon et al. 2001: 11) the disapproval of the use of *te reo Maori* in the early twentieth century along with the introduction of Christian teachings, affected the transmission of history and *whakapapa*. The diminishing prevalence of *te reo* was also enforced through other decisive measures such as the punishment of children who spoke *te reo* in school, along with interrelated factors such as an understanding that learning English would enhance employment opportunities, extensive socialization with Pakeha populations, the relative proximity to the city versus a rural location for Maori, and postwar urbanization (Simon et al. 2001: 170-173). The Maori descendants of those who experienced this period of schooling reflect the past circumstances of the Native Schools as being party to their disenfranchisement with language and Maori identity. The restriction of speaking *te reo* in Native Schools and in areas of socialization in the schools, changed in the late twentieth century with protests to the government by Maori leaders who attempted to strengthen aspects of economic prosperity and identity in opposition to assimilation with Pakeha populations.

In the evidence presented in the *Wai 903 #B16* brief for the Waitangi Tribunals Nga Paerangi land claim in 2007, Dave Pauro gave evidence in relation to his grandmother, respected elder Te Manawanui Pauro, about her upbringing and schooling experiences. She stated that she was not allowed to speak *te reo Maori* when she went to school at a nearby *marae* or else she would be caned. Her mother was Moori Pirere, who was

educated at a Christian boarding school, and so she spoke English as well as *te reo*. As a child growing up, speaking *te reo Maori* in the home was not reinforced for Te Manawanui. She also noticed that her brother became a *te reo Maori* speaker again once he returned from the war after having been involved with the Maori Battalion (of WWII regiment) (WAI 903, 'Brief of Evidence of Dave Hori Pauro' #B16, 10 August 2007).

Much of today's older generation has lost their connection with *te reo Maori* in Whanganui, and in turn has also lost much of their *whakapapa* and historic knowledge. The reflections brought up by testimony to the Waitangi Tribunals are important, because they recall issues relating to the loss of language in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when *te reo* was still being spoken by many, but teaching Maori language was not thought of as beneficial during that political climate. Though a Christian education was received by many from Kaiwhaiki, many continued to speak *te reo* until later in the twentieth century when the spectrum shifted towards more European focused knowledge as a means of gaining equal footing socially and politically. Events such as participation in the World Wars, and the creation of the Maori Battalion, helped forge social and political connections that resonated with the many young Maori boys who were sent off to war and came back with increased political consciousness (Elsmore 1989: 357, Tapsell 2003: 244).

A young *te reo* teacher from Whanganui named Pop told me that the generation who have lost touch with their cultural roots are the 'lost generation'. Now at an older age they do not have the oral literacy required to conduct Maori ceremonial procedures. These elders are the ones people look to at a *powhiri* [*marae* welcoming ceremony] to provide the *karanga* [call onto the *marae*] or *korero*. Pop continued that older people often could not do it because they were not taught in that manner. General expectations that elders stand on the *paepae* [speaker's area/bench on the *marae*] and lead ritual ceremonies, giving *korero* and singing *waiata*, are consistent throughout Maori society, but instead a much younger generation is often in charge of these duties of the *paepae* in communities like Kaiwhaiki. Pop said that the young people are meant to be scrubbing toilets and working to prepare the *kai* [food] in the kitchen. She clarified that there are still young leaders today who were given their knowledge in a form aligned with the earlier system of a traditional Maori learning repository, the *wananga*, but they have recently skipped these normal formative steps and gone straight to the *paepae* to become very young leaders speakers for their community (Fieldnotes, Pop Hawira, 11 September 2009).

The suppression of Maori knowledge by attempts to civilize populations through missionary Christianization and later the Native Schools has been a symbolic locus of political grievances between Maori and Pakeha populations. In the late nineteenth century, Maori responded to this dislocation of social structure by emphasizing the hierarchy of *hapu*, *iwi* and *whanau* as the basis of Maori political units (Sissons 2004). When the *iwi* began to be seen as a mainstay of authority and self-determinative tribal rule, issues of existence within a post-settler nation became focused on land alienations and ways to

preserve tradition in places such as the *marae* and especially at *hui* (Metge 1964). A 'renaissance' of Maori culture also refocused the lens on the losses of land experienced and the socioeconomic situations on the *marae*. Leaders emphasized that power should be centered in the hands of Maori themselves, and a political systematization of kinship (see Sissons 1993) was solidified into a cultural ethos for how to recuperate the appropriations of culture made during colonial settlement. The idea that land-based knowledge creates 'a place to stand' (in relation to *marae*-based identity see Salmond 1975; Walker 1975; Mead 2003: 110) forms a framework from which Maori advocate their connections to the past, ancestral identities, and rights in the future. In Whanganui these losses are now being politically established through the Waitangi Tribunal courts as a means for individuals to establish their own place in the community while establishing the community's place on the land.

Losses of the land and identity



Figure 2.2 The Whanganui River

The Waitangi Tribunals have sparked endeavors to regain knowledge, find empowerment through indigenous voice, and reconnect to land and ancestors, as gathering knowledge from archival sources and community members for land claims has

shaped ways individuals can reconnect with elements of their own family and *iwi* based elements of identity. These processes have affected the responses people in the community have to *taonga*. Through Maori initiated research to prepare for Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi's Waitangi Tribunal cases, issues arose as to who could speak on issues of community history, knowledge of the landscape, and genealogical knowledge. When I visited the Whanganui Land Claims office where the people researching this knowledge gathered, I spoke to those present about the Smith collection, but the conversation quickly diverged into their endeavors with the Waitangi Tribunals.

During my time in the office that day, many people came in and out. Most of the men greeted each other in a traditional manner (*hongi*- pressing of noses), which I did not see in most other non-*marae* situations, and most of the conversations were carried out in English. There are about 14 or 15 people working (part to full time, with other input as well) to gather historic knowledge for the Whanganui Maori land claims cases for their respective *hapu*. They meet in the Whanganui Land Claims office on the edge of the town to exchange information. Ken is the main claimant for Nga Paerangi, and in order to accommodate this process he has had to work his normal job very sporadically [as a farmer] to learn all of the knowledge necessary to present the historic evidence to the courts and organize others in the *hapu* to give their own oral histories as testimony. All of the men in the office were middle aged and most were taking time off of their respective jobs to be there. Some people came in just to sign certain documents, and then return to their jobs. There is a woman involved Tracy that is heavily involved in the Tribunals for Nga Paerangi but she was not there. When I first asked the men to look at the Smith photographs and tell me anything connected to *taonga*, Ken was the first to begin detailing the land boundaries negotiated in the 1800s for his *hapu* Nga Paerangi. He explained ways he collected many resources (Early Native Land Court records, regional archives, historical memory of Nga Paerangi *hapu*) as assembled information to figure out which ancestral lands belonged to Nga Paerangi. Ken explained that the conflicts arose early on during land purchases by Europeans, because they placed false boundaries on lands, which pitted groups against one another. This debate over land boundaries continues today as there continues to be conflicting interests emerging during Waitangi Tribunal cases. The men in the Claims Office spent a lot of time discussing what kinds of things could be claimed and their own personal elements of knowledge in relation to their *hapu*. Ken explained that there were many issues of intellectual property rights as well as personally for him, *taonga Maori* that he wanted to sort out, but that the tribunals were not the appropriate forum for such issues of knowledge. When I asked people in the office why representatives of separate claims were sharing knowledge when many must have overlapping land interests, George, a river canoe tour guide explained that in the past their different groups were sharing land resources, and now they must try to do it again. George, Ken, and others who came into the Land Claims office stated that they had gotten involved simply because, "someone had to do it". They also felt that despite possible issues they might have had with one another's *hapu*, that they had to bind together to bring forward their issues they jointly held to fight against the losses of land, resources, and their cultural heritage that the Crown was responsible for across the whole region. George went on to lament that information allowed as evidence in the Tribunals now is too condensed, because representatives are not given enough time to give all of the information they need. He worries about what will be left in these records for his children in the future, as they are forced to accommodate the European legal procedures (Fieldnotes, Whanganui Land Claims Office, 3 August 2009).

In the Whanganui land claims, many involved now have an aspect of community leadership put upon them. The knowledge of the land, ancestors, and history that have

been excavated through the involvement with the tribunals, not only adds to individual knowledge, but also collective group knowledge comparable to understandings of the *tuakana-teina* relationship (big brother/little brother) 'where an older sibling or more expert member of the group takes responsibility for the needs of the younger or less expert member of the group' (Hohepa and McNaughton (2007[2002]): 221). With increased knowledge comes the responsibility of interpreting it according to political expectations for the community's benefit. These interpretations of knowledge referenced the losses of culture and land as a result of European colonization. Though all the men in the office that day were descendants of Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi *iwi*, they were from different strands of the sub tribal branches of the Whanganui River. The three sections of the Whanganui River, see themselves as interrelated 'twisted strands', but remain notionally divided into three sections 'as separate groups and as a collective whole' (Young 2007: 39). Though Whanganui sub-tribes work together, they are independent and the histories of one strand of the River cannot be told by another strand because they do not have the rights to the correct knowledge. Other surrounding tribal entities like Kai Iwi, Ngati Tumango also consider themselves as part of the twisted strands of the river in closeness with communities like Nga Paerangi, but they have their own community interests in issues of land and resources (Young 2007: 102). Therefore in working together there is an element of personal authority over one's knowledge at stake in sharing what information one has discovered for common *iwi* goals, while also asserting knowledge to secure resources that help one's own *hapu*.

The issue of land has been one that has brought Maori together and mediates as a symbolic and material link to the past also dictating the fate of the future. Ward (2000) has argued that land dispossessions formed the backbone for a sense of identity forged by joint struggle, and that Maori were not simply displaced, but experienced an evolving sense of the meaning of possession and rights to land. The Whanganui Purchase of 1848 was marketed to Maori of the area as a way of incorporating Pakeha and the economic benefits they would bring to the region as a benefit to the community (Rose 2004: 7-8). Instead, land sales disconnected many upriver *hapu* from the resources they used to be able to access downriver, such as fishing in areas closer to the sea.¹² Land losses which

¹² When the communally shared fishing area of Pakaitore was sold, many of the *hapu* who relied on the area as a food resource such as Nga Tamareheroto and Whanganui people were cut off from having access from new boundaries that "forced people into squabbles and losses" that are now being brought out again in the Waitangi Tribunals (Southern Whanganui Cluster Traditional History Report" David Young (July 2007) A report commissioned by the Crown Forestry Rental Trust Wai 903 #A129). In 1995, Pakaitore was occupied by Maori

were markedly increased in the 1860s, also created a situation where only certain *hapu* (those closer to town and Pakeha settlements) could benefit from new economic opportunities presented by Europeans, eventually causing an economic dependency on settler goods and services and divisions between *hapu* in the Maori community. The availability of economic benefits to those who were able to establish trade was centered in the town of Whanganui, because of the proximity to European settlements. The people left behind on the *marae* upriver whose lands were quickly bought up in larger sections for farming then had an inadequate land base for their traditional lifeways (Rose 2004). As Maori recognized that land losses and ideals of Christianity served more of the settler agenda in their imposed partnership, people began to distance themselves from Europeans (Elsmore 1989, Sinclair 1990).

Land losses may have characterized the nineteenth century, but by the twentieth century these losses prompted the dispersal of Maori communities to urban centers (van Meijl 1998: 400; Simon et al. 2001). The economic impetus that came from the city centers for those seeking work and opportunities was especially significant in the 1960s. Morvin, a Nga Paerangi elder living in Kaiwhaiki and general cultural heritage authority for the group, described how things changed on the *marae* in the 1960s, when Kaiwhaiki used to be quite self-sufficient with people working and living off of the amenities set up in the area. He described how people shifted from working in local industry, farming, and agricultural endeavors to leaving their home base to work in the city of Whanganui in the shearing and freezing works. He explained that:

... Maori Affairs came in- the Maori Affairs Department had started enacting various pieces of legislation that enabled us to tighten up on a few things or at least for example, boundaries. Once upon a time there was hardly any fences here because we lived a communal life. We would go along there and one of the aunties would call up and they made a cup of tea and we would have something to eat and everybody did that. On the *marae*, everybody did that sort of thing. And well, you had the fruit and the freeze, and the orchards all through the back here as kids. There were all these trees. Of course later on people got a bit more conscious of being tidy around the house. They cut all the dead trees and all that sort of thing. The land instead of plowing it all up like they used to, they started to mow it. The emphasis went away from home industry to going to town to obtain things. But it was because we became more individual instead of living totally communal and it's like the saying, the further you are away from the fire, the less heat radiates out. And that means if you're part and parcel of the tradition, and you're right next to it, then everything is going. The heat is there, the enthusiasm, the energy and all that. But as people moved away to live a more secular life or individual life, they tended to become more nuclear (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009).

groups seeking their voice to be acknowledged about their rights to contested lands, such as the misappropriation of the communally shared Pakaitore traditional fishing territory. The site has been renamed to Moutoa Gardens, and holds a memorial for the losses experienced during the Battle of Moutoa Island.

As mentioned previously, urbanization aided in the decline of *te reo Maori* in postwar years, but also the closeness of the *whanau* structure (Simon et al. 2001: 172-173). The process of increased urbanization of Maori was another factor that aided in the fracturing of connections Maori have with their land bases, as a source of food, work, community, and *whakapapa* based knowledge handed down through the closeness with elders and grandchildren. These disconnections also referenced the coming of Pakeha, as Morvin discusses in his narrative above. There is a multifaceted process whereby ideas surrounding the loss of knowledge pertain to a loss of a land-based knowledge and also the physical loss of close connections with kin relations. These concerns are also embedded within the Kaiwhaiki community's anxiety for the loss of knowledge, as older individuals seeking to reconnect with language, land, and *taonga Maori* desire to participate in community decision making processes and promote Maori ideologies to influence future generations. Concerns over the land are closely related to kinship as a central component of Maori identity, and *taonga* is a Maori concept that frames such links between knowledge, the land, and ancestors in its history and present existence.

The contention that there is a 'need to return to the land' expressed by leaders in the community relates to issues that knowing oneself through the land is considered integral to identity and finding place. This means people must seek out land based knowledge through their return to it, experience with it, and attainment of knowledge about its histories in relation to themselves. Using the land as a means of personalizing knowledge and locating oneself in the Maori landscape has become an important means of articulating an identity within one's hereditary links and within the wider community structure. The inevitable partiality of knowledge in the realm of the historic landscape has been highlighted through the process of Waitangi Tribunals preparations, which has helped re-stimulate endeavors to recapture such types of knowledge bases. The incorporation of the contexts of knowledge loss to the contexts of land loss has become a particularly salient feature of many Nga Paerangi evidence briefs, as people demand *utu* (reciprocity) for the loss of their cultural *mana*. Meanwhile older and younger generations alike are undertaking the scavenging of archives and social memories to piece together their ideological foundations and recover from choices to urbanize and leave land bases. In a sense, Whanganui Maori are seeking to return to the 'fire' of the experience of tradition not always in the physical sense of moving back to the *marae*, but by revitalizing elements of connecting to ancestors through foundations such as the land and *taonga Maori*.

The losses of material culture and its connective knowledge

Material culture plays a role in the imaginings and understandings of identity whether it is in the form of transactions and exchanges of objects, performance of rituals, or exemplifying the significance of land as the core grounding of traditional values relating to identity. As mentioned previously, *taonga* is a Maori concept used to frame these materialities of heritage as central to identity, and are important based on their framework situating them as ancestrally created and genealogically representative. These ancestral connections are more than representative, but become lived through *taonga* as symbols of immortal group identity (A. Weiner 1985). Though the ancestral connections and *korero* are the key factors in the sense of identity that *taonga* bestows, and the background of the Whanganui community's dispossession with material culture also helps illuminate ways that *taonga* are connected to their overarching sovereignty claims. Paul Tapsell (1997, 2000) has discussed the importance of *whakapapa* to current Maori practices and beliefs, and how that connection continues to exist between special *taonga* and communities.



Figure 2.3 Taiaha, PRM 1923.87.1

Personal 'fingerprints' are embedded in the lifecycles of *taonga* from the first person who made the object, to anyone that it was passed on to, as well as periods where it might have been off the radar for its community of origin. The identities attributed to *taonga* are not stable, but are flexible and adaptable to the changing lives of Maori, and so reflect much of the social ideals attributed to cultural values. Artifacts can be recontextualized according to their situations, although usually in consideration of their original intended identity.

When Ken, also a keen scholar of *taonga Maori*, first saw the photographs of the Smith collection, he focused on the *taiaha*, or warrior's staff (PRM 1923.87.1), partly

because it was connected to some of the most famous ancestors in Whanganui. This *taiaha* was passed down from Titokowaru to Hori Kingi te Anaua, to Taitoko te Keepa te

Rangihihinui, who then gave it to his cousin Te Oti Takarangi. At Takarangi's death, this *taonga* was given to Charles Smith. The *taiaha* is decorated with the red feathers of the kaka parrot, and tassels of the white haired dog known as *kuri*, which has long been extinct. Ken connected the transition of the *taiaha* from Taitoko te Keepa te Rangihihinui to Te Oti Takarangi as they were known relations in Whanganui, with Te Oti Takarangi being a famous leader in Kaiwhaiki. He seemed confused through by the passing on of the *taiaha* between Titokowaru and Hori Kingi te Anaua. When asking Ken what he thought was happening in these exchanges he lamented that there are not many around now who have this knowledge of *whakapapa* anymore in the community, and most had not heard the narratives attached to the Smith collection. He explained that when the Europeans came, they stopped the *waiata* (songs sung on a ritual occasions or to augment a speech given, but carrying historical/genealogical content). This loss of *waiata* was reflected also in the loss of genealogical and *taonga* related information, which he explained, people in the community are now actively trying to get back. Initially when Ken saw photographs of the *taiaha* and read the names of the *tupuna* who had passed it on from one person to another, he could not believe that such important ancestors had owned the staff at some point. He thought it was possible, but that men who were fighting on different sides of a war were passing *taonga* to one another was difficult to understand. Namely, he found it interesting that Titokowaru a powerful opponent fighting against European power, and Hori Kingi te Anaua, a lower river chief who was a supporter of the settlers, could be engaged in the exchange of this *taiaha* (Ken Clarke, phone conversation, 11 March 2009).

Fitting with the lack of knowledge in Kaiwhaiki about the existence of the Smith collection, Ken had not heard this narrative regarding the passing on of the *taiaha* before, but did articulate that the ancestors connected by it would have to have had strong genealogical connections. The *taiaha*'s history was of interest to him, but so was the positioning of political issues facing community knowledge in terms of what *taonga* such as the *taiaha* says about the past. With the exception of Te Oti Takarangi, the *taiaha* was from leaders outside of Kaiwhaiki, but the idea of hereditary possession spoke to ways an object might come to signify relationships of importance between Maori, and also the extension of social relationships available outside of kinship structures with the passing of the *taiaha* to Smith.

When presenting images of the Smith *taonga* to the Kaiwhaiki *marae* after being welcomed into 'Te Kiritahi' (Kaiwhaiki meeting house) by a *powhiri* (welcoming ceremony onto the *marae*) with Nga Paerangi members, people suggested that for information on

taonga linked with Te Oti Takarangi and his nephew Tamati Takarangi, I should consult their direct descendants. One was still living on the *marae*, and his name was Wi Paki. He was an elder sitting on the *paepae* during the *powhiri* into the *wharepuni*, but he shook his head to signify that he did not have any more information on the Smith *taonga* (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki, 14 August 2009). *Taonga* today are important for their ability to communicate both hereditary and political rights to knowledge, but this is dependant on one's personal attainment of knowledge.

In relation to the *taiaha* (PRM 1923.87.1), later more interconnections between Titokowaru and Hori Kingi te Anaua (from Putiki *marae*) emerged in connection to its past owners as the statement repeatedly emerged that 'all Maori are related'. Michelle, an archaeologist and the Whanganui Regional Museum (WRM) curator, explained that

Maoridom was to be looked at as a whole. Titokowaru and Hori Kingi te Anaua might have had an exchange with this *taiaha* based on their situations during the Land Wars. When Titokowaru's people were taken down to Dunedin for hard labor, Te Anaua tried to negotiate for their return to his land, so they would not have to fight the government again. And because Te Anaua was based on the Whanganui river, he was in a better position to solidify those alliances with the British being lower on the river because he had easier access to the Europeans. Te Anaua called them his people. So even though they were on different sides in the 1860s Maori campaigns, they weren't really. And later in life they saw the folly of trying to be friends with Europeans, when they realized that all the Europeans wanted was their land and their wealth. They didn't want to have alliances and equal footing- so old alliances between iwi groups were reconnected, but they were always there even if they had fought against each other. They were still family (Michelle Horwood, interview, 11 August 2009).

The links that the Smith *taiaha* generates with famous local warriors also speaks to the historic relevance of *taonga Maori* and how *hapu* along the Whanganui River regard pivotal moments in settler/Maori relations with their own present situation. The *taiaha* proves as testament to ways *taonga* was moved within genealogical lines that fostered historic social relationships. Ken also described how his means to regaining knowledge was through records that early Europeans kept, which was most likely partial because, 'Whanganui *iwi* are known for our secrecy' (Ken Clarke, phone conversation, 11 March 2009). Using *taonga* in tribunals evidence to support *korero* about the land or interconnections in *whakapapa*, serves as an effective visual materialization of the history being articulated, while the significance of *taonga* extends more importantly to its cultural abilities to demarcate and exemplify relationships.

The early expeditions to New Zealand collected artifacts as a type of novelty, but soon settlers began to outnumber Maori populations after the New Zealand Wars, and European interest in artifacts began to reflect more of a salvage paradigm to preserve a culture nearing extinction (Van Meijl 1995). Incoming settlers were also contributing to the

removal of *taonga* from Maori homes and the *marae*, which compounded pressures on knowledge of making and use of some traditional *taonga*. Many people including Charles Smith, shipped objects back to their homelands and foreign museums. In the wake of experiencing dispossession from lands especially following the 1860s period when 1.25 million acres were confiscated (van Meijl 1998: 401, see also Sorrenson 1965, Orange 1987) and being repositioned into a minority status in New Zealand, concepts of *taonga Maori* were revived with an accumulated value of historicity, direct ancestral connectivity, and the capability of politically demarcating issues of hegemony that called for the reappropriation of material culture (Mead 1984; Tapsell 1997, 2000; Tsosie 1997; Lyons 2002; critique Handler 1991). The significance and value placed on the objects themselves has reified their objectivity as material qualifiers of identity, historical redress, and negotiation.

Though not all the beliefs held about *taonga* and its importance are the same, the significance and power behind *taonga Maori* continues to be reconfigured in accordance with prevailing cultural dispositions throughout Maoridom. In an informal community lecture on the artifacts of Ngati Toa, Ngati Raukawa and Te Atiawa given in 1978 by Maui Pomare, key Maori National Museum Maori consultant, he urged the audience asking questions to let go of antiquated ideas surrounding old ancestral heirlooms, and realize that the *taonga Maori* and its association with European contact formed an important part of Maori cultural heritage (ATL, 'Maori Pomare lecture', 12 February 1978). In Whanganui, the disenfranchisement with material culture was partly attributed to influences of Christianity and government suppression of carving. Kaiwhaiki elder and cultural leader Morvin suggested that *taonga* for the area was mainly used in private exchanges to engender and maintain relationships outside of museums, meaning today not much is still preserved today (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009).

Cultural revitalization efforts of Maori leaders concentrated on *taonga* as integral to Maori traditional culture, and tried to reestablish the practices of weaving, carving, and other traditional arts that had been dying out. This led to an Act of Parliament in 1926 that set up a Maori Arts and Crafts Board and sought to include these practices into Native School teachings as well (Ngata 1940:322). A side fund was also made for weaving that was to commence in Putiki *marae* in Whanganui to help recover the art (Ngata 1940: 331).¹³

¹³ An event also referred to in a firsthand account of weaving practices at Putiki *marae* in Maudie Ruaka Reweti's oral history (28 June 1994, WRM OHA/TMIOLP).

Despite unfamiliarity with *taonga* in Kaiwhaiki, the appearance of the Smith collection during a time when speakers are contextualizing *taonga* as physical markers of history, reveals a hierarchy of knowledge between speakers and listeners. The appearance of the images also served as the platform from which issues of the politics of knowledge within a community could be revealed as people expressed varying issues and opinions, as indeed the notions of *taonga* are open to change depending on the sociopolitical circumstances being faced at a particular point in history. Nonetheless, the understandings of *taonga* for Maori must concentrate on the framework of cultural appropriateness in connection to the passing on of knowledge and its regulation.¹⁴

Power and secrecy: cultural restrictions of knowledge

Material culture in Whanganui has been a component of the Maori cultural renaissance. Issues such as the repatriation of human remains, the return of objects to their rightful *hapu* (cases in Chapter three), and the restriction of knowledge about *taonga* to certain families are related to this process of reconciling and controlling the losses to cultural knowledge in the community. Though many stated that Whanganui and especially Kaiwhaiki was not known for their *taonga*, there still existed many examples of it in family homes (photographs of ancestors and personal items), community *marae* that housed *taonga*, and the whispers that were exchanged between community members when looking at some *taonga* images, which was outside of my field of available knowledge (cf. Poignant 1996). These experiences speak to a diverse appreciation and knowledge of *taonga*, which because of a history of colonial repression has created a position where Maori seek to protect items considered to be survivals of cultural heritage. The loss of knowledge about the Smith collection from Kaiwhaiki is connected to the changes in the community during the 1860s when Smith collected the *taonga* and later sent them to England. During interviews, certain knowledge involving the collection was also denoted as secret or belonging to particular families or individuals, because it was deemed potentially dangerous and too powerful for listeners in relation to issues surrounding deceased ancestors.

¹⁴ The appropriate contexts of *taonga* were also an issue discussed in the opposition given in many Maori communities for the teaching of Maori arts in Native Schools, due to the schools being an improper environment, children being too young, and other restrictions of *tapu* surrounding the knowledge of the arts (Simon et al. 2001: 189).

The scarcity of knowledge increased with the dispossession of material culture, which can also promote the traditional ideals of knowledge restriction. The purpose of controlling knowledge within Maoridom is to ensure it is retained in its correct form, but also to restrict its release to outsiders with inappropriate goals for that knowledge. Herle (2002) similarly faces such issues with Torres Strait Islander knowledge in planning an exhibit seeking 'inclusion and consensus' amongst those in the community, because of a hierarchy of knowledge where 'knowledge is owned and selectively transmitted to descendants' (237). Historic and genealogical information that comes from *taonga Maori* like the Smith collection was also often talked about as needing to be appropriately explained by specific families connected to the pieces. The hereditary ownership of knowledge relates to histories as far back as migration stories being regionally specific. Knowledge related to historic orations would also belong to specific families, such as *waiata* from colonial times, which were placed under stringent restrictions so much so that their lack of transmission and upheld secrecy took 'precedence over the survival of the chant' (McLean 1965: 302). Maori oral histories tend to belong to particular families and are closely associated with genealogical mappings that situate a certain family within the larger tribal history of the group, yet remain individualized (Binney and Chaplin 1986, 2003:110).

In a semantic discussion of knowledge in Maori society, Salmond (1982) has stated that knowledge is embedded within the power of *tapu* (sacred) and *mana* (power, prestige) that is successively transferred through the generations. The *tapu* manner of specifically esoteric knowledge meant that it was traditionally 'taught in seclusion, often in the dark and well away from food, women and other polluting influences' (Salmond 1982: 83). This consideration of *tapu* demanded there be a protector of such powerful knowledge, as well as the upholding of restrictions to guard against harm from it. Historically to protect against *tapu* in Maori communities, certain activities demanding protection such as catching fish, would commence by acknowledging associated gods, like Tangaroa god of the sea, and reciting *karakia* (incantations) to counter any harmful effects of *tapu* (Mead 2003: 89). For artworks and *taonga Maori*, issues of *tapu* and magic are based on the ancient genealogies being transcribed onto *taonga Maori* carvings of esoteric narratives, or the histories of the objects themselves associated with death, war, or murder. There are different capacities of knowledge that enable one to safeguard aspects of traditional culture such as being able to recognize the language encoded within *taonga Maori*. This social differentiation has come to define ways knowledge in Whanganui relates to social power for those with different specializations in genealogical knowledge, historic, local

hapu leaders, or *tohunga* (skilled and knowledgeable priests). These capabilities to handle knowledge were explained as necessary when dealing with narratives connected to bad *mana*. Such knowledge could be harmful to speakers and listeners alike, and so only those ready to receive it could (Gerrard Albert, interview, 1 October 2009; Haimona Rzoska, 4 November 2009).

Maori graphic design teacher, researcher, and digital archivist of the Ratana Church's history, Arahi Haggar, explained the difficulties in compiling an archive of the knowledge in connection to the Ratana Movement due to the dangerous elements of its related knowledge. The Ratana Movement is connected to the Ratana Church (located outside of Whanganui), which was established by Tahupotiki Wiremu Ratana and his followers as an amalgamation of partially Christian values, politics, and a move away from the '*tohunga* culture' of Maoridom in favor of Treaty of Waitangi rights to sovereignty becoming the focus of political endeavors. Arahi described how he tried to access knowledge through the elders of the Ratana Church by asking for it, even though the knowledge had passed over his grandparents and parents. He explained that the 'old people' held onto the knowledge because it was *tapu* and only for descendants directly in their own descent line, so much of the knowledge died with the elders. Arahi gained his knowledge because he was dedicated to its pursuit through archival records, and continually asking *kuia* (term for older women/grandmother) and elder men, who would hold off in giving him the knowledge until they were almost near death (Fieldnotes, Arahi Haggar, 10 January 2010).

Holding onto important knowledge within the community speaks to the ideals of traditional safeguards for knowledge. Other traditional practices and knowledge connected to material culture in Maoridom are also protected. Firth (1959: 248) points out that material objects can attain increasing levels of *tapu*, which runs in accordance with their relative social importance. Barth (1975) analyzes the workings of Baktaman taboo, a totemism comparatively equivalent to Maori *tapu*, as the creation of 'secrecy whereby sacred occasions and objects acquire their ritual and acknowledged social value' (169). In this way, the *tapu* surrounding objects heightens its value, while also paradoxically broadening the gap in a community's social knowledge through the restriction of access to its transmission. Certain objects such as Maori fishing canoes might not have much *tapu* in connection with their use, but other objects of heightened value such as sea faring canoes, and superior house carvings will have an intensified amount of *tapu* (Firth 1959: 248) due to their significance to traditional Maori lifeways and perceived scarcity. Maori carvings depicting the gods, demons, and ancestors have long been recognized as embodying a

means to *mana* and depicting concerns over the protection from *tapu* (Mead 1986, 2003; Hita-Brown 2006). When *taonga* are associated with ancestors who were famous, important to history, or who were possibly involved in acts of *tapu* (murder, deaths, carrying out ritual activities with an object, e.g. tattooing), knowledge connected to *taonga* and its transference is restricted. Maori may choose to 'send away' knowledge (e.g. physically giving away as in cases of people giving old *taonga* to Ratana Church to keep them from harm) or giving it *tapu* restrictions that keep knowledge unshared communally.



Figure 2.4 'Tunuhaere' canoe prow, PRM 1923.87.12

Outside of the community claims about the importance of knowledge and concerns over its loss, the continued restriction of knowledge became an interesting aspect of my research in Whanganui. As an outsider when I attempted to learn about the collection pieces connected to secret knowledge considered inappropriate for me to learn, several people discussed the *tapu* restricting their responses. The named canoe prow 'Tunuhaere' (PRM 1923.87.12) in the Smith collection became a major focal point of much of the *taonga Maori* research because of the extensive nature of its accompanying *korero*, which no one in Kaiwhaiki had previously heard. Tamati Takarangi, nineteenth century community leader and Te Oti Takarangi's nephew, gave 'Tunuhaere' to Smith after Te Oti died. Smith then sent this piece home to England, along with it a letter telling the story behind the prow. In the letter excerpt Smith recounts the narrative told to him:

The name of the figurehead is Tunuhaere - named evidently from improvisation [sic] at the time of presentation to Takarangi - The name of the canoe was "Wainui" (big water). It belonged to Rangitauira, an upriver chief (killed since I have been here, at the battle of Moutoa fighting on the side of the Hauhaus). It was one of the canoes bringing down a war party of Taupo and upriver natives to demand satisfaction from the Kaiwhaiki natives for a

theft. The object taken was a native made cartridge case - stolen by Katene te Kuihi of Kaiwhaiki from Kotuku Rairoa - in or about the year 1842. Many of the war party were afterwards well known to me, but only one I expect has often been named in my letter. It was Te Herekieke, the influential chief whose principal place was Tokaanu on Lake Taupo, but who was living just where Edgar Smith now lives, with a lot of his people round him, when I came. He was the best native I ever knew. The war party came down & camped at the mouth of the Tunuhaere creek and sent in their demands to Takarangi at Kaiwhaiki just opposite. They demanded now much more than the return of the stolen property. They required the surrender to them of the elder brother of Katene - to be killed & eaten. This was refused point blank by Takarangi. Then the war party shifted their camp a mile or so down the river to give the Kaiwhaiki natives time to consider. On their return Takarangi made answer that he would not hand over Katene's brother, but he would instead surrender his own Aunt Ripeka (I forget her proper Maori name. I think it was Takahia). The war party on consideration accepted her as a substitute, but would not kill & eat her as she was related to themselves. So they sent her back unharmed and the quarrel was over. The Kaiwhaiki natives then feasted the war party and the latter on going away made complimentary presents in return. Among others this figure head to Takarangi - which was presented to me by Tamati in memory of the old man (Related document file for 1923.87.12, Pitt Rivers Museum).

The narrative that accompanied Tunuhaere made it very evocative. The multiple ancestors named in the narrative struck different chords of recognition and interest depending on people's personal associations, but as I had repeatedly been told, every Maori is related however distant. Later in my research through the confirmation of the previous prow owner Matene Rangitauira's descendant, Che, I discovered that the correct name for the prow was *pakurukuru* not *tete*. At the Akaroa Museum, the collector (who collected many *taonga* from the Whanganui region in the 1950s) and curator Murray Thacker also confirmed that 'Tunuhaere' was a *pakurukuru*, and that it came from the *waka tete* canoe, which was a much smaller fishing *waka* than the war canoe that could have held a war party coming for revenge on Katene te Kuihi. Murray showed me examples of *waka tete* with *pakurukuru* still attached, which were about the size of multi-purpose or fishing *waka* that could hold about four people (Murray Thacker, personal communication, 17 November 2009).

This story might have been pitched to a specific tenor in order to disguise more powerful associations in connection to the prow. Once an exchange piece given to calm a quarrel, as a gift to a European friend, this *taonga Maori* was re-elevated to a status of great *tapu* and *mana* through its accumulated history and underlying associations. As people in Whanganui read the *korero* accompanying the photographs of the prow, some described the *tapu* connected to the narrative.

The name of 'Tunuhaere' itself tells a lot about what needs to be understood about the prow's more secretive associations. The ancient *pa* (fortified structure, may be inhabited permanently or used in battles as refuge) site of Tunuhaere stands adjacent to Kaiwhaiki on the opposite side of the river, and its name is translated to mean, 'to roast while traveling'.¹⁵ It was once the residence of the ancestors of today's descendants living at Kaiwhaiki before the move across the river. The site still has strong *tapu* restrictions regarding its history and no one may climb it without permission. As an outside researcher I was an unsuitable recipient of the secretive knowledge surrounding Tunuhaere, but was made aware that this knowledge was guarded for a reason involving deaths of ancestors.



Figure 2.5 View from Tunuhaere pa looking towards Kaiwhaiki *marae*, Photo credit Ken Clarke

Discussions of this secret knowledge and its importance to *mana*, community protection, and cultural preservation were communicated through the attention knowledgeable community members paid to this specific canoe prow.

Gerrard Albert is a young Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi cultural leader working with all of the region's *hapu* in their land repatriation claims through the Whanganui Iwi Land Trust Board. He was educated in a traditional manner because his family holds *mana* (more on Maori cultural education in Chapter four). Gerrard is highly regarded as knowledgeable in the community and politically active. When he saw the photo of the *pakurukuru*

¹⁵ The definition of Tunuhaere meaning 'to roast while traveling' was relayed in T.W. Downes' (1938) *Whanganui River Stories or River Ripples*, and others told me the name Tunuhaere also had to do with cannibalism, but no other details of the story. It was also conferred to me that this was not the whole story, and that narrative could not be told.

‘Tunuhaere’, he explained that knowledge worked in connection with *mana* and only came to those who were suitable. Instead of expanding on the narrative of ‘Tunuhaere’, he transitioned into a story of two lost *pounamu mere* (greenstone war clubs), ‘Whakarewarewa-i-te-kukuwai’ and ‘Te Maro Taritari’ (see, pg. 9 above). He explained that when ‘Whakarewarewa’ was repatriated, it was not meant to return. Due to its associations with war, death, and murder, the ancestral owner had buried ‘Whakarewarewa’ to suppress the bad *korero* that had been attached to the *taonga Maori* and the family. When the *mere* went on sale at auction after being accidentally dug up, the community intervened so as not to lose it forever. The ancestral associations have now dictated that the rightful owners take care of the repatriated *mere*, but the *korero* has also come back to the community, which was intended to remain hidden (Fieldnotes, Gerrard Albert, 1 October 2009).

Gerrard also explained that there was *tapu* surrounding the knowledge of Tunuhaere *pa* because of its connection to cannibalism and that his cousin Haimona and his family knew the *korero* associated with the site, but would not tell it. This was because their familial knowledge was guarded for the protection of others from bad *mana*. This does not mean that the *korero* can never be heard again, as obviously those Haimona and his family deemed suitable for the knowledge could have it, but Gerrard explained that the knowledge was not for everyone (Fieldnotes, Gerrard Albert, 1 October 2009).

With this information it might be conceivable that the *tapu* associated with the site of Tunuhaere, and possibly the *pakurukuru* as well, were the reason that Tamati Takarangi was allowed to let Smith have such special *taonga Maori*, to physically rid the community of bad *mana*. Other *tapu* associated with the ‘Tunuhaere’ *pa* relates to the previous owner, Matene Rangitauira. Smith’s narrative states that Rangitauira joined the warring party as they were coming down the Whanganui River. Rangitauira was also from Nga Paerangi *hapu*, but was originally from upriver around *marae* Kowhai.¹⁶ As a *tohunga* and under the tutelage of Te Ua Haumene (starter of the Pai Marire movement who spread peace and righteousness, but he and his followers were often strongly conflict oriented [Young 1998: 57]), Rangitauira brought the faith back to his people upriver and became a

¹⁶ Several people with information about Matene Rangitauira stated his place of residence on different *marae*, but none of them were Kanihinihi as Smith quoted in his letter. On the other hand, the movement of individuals in the 1800s between different *marae* does not preclude him changing residences, especially as his political exploits became more political. See Binney (1995) *Redemption Songs: A Life of Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki* on the movement of Te Kooti, founder of the Ringatu movement, and as he became a political refugee he took shelter in the Whanganui region in the late 1860s (pp. 187-198), and even Kaiwhaiki leader Te Oti Takarangi asked ‘Te Kooti to remember him when he “came forth”’ (193).

leader of the anti-settler movement. He also commissioned 'Teremoe', the large war canoe currently held in the National Museum of Te Papa Tongarewa, which was overtaken by Hipango (from Kanihinihi) after the Battle of Moutoa Island. When Rangitauira led his followers in the clash between Maori supporting the settlers and Pai Marire followers at Moutoa Island in 14 May 1864, Rangitauira's anti-settler Maori warriors lost and he was killed (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009).

This battle today is still a very sensitive subject and Moutoa Island itself is too *tapu* to step foot on because of the many Maori who died and were buried there (Young 1998: 63). The prow's connection to Rangitauria adds another layer to the narrative invoking *tapu* through associations with death and linking to the secretive elements surrounding this *taonga*. Knowing that Haimona and his family knew the *korero* behind the Tunuhaere site and possibly also more about the story connected to the *pakurukuru*, I pressed Haimona for more details. He was very good at being vague about details of the ancient *pa* site, as well as being vague on the return of the *mere pounamu* 'Whakarewarewa', which is the hereditary responsibility of his *whakapapa* line. I never received the full story of why 'Whakarewarewa' was buried and lost in the first place, except that Haimona revealed that old *korero* coming out was not always a good thing when they were negative, and that *taonga* were often intentionally buried so that knowledge would not be passed on to inappropriate people (Haimona Rzoska, interview, 4 November 2009).

Much like the elicitation through photographs taken back to the Nga Morehu Maori community by Binney and Chaplin (1986, 2003) in the 1970s, photographs helped community members rediscover a suppressed version of history. In the case of Kaiwhaiki, perhaps the history held in the Smith *taonga Maori* might have been purposefully repressed through the selective transference of knowledge in the community and by giving Smith the objects. James Weiner (1995) explains such issues with the transmission of knowledge as something that for the Aboriginal Ngarrindjeri tribe can be understood as a way that 'secret or restricted knowledge is generated by the particular strategy or mode of social differentiation of a given community' (4). The embedded social understandings of sacred knowledge are only available for those experienced in guarding themselves from *tapu* who hold a certain level of familiarity with Maori knowledge. This means that one holds knowledge as a medium for others in the community as a way of negotiating the continued social relationships between the *tapu* realm of deceased ancestors and today's descendants (Salmond 1982).

When speaking with John Maihi, a respected community leader from Otoko *marae* and advocate for repatriating *taonga Maori* back to Whanganui *iwi*, he explained that he gained his ancestral knowledge directly from his *marae*'s elders. He was the eldest in his family and had grown up with the 'old people' on the *marae*. At 22 he was called back home to meet eleven elders in the *wharepuni*, where they recited *karakia*, *whakapapa*, histories, and songs for the entire day. Then each elder touched his head and they told him he was fully trained. By the end of that year all eleven elders had died and he was then a leader of his community, because he had knowledge that passed over his parents and family members directly to him. He was thrown into this position of power without much experience. In situations where he was asked to be the voice of the community, he did not know what to say. One time, he stood during a community *hui* [meeting] and blurted out that "This is not the way to do things", which surprised even him. He did not yet have a full grasp on *te reo Maori*, but when he got up to speak in these situations, he could feel the spirits of the eleven elders speaking through him and helping him to powerfully get his point across...Finally at 35 years old, John felt the spirits leave him on his own, and even his family members had dreams and visions of the spirits leaving him, so he knew that he was to continue his journey as a full *tohunga* on his own (Fieldnotes, 12 January 2010).

John's journey of gaining his knowledge quite quickly made him a very young *tohunga*, but the power and efficacy of his ancestors was literally absorbed and communicated through him. This speaks to notions that such ancestral knowledge, experience, and open-mindedness to the ability to communicate knowledge from other spiritual realms, validates knowledge in its connection to ancestors. The added factor of choosing certain individuals to be responsible to hold onto the limited transmission of knowledge articulates ways knowledge is powerful, while positing dangers to the uninitiated in handling such *tapu* subjects. The experience of magic and mysticism in Whanganui is talked about as a reality of daily life in connection to sacred sites (e.g. Tunuhaere and Moutoa Island) and the continued presence of spirits in the community. The more in tune one is with his/her traditional knowledge, the closer he/she can come towards upholding elements of *tapu* in cultural practices.

The *tapu* surrounding the 'Tunuhaere' canoe prow speaks to ways that the power of ancestors can be transferred through time, and although knowledge about the prow remained uncommunicated, the potentially harmful aspects of its narrative endured. Those who could convey the knowledge connected to the prow refused to speak about the subject for both cultural and political reasons. Parkin (1985) makes the metaphoric connection to knowledge as a manipulable object, only conveyed and controlled through speech, where 'speaking *is* knowing' (56). Therefore, there is power in not speaking, or withholding knowledge from the public realm, which also informs Maori ideologies in negotiating cultural identity. If knowledge is a resource, or taken one step further, an object that has effects that can be enacted upon other persons as a means to motivate or color actions (see Rubinstein 1981, Strathern 1985), then as an element of political power the

visibility or invisibility of knowledge indicates a relationship between those who are able to take up control of knowledge and the people seeking out that knowledge (J. Weiner 2001: 151). The years of the Smith knowledge remaining out of public sight in connection to the 'Tunuhaere' canoe prow, speaks to ways that scarce elements of ancestrally related knowledge coming back to the community have renewed aspects of *tapu* and restrictions that simultaneously seek to preserve such helpful cultural knowledge. The type of knowledge considered secretive might have been explained as related to *tapu*, but the main basis of restrictions about knowledge connected to the 'Tunuhaere' prow and *taonga* like the repatriated *mere* 'Whakarewarewa', relates to the relationship within a kin group, taking care of the ancestors, and protecting the living through the responsibilities of knowledge.

The existence of *taonga* attests to the survival of Maori cultural knowledge

The perceptions of loss of local knowledge in Whanganui and understandings of the importance of familial knowledge combine to affect ways *taonga* is relevant to Maori identity. I previously mentioned Paul Tapsell's theories on *taonga* as deeply connected to ancestors, and the medium for their spiritual essence as being related to their history of exchange and social life (Tapsell 1997, 2000). This connection is important to ways community members establish the interrelatedness of all Maori and their associations with historic land bases. *Taonga* from the Smith collection elicited various responses as I spoke to people in the community with different knowledge bases, but the key thing that bound peoples' interest in, secrecy about, ability to connect with, or indifference to the Smith *taonga* images was whether an object was connected to an ancestor or not. If no ancestor was named, then the image had to bring up memories connected to individual family narratives in order to obtain responses or interest. I also received more politically tinged responses in situations with named *taonga* from many of the knowledgeable speakers for the community, especially from the standpoint that protecting the knowledge of their ancestors was their responsibility of leadership. Maori in Whanganui have stressed that reconnecting to knowledge of ancestors is the most important aspect of the cultural regeneration process, and engaging in Waitangi Tribunals and collecting knowledge is re-stimulating this knowledge (Fieldnotes, Ken Clarke's house, 19 December 2009). Stressing the importance of what has remained the same from a Maori conceptual perspective enables *matauranga* to be showcased within *taonga* that culturally establishes historic place. This knowledge serves as a conversational platform for community

members to communicate about history, and is applicable for connecting the presence of *taonga* from the ancestral landscape to its continued existence today.

If a dispersal of 'knowledge' can indeed be lost in an objectified sense as a resource due to external and internal influences, its potential to resurface through material means such as *taonga* must also be a possibility. Rubinstein (1981) draws a parallel to the ability for knowledge in Vanuatu to acquire an object-like status that can exist unquestioned, and on the other hand may also be tied completely to its relationship with the bearer of that knowledge (149-150; 156-157). The relatability of knowledge produced originally by ancestors enables certain kinds of knowledge (related to *taonga Maori*, esoteric histories, genealogies, etc.) to be tied to the persona of a particular person, acting as an internal system of validation where the embodiment of knowledge is given authority and social currency (Appadurai 1981: 203, Strathern 1985: 67). The importance given to ancestors in Maoridom upholds the idea that '[t]he past is being made meaningful to those upholding it in the present' (Borofsky 1987: 144).

This confrontation of knowledge and history helps synthesize a history of disempowerment 'into new forms of historical discourse that are rooted in the moral, aesthetic, and cognitive sensibilities of specific human social groups' (Hill 1992: 811). Maori perspectives of a disenfranchised history can be effectively translated into the political arena to convey a need to reconnect and repossess their cultural history and identity through such continuous surviving elements of culture such as land and *taonga Maori*.

Concern for cultural change is pervasive for many Maori groups, and is not treated as something endogenous to traditional life, but as a disruption to it. Community leader Gerrard, in a position paper on the ongoing Waitangi Tribunals, laments the loss of past customs when *iwi* members lived, fished, hunted, prayed, traveled together, and the 'subversion of Whanganui *hapu* communism during the latter half of the 20th century [that] has resulted in a diverse *iwi* profile becoming evident today' (Albert n.d.: 1). The disenfranchisement from tradition is regretted as contributing to the community economic and cultural downturn, because of the way people have had to represent themselves to receive acknowledgement as authentic indigenous entities.

Henare (2007) describes Maori cultural identity as a survival in spite of a history of cross-cultural encounters, where they have learned to shift their registers of value and their 'Maoriness encompasses other identities without obliterating or diluting them' so that one can be considered 'wholly Maori *and also* European' (64). While these realities of

separate registers of knowledge are relevant to understandings of *taonga* in different contexts, it is from these cross-cultural exchanges between Pakeha and Maori that must draw on difference to convey the symbolic power of *taonga* in the political realm; these differences draw from a distinct Maori identity complemented by knowledge of one's past, language, associated lands, and distinct practices in opposition to Pakeha culture. From a position of a distinct indigenous identity in spite of a past of colonization, Maori can assert rights to symbols of identity like *taonga*, or more concrete rights to land and other scarce resources such as knowledge (cf. Harrison 1999: 248-249).

Elements that strengthen the call for Maori control over *taonga* and its continued importance are based on ways *taonga* exemplify connections to ancestors, and peoples' personal connections to the ancestors themselves. In this, the knowledge from *taonga* as *matauranga* also remains a finite and precious resource that is unchanged due to its survival after centuries of cross-cultural infringement (Salmond 1982: 82). Salmond states that knowledge was described to her as a cloak that is rare and to be cherished (1982: 83). These issues relate to losses of the land and *taonga* from Maori communities, which establish *taonga* as particularly salient markers of identity. In the context of Whanganui, some who sought to guard the knowledge from the Smith collection recognized this aspect.

Kaiwhaiki elder Morvin Simon acquired his knowledge also in the more formal settings expected of elder cultural leaders who inherent their knowledge from respected *tupuna* (ancestors), and with that knowledge the *mana* of the speaker is also passed on to the listener. When asking Morvin about the restrictions put on giving traditional knowledge to someone who may ask for it, but may not be suitable to receive it according to cultural standards, he declared that was an antiquated notion. The restriction of knowledge from those who ask, Morvin explained, stems from the turn of the century when Maori in Whanganui decided to hold back their knowledge when the wrong people began to tell things to Europeans that were later used against them. He stated that this is when people would pretend not to know, or turn people seeking knowledge away. Morvin continued that sometimes people held back so much that what the 'old people' knew actually died with them. But he then stressed that things are changing as a younger generation take control of knowledge and lead their own *marae*, as well the greater inclusion of women in this picture of Maori holding powerful knowledge (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009).

In a recording I listened to of a lecture Morvin gave to a Pakeha and Maori audience in 1994, he painted a slightly stricter depiction of knowledge dissemination in Whanganui pertaining to understandings of knowledge within the community as finite. He explained that knowledgeable people were often reluctant to give out their knowledge and erode their own power (see Salmond 1982: 82). While taking questions from the audience, Morvin was asked why he gave ambiguous details of Whanganui and specifically Nga Paerangi history. Morvin explained that before giving knowledge to a *moko* (grandchild), he might ask himself why the *moko* has asked the question in the first place. Will the *moko* be able to handle the answer, or will he ridicule at it? If the elder gives him the answer, will the *moko* look after the answer for the future? Morvin explained that there are many answers that can be given to a question about a subject, and those answers are tailored to the person doing the questioning, whether they are a tourist, interested person, or actual descendant. And further, it is only those descendants who are deemed ready to protect it who can receive this knowledge. (ALW, 'Morvin Simon at Davis Lecture Theatre', 1994).

These concerns with the dispersal of knowledge speak to the trend many leaders in Whanganui alluded to, that the community likes to keep certain things to themselves. This very descendant only based answer about the restrictions on Whanganui history aligns with the idea of the scarcity of knowledge and it needing to remain within family boundaries in order to not lose its *mana*. Though in my interview with Morvin he alluded to changes in the traditional dispersion of knowledge to younger leaders as a positive attribute (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009), the same principles of knowledge restriction are intended to denote only those most eligible to protect knowledge be it within a specific family or not.

Morvin's nephew Gerrard Albert, received knowledge about his ancestral past that was intended for his parents who were skipped entirely. Gerrard explained that he was very close to his *kuia* (grandmother) who is very respected in the community. In learning his knowledge in a *wananga* (traditional Maori learning repository) setting from his *kuia* first, and later uncles, his parents were passed over. He first explained that knowledge is *tapu*, or sacred, and not for everyone. To explain this he related the story of his great great grandfather, and the *waiata* (traditional song) that he composed to lament the fact that he was not chosen to receive ancestral knowledge. Instead, the great great grandfather's contemporary Wi Pauro received knowledge 'sideways', which was intended for Gerrard's grandfather. When Wi Pauro received the knowledge he left to be secluded with the knowledge in Makirikiri (near Kaiwhaiki) and piece it together. *Mana* from knowledge

stemmed from one's ability to interpret the information. Gerrard explained that outsiders or those not ready, might ask for knowledge, but they will not get it unless the elders are ready to give it up. If knowledge were given to everyone it would lose its *mana*. Gerrard also explained the passing over of his parents for receiving knowledge as partially because he is one of the last (of four) generations who had been cursed because of a slight committed on another's family. He claims that he does not believe in this kind of *tapu*, but that some level of it does still exist (Gerrard Albert, interview, 1 October 2009).

The reason *matauranga* is important and is protected is similar to the familial principles connected to *taonga*. *Matauranga* is related to the principle of *whanaungatanga* (familial obligations) that underlies the ideologies of *tikanga Maori* as well (Mead 2003: 28-29). *Whanaungatanga* relates to the support expected of and to one's kin group (or often extended to those outside of the kinship structure). Working towards strong ideals of *whanaungatanga* gives a person more *mana*, which is drawn from possessing knowledge from ancestors and helps position certain people in the community within leadership roles as 'power is socially founded upon the kinship group, the parents, the whanau, hapu and iwi' (Mead 2003: 29-30). *Matauranga* remains finite not only because of its limited distribution, but also because it is knowledge about the ancestors, their relationships, and this established knowledge reflected onto the present moment of kin relationships. *Taonga Maori* supports this idea in its continued existence through time alluding to the relationships between ancestors that are transmitted in the present, much in the same way that all past kinship relations continue to be cared for and carried on under the principles of *whanaungatanga*.

The relationship of restricted knowledge in Maori communities tethers a relationship between those who withhold knowledge in adherence to issues of *tapu* and the descendants they aim to protect. Social connections to the past and the ancestors are deepened as people strive to gain a more coherent understanding of their reality by accessing the knowledge of their kin. The secret knowledge associated or illuminated through *taonga Maori* also speaks to the partial nature of the sharing of community knowledge. The lack of uniformity in this social diffusion of knowledge creates individuals who can 'be called in to perform ceremonies necessary for other persons who lack such knowledge. Obligations are created between people based on their differences, rather than their similarities' (J. Weiner 1995: 5). Accessing that knowledge from others enables a cycle whereby a journey towards obtaining more ancestrally connective knowledge also implicates the speaker and listeners in exchanges that bind them to one another. The

perceptions of Maori knowledge generate a cycle by which some knowledge is considered lost, but available within the knowledge of others. The lost knowledge of the past then, might remain unrecoverable in the case of restricted knowledge within *taonga Maori*, but it is used to 'do all of the differentiating work it has to do' to create cultural knowledge anew (Strathern 1991: 98).

While legal recourse in Whanganui takes centre stage in discussions over recourse for the loss of cultural knowledge, the re-envisioning of histories and community research endeavors are repeatedly binding kin in the discursive process of knowledge retention and loss. The relationship between kin and ancestrally connective *taonga Maori* is mediated by the existence of a hierarchy of knowledge, so that it can be relationally composed through speakers and listeners, which always maintains the partial nature of knowledge circulation (cf. Crook 1999: 237, Strathern 1991: 97-98). This means the reconstruction of community knowing through *taonga* or other historic survivals will be interpreted contextually as socio-political factors change and affect the 'social life' of knowledge (Rubinstein 1981: 136), but the personal connections that stem from such material culture foregrounds ways *matauranga* and *taonga* are used to demarcate what has stayed the same for Maori culture (Henare 2007). These ideals revolve around the relationships between ancestors and descendants expressed through *taonga* as survivals of the past that deem community memories as important to the project of regenerating knowledge. In the following chapter, I will be discussing the responses to the Smith collection *taonga* as a gathering point for expressions of history, artistic connections, personal narratives, but also political concerns of the community in relation to the control of *matauranga* and *taonga*.

CHAPTER THREE- *Taonga Maori* reactions to the Smith collection and *taonga* in Whanganui

While I have been talking about the cultural and political regulations of knowledge within Whanganui in relation to *matauranga*, the responses to the Smith collection must also take into account the *kaupapa Maori* (combination of values both spiritual and social as applied to modes of learning, education, research, and ethics) aspects of knowledge in a community. In the Smith collection project, I attempted to return images of ancestrally connected *taonga Maori* to provide knowledge of the narratives Smith recorded and use *taonga Maori* as a visual stimulus for historic memories. I was met with personal responses about ways that such images were connected to ancestors and therefore significant, but also information about ways that museum collections needed to stay within community control. *Taonga Maori* as historic photographs or objects emerged in these responses as platforms for knowledge regeneration, and a focus also developed on ways that material culture is an arena for negotiations of power and agency.

Kaupapa Maori has been defined as the contemporary research goals for Maori communities which recognizes that 'up until recently Maori were rarely involved in research activities' about their own culture (Mead 2003: 317). Now practices of research are required to recognize cultural values, such as the *tapu* of knowledge and the need to control this within the community. In her analysis of the need to rethink research strategies in Maori communities as part of a decolonization process from western frameworks of knowledge, Smith (1999) explains *kaupapa Maori* as the need to acknowledge different indigenous epistemologies. This consideration takes into account the connections between *te reo Maori* language, community knowledge, and identity, which moves towards research that will benefit the community. As a visual resource, historic photographs help trigger key reflections and genealogical information connected to descendants' own personal associations and upbringing (Brown and Peers 2006: 97), while the divergent reflections on such sources of knowledge become ways different *whanau* and *hapu* can construct their own useful outcomes of knowledge.

A history of colonial possession of Maori objects and art has translated to a situation where those objects also become an important point of contestation against European culture (Henare 2005a: 47). Re-possessing aspects of cultural heritage is part of the larger goal of regaining control over land and resource losses, but is not as primary as those overall objectives. The use of *taonga* today can be compared to previous historical situations where the objects were once used to position Maori communities within specific

political relationships to European settlers.¹⁷ For example, famous Anglican missionary of the Manawatu Whanganui regions, Reverend Richard Taylor, was gifted a chair with ornamental carving by the parishioners of Putiki *marae* as ‘a fitting gift to show the respect in which Taylor was held’ (Horwood and Wilson 2008: 121).

Concerns over the control of *taonga* were expressed in Whanganui in many ways: by people seeking to correct the spellings of names and locations that Smith wrote in connection to objects, through concerns when narratives had different information than what was currently known in the community, and assertions that *taonga* needed to ‘come home’. Such issues readily extend to other aspects of the cultural heritage reclamation process. Maori in Whanganui stated a continuing need to promote the wider knowledge of *te reo Maori* language, the need to restore Maori names to the landscape, and goals to separate Maori knowledge (*matauranga*) from infiltrations of European knowledge through Maori focused education initiatives. This chapter will explore ways people responded to the Smith *taonga* images within varying contexts of knowledge, and how perceptions of *taonga* shift between their relational aspects and more political contexts of agency and power.

In attempting to take back images of *taonga* and knowledge tied to them without the actual presence of these objects in the community, this project became very knowledge-context-specific, as photographs can be representations of people, but also as Banks (2001) notes, the ‘actions or knowledge associated with the person represented’ (50). Only certain people could and wanted to talk to me about *taonga* in connection to their personal knowledge and memories. Others held back and had differing ideas on appropriate contexts for sharing knowledge. The definition of *taonga Maori*, as defined in the previous chapter, is complex and historically entangled in the politics of indigenous communities with differing agendas of activism, traditionalism, and more modern regeneration (see

¹⁷ The 19th century conditions of Maori economy became highly predicated on material prosperity based on a framework of European knowledge. The recognition of this decline in *sui generis* knowledge in favor of European practices, was built up as the Pakeha population continued to gain local knowledge, while Maori people practiced their own customs less, such as *tapu*, *utu*, *murū*, and warfare in general (Elsmore 1989: 21). McCarthy (2007: 31-33) describes the way *taonga* were donated to museums to help widely display Maori *mana* through powerful objects as an act of self-positioning in changing circumstances. He cites an instance where Metekingi from Whanganui donated a *pare* named ‘Te Whakangoto’ in 1866 to the Colonial Museum (McCarthy 2007: 32, citing- Anonymous note 27 November 1866, Te Papa Archives, MU 147, 1/276). McCarthy (2007) also references Phillips (2005) and her examples of gift presentations that Canadian First Nations engaged in during the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1860. Phillips illuminates ways First Nations ‘speeches, presentations of gifts and modes of self-display were...intensely meaningful and highly ritualized, forming part of a long sequence of such exchanges that stretched back to the beginning of contact’ (2005: 115).

Niezen 2003, Harkin ed. 2004). Most significant for a Whanganui-specific understanding of *taonga* was the emergence of a greater focus on the community goals of knowledge re-generation that I witnessed through reactions to the Smith collection images. People spoke about their own family heirlooms, the importance of interactions with *taonga* at museum exhibitions, and issues of the repatriation of human remains, or *koiwi tangata*, and other *taonga* objects that helped address their concerns over losses of knowledge in the community.

It became clear that it was not the actual object or its preservation that was the foremost issue of interest to all interviewees, but how the knowledge and history that potentially comes from *taonga* should be handled. When I showed a group of three ladies from Kaiwhaiki named Mona, Bubbles (both elders in their 80s) and Dyan (a claimant in the Nga Paerangi land claims) the Smith images, they immediately prefaced any reactions by saying that Kaiwhaiki did not do carvings or have *taonga*, which was known about at least. Mona stated that ‘people ask or say something about carving and we say we don’t know. We don’t have any carving over at Kaiwhaiki. It’s not what we do’ (Fieldnotes, Bubbles Walker’s house, 21 September 2009). The perception of a lack of knowledge surrounding *taonga* was something I faced commonly during my time in Whanganui. Using the Smith collection to learn about Maori perspectives on *taonga* helped articulate diverse opinions, as some people just had not seen *taonga* from Kaiwhaiki and were interested to look, like the ladies in the description above.

Others when looking at Smith *taonga* reflected on their own personal narratives as images of ancestors conjured memories of the past. When genealogy specialist Haimona saw the photograph of ‘Karehana Tahan on the roof’ (PRM 1998.243.17.2), he commented that he also came from the same line as Karehana Tahau.¹⁸ Karehana had adopted his great grandfather, which Haimona explained meant that he was not directly from the same bloodline. Haimona’s descent was from the Tomairangi line, but also Te Uira, which was a *whangai* (adopted) line coming from Haimona’s grandfather’s adopted mother. He identified another woman who was part of these interconnected lines, who also came from his *whangai*’d great-grandfather, as Ripeka te Waimona- or Ripeka Takahia as she was also known. Ripeka Takahia was the aunt of Te Oti Takarangi, who was put up as the leverage in the conflict that led to the exchange of the canoe prow ‘Tunuhaere’ (PRM

¹⁸ Though Tahan is recorded as the name connected to the Smith photograph, Tahau is the spelling based on archival records of Karehana Tahau’s evidence in Native Land Courts, where is adopted daughter Ngarongo Kaumoana became a land applicant for Kaiwhaiki in his place (WH. MB. 51).

1923.87.12) when Matene Rangitauria came downriver with others originally from Lake Taupo (Tokaanu) (Haimona Rzoska, interview, 4 November 2009).



Figure 3.1 Photograph of Karehana Tahau (PRM 1998.243.17.2). The handwritten caption reads 'On the roof a Maori named Karehana or Tahan [Tahau] (genuine Maori), who was taken prisoner by the British forces with 50 others at the Wereroa Pa. He escaped from the hulks in Wellington harbour on a stormy night, & were [sic] not recaptured.'

When Mona saw the same photograph of her ancestor, Karehana Tahau, she did not immediately say that she was related to him. I only found out later on that he was a relation of hers (great-grandfather). Instead Mona began to tell me the story of where her Maori name originated. First she began by saying that it might sound like a fairy tale, but it was true that

...her grandmother's father had just married his wife and at that time Maori men newlyweds were sent to jail on an island to lower and decrease the Maori population. Because of his strong love for his wife, he could hear her calling his name to come home, so he found a log and drug it to the beach until he felt the time was right. Then one night he took to the brush to cover himself, and got on the log and slowly floated with the current to Paekakariki. The current that night had been flowing upwards, and so he landed further up and closer towards Kaiwhaiki. He only walked by night, and eventually made it back to Kaiwhaiki. When he and Mona's great-grandmother had their first child they named her Kaumoana, which means to swim the sea. That was Mona's grandmother, and she was the first child of

her grandmother's son, so she received the name as well (Fieldnotes, Mona Kiddie's house, 28 October 09).¹⁹

Mona explained that there was also another version of this same story that was told by community elder Morvin, but that her *korero* was the one that had been passed on to her. Previous to this exchange, Mona had explained that she had learned her 'Maori korero' and community history very late in life at 71 years old. Even though she was an elder, she said that she did not have that much knowledge to add to a project like mine, and that 'bigger people in the community' were the ones to go to. Her suggestion was mainly intended to shift questions about specific *taonga* to the actual descendants connected to the ancestors of objects, as mentioned in the previous chapter, where the hereditary ownership of knowledge was implied by people suggesting I needed to consult the descendants who truly possessed knowledge connected to their ancestors.

The interconnection between photographs and *whakapapa* reflections are enabled by the multiple narratives and knowledge that can emerge from viewing the images. The knowledge available from *taonga* suits the elements of indigenous historic interpretations that allow for a flexibility of knowledge to remain. For those pursuing tribunal based research by reclaiming knowledge from archival sources and community memories, issues of reconnecting knowledge of *taonga* to support historic connections between people and places is especially helpful as evidence, as well as perspectives of *kaupapa Maori* research because the knowledge produced has the ability to bolster community *mana* (Smith 1999). Responses to the Smith *taonga* also at times reflected these more political issues with knowledge within contexts of history and socio-political endeavors.

At first when showing Mona the *taonga* images, she commented, 'Who is this Smith family? He must have been well liked to get all this *taonga*' (Mona Kiddie, interview, 21 September 2009). Similar sentiments were echoed when showing the *taonga* at Kaiwhaiki *marae* in the *wharepuni* 'Te Kiritahi'. A few people in the group voiced concerns over 'why did Smith take all this *taonga*?' (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki *marae*, 14 August 2009). In the same gathering, a woman named Sue stood up and said that there are 'things that we don't want to get out to the people, and information that should stay home', which was her main concern in getting involved with these images connected to important ancestors of the community (Fieldnotes, 14 August 2009). Interviewees were concerned that the spellings that Smith recorded (often not in accordance with official Whanganui spellings

¹⁹ This *korero* differs in the Kaiwhaiki community, and others have different interpretations depending on who is telling the story.

and dialect) were incorrect, such as Smith's spelling of Kaiwhaiki without its "H", which was also a topic frequently revisited (Fieldnotes, 14 August 2009; 21 September 2009; 8 December 2009). Ngati Rangi leader Che (also connected to *hapu* Ngati Tuera and Nga Paerangi), was heavily involved in the Waitangi Tribunals for Ngati Rangi, as well as being occupied with *taonga* research in the Whanganui Regional Museum (WRM). One of his first comments during our interview while looking at the Smith *taonga* was that these objects being in a museum in England shows how museums are institutions for the glorification of the theft of Maori cultural heritage. Those objects are placed in the care of curators who care for things as they see fit. They care for the physical side of the object wellbeing, but not for the spiritual side of it (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009).

Issues of control over *taonga* by addressing its location, access, and care in museum collections commonly emerged, especially from Maori with leadership responsibilities over community affairs. Some people questioned me about issues of the return of the collection or its misappropriation (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki *marae*, 14 August 2009; Rangitunoa Black's house, 17 August 2009), or at least the need for a museum exhibition so the '*taonga* can be near the people' (Ken Clarke, interview, 4 November 2009). As Tapsell communicated, in moments of cultural or political upheaval within a community, such as with the ongoing Waitangi Tribunals, the call for repatriation of certain *taonga* as cultural property will surface (Paul Tapsell, personal communication, 11 November 2009). Interpretations of material culture fluctuate over time as part of the creative process of contemporary cultural identity in Maori communities. In this way the knowledge *taonga* offers mirrors other societal aspects being strongly emphasized today such as greater control over and proliferation of *te reo Maori* language, *whakapapa*, and protocols on the *marae* – making knowledge regeneration a key goal for the community or family group (more on this in Chapter four).

Issues of the location of *taonga* and the need for proximity with objects to appropriately take care for ancestors/objects, stem from a past dispossession from cultural heritage in Maori communities. Responses to *taonga* are undoubtedly affected by their location whether they are in family homes, on the community *marae*, or as images from museums that are not under Maori control. The relational quality attributed to *taonga* speaks to the importance of community sociality continuing from an *iwi* home base, but seeing objects and knowledge controlled by outsiders also brings up political responses to such images; especially for the Smith collection which was little known in Whanganui at the time of my research. Images of historic photographs of ancestors in the Smith collection elicited the

strongest responses. There is a more widespread interaction and familiarity with historic photographs in Whanganui within peoples' homes and on the *marae*. When interviewing Kaiwhaiki elder Morvin, he explained that he took care of the photographs in the *marae* and placed new ones up of ancestors who passed away because, 'when you come home and you see your parents in there, you feel part of the place straight away' (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009). The physical objectivity of *taonga Maori* then becomes the locus through which different social lives can meet, as identities of associated ancestors encompass the physicality of particular *taonga Maori*.

The ownership issues of *taonga* causally concern government agencies and museums, who in New Zealand have adopted a stance of *kaitiakitanga*, or custodianship, in order to acknowledge that Maori are the traditional owners of objects and that museum experts are there to act as caretakers of these valuables (Hakiwai 1991; Coster 1994; Wareham 2001: 39; McCarthy 2007: 175, 2011: 22; 129-135). Museum ownership or national control of material culture alludes to the loss of *korero*, which Mead (1984) suggests disenfranchises Maori from their cultural histories, because the *taonga* connected to *korero* needs to be 'brought home where it can be seen and talked about' (28). In literature, this idea of the loss of *korero* has also been extended to the loss of *taonga* as ancestors, therefore communicating the need to take care of kin relations, regain histories, and pursue future community strength by re-connecting with such sources of cultural knowledge. This kinship based understanding of *taonga* means that descendants must be '*hunga tiaki*, or guardian', which means that it 'is the obligation and responsibility passed down by ancestors requiring descendants to protect, interpret, *manage* and transmit the kin group's *taonga* to future generations' to carry on their sociality (Tapsell 1997: 362, emphasis original).

Anthropological definitions of *taonga* have historically focused on more static frameworks for their interpretation through exchange theories. In definitions of *taonga* by Mauss in *The Gift* (1990[1950]), the notion of gifting *taonga* carried with it the transaction of the *hau*, or spirit of things, that maintained some aspect of the original giver. Mauss stated that the *hau* was the reason one was compelled to continue in the exchange. He outlined links between *taonga* and rules in Maori society that compel exchanges on the basis of the *hau* stipulating *taonga* exchanges were 'between souls, because the thing itself possesses a soul...Hence it follows that to make a gift of something to someone is to make a present of some part of oneself' (1990 [1950]: 12). Mauss skirts the anthropological implications involving the relationship between persons and things by

identifying a link between rights and persons, instead of analyzing the social consequences of *taonga*. Firth (1959) also describes this 'essence' within *taonga* that narrates the feelings connected to an object of importance, but clarifies that there are varying feelings of connectedness when *taonga* has important associated *mana*. For example, the idea that there is a heightened amount of *mana* connected to objects belonging to or photographs of famous ancestors denotes prestige while strengthening social bonds for those who can connect to such *taonga* (354).²⁰ Firth gives a transactional approach to distinguish between economic and ceremonial exchanges (1959: 402), but also makes reference to the applicability of *taonga* to multiple transactional interpretations. These interpretations also relate to property issues, ownership, and ways that *taonga* can become markers of rights to land (1959: 356).

Especially after the 1984 touring exhibition 'Te Maori: Maori Art from New Zealand Collections' where the art, Maori culture, and people were launched as a package, perceptions of *taonga* changed (Mead 1991: 167). The 'Te Maori' exhibition enabled *taonga* to act as a political marker and symbol for indigeneity in its 'traditionalist orientation', but the Maori involved were also continually asserting the connection 'between the people and the treasures' (Thomas 1999: 189). From tribal perspectives, *taonga* have been personified as actual living Maori ancestors (Mead 1984; Tapsell 1997, 2001, 2006), which has led to claims of ownership and repatriation not just of identity, but also over the dead at the national level (see Verdery 1999). Theorized in these terms over the last decades of cultural revitalization, the politics of identity could more clearly be understood in Maoridom as a way of protecting not only the rights of those living today, but also the rights deserved by their forebears. This also relates to the repatriation of human remains, and policies that the national museum has followed in the past decades (Solomon 2007; McCarthy 2011: 217-221). Protecting the *mana* of the social group and the ancestors is important because the actual individuality connected to *taonga* tangentially relates to a leader's own *mana* as they 'draw their prestige and power from their ancestors (*mana tipuna*)' (Mead 2003: 29).

Working with the Smith collection made it apparent that there were ways to construe *taonga* in connection to political issues, but *taonga* always tended to connect back to the

²⁰Firth (1959) focuses on the types of exchange that *taonga* undergo of either economic or social natures, but distinguishes different terminologies for objects with specific purposes in accordance with Hamilton's *Maori Art* (1901: 226). Hamilton used *kanawa* to mean a war weapon handed down by the senior warrior in the family, and *manatunga* and *oha* as different words for a keepsake (1959: 354). Firth describes ways the circulation of such objects strengthened the social bonds and prestige surrounding the chief of a group.

ancestral relations that Maori were seeking to uphold for themselves, as well as for the future *uri* (descendants) to keep in their minds and hearts. Photographs of *taonga* have their own specific tactile qualities, which lend themselves variously to a project of knowledge repatriation (Edwards 2005), but also inspire various contemporary responses based on photographs being a familiar medium to support Maori *korero* in connection to ancestors and the land. Within this dual register, *taonga* act as a platform from which to articulate knowledge in variable ways for a community, while they also enable the assertion of ancestor derived knowledge as a basis for wider issues of control sought by Maori through principles of *kaupapa Maori*. Control over material culture saliently draws parallels with aims to regain rights to land and resources. In Whanganui, knowledge of ancestral names, community histories, and images of ancestors are Maori ways of knowing based in historic knowledge, from which individuals and groups can influence larger political goals by asserting rights through this autonomous positioning of knowledge. This chapter also examines ways responses to the relatively unknown Smith collection help highlight the immaterial wealth available from initial perceptions of *taonga*, and what interactions between an indigenous community and non-indigenous researcher communicate about the politics of Maori knowledge.

Views on *taonga* exchanges and movements

A current scholarly reading of the concept of *taonga* has defined it as any Maori cultural treasure, tangible or intangible that is related to Maori history, identity, and personhood, but *taonga* has been attributed varying definitions over the years within anthropology (see Mauss 1990 [1950]; Mead 1984; A. Weiner 1985, 1992; Tapsell 1997; Henare 2005a; on the analysis of changing perceptions- McCarthy 2007). *Taonga* has taken on different interpretations, but what has remained historically consistent has been that exchanges of *taonga* always engender social relationships. From early trade with explorers (Salmond 1975: 19-22) to establishing relationships with European political representatives, *taonga* were used to relationally position the givers of objects to those who received them (Henare 2005a). Many of these historically exchanged *taonga* have gone to museum collections, where the surviving material culture from these early transactions are upheld as rare, valuable, and now capable of establishing the political position of Maori being dispossessed of their material culture. As a result, *taonga* are now reinterpreted in legal frameworks as objects that connote possession and belonging in relation to the land.

Taonga in the Smith collection at times stimulated ancestral narratives, personal reflections on growing up, and memories connected to the land, but also stimulated more political responses in the sense of incorporating an awareness of indigenous politics and ways *taonga Maori* can be used towards furthering indigenous rights.

From the time of James Cook's explorations in New Zealand and the voyage of the *Endeavor* in 1769, the exchange of goods between British sailors and indigenous inhabitants of New Zealand was an inherent part of the relationship between the two groups. Henare's (2005a) research on the initial contact exchanges of material culture notes that gifts given by the Europeans were mainly in exchanges for fresh food and water. These gifts were sometimes rejected, but were often well received by the indigenous inhabitants (Henare 2005a: 31-32). From the information in the historic journals of European sailors, Henare concludes that some artifacts given by the Europeans were considered to have considerable *mana* (social prestige), such as items that the Europeans seemed to cherish like books or glass that seemed similar to *pounamu* (greenstone); yet the economic value of these goods were also anticipated once tools and metal given by Europeans made their utility apparent (2005a: 33-34). The multiple associations going on in those early exchanges of both an economic and social nature have been downplayed mainly in terms of the social relationships that Maori were seeking with the sailors, denying the ability for Maori perceptions of value to adapt from the first influx of European material goods.

The more economic aspects of *taonga* in Maori communities were emphasized in anthropological literature in connection to exchange theories (Mauss 1990 [1950], Firth 1959). In an elaboration on exchange, Strathern (1988) argues that Melanesian sociality underlies exchanges, as the objects, food, or other exchange items are much less important than the social relationships formed between the exchangers. She goes further to suggest, 'social relations are the objects of people's dealings with one another' (1988: 172). Strathern found that knowledge in Melanesian societies has been informed by a Western anthropological base²¹ from which concerns over possession and how to understand it in relation to quests to retrieve lost cultural knowledge has dominated ethnographic studies of indigenous issues in past years. Strathern contests that

²¹ Henare (2007) counters such Melanesianist theories and looks at the objectification of *taonga*. This is related to a shift in indigenous political awareness of a need to regain control of cultural heritage as a 'side-effect of rejecting earlier anthropological tendencies that allegedly arrested "primitive" cultures in an eternal ethnographic present' (2007: 62). Henare further connects this trend in understanding *taonga* to the need to forward such self-determinative knowledge possibilities through a European language that attempts to translate untranslatable Maori cultural concepts (63).

knowledge is not thought of in terms of possession nor is it 'built up' as a whole construction, but instead knowledge can be 'taken apart to reveal [its] composition' in a manner that 'leads to individuals testing their effects on others, trying out their capabilities, improvising and innovating, for capacities can only be known by the manner in which they are revealed' (1988: 288). This process constantly renews and creates ways for people to exchange their knowledge, in which relationships are established and the materiality of things is secondary.

Knowledge and *taonga* are integrally bound together for understanding the current importance of historic material culture in a Maori community. The information elicited from *taonga* images in Whanganui at times did relate to narratives of exchange or specific information about ancestors, but also related to people's personal frames of knowledge and interests. Looking at *taonga* and speaking about current endeavors such as the Waitangi Tribunals integrally linked *taonga* to the process of rearticulating historic knowledge in the current socio-political realm as a point of remembrance and contention. Movements of *taonga* endure their own separate cycles of loss and remembrance throughout time. The way objects or photographs move through time append contextually separate meanings to the knowledge connected to *taonga*, especially when *taonga* has moved into a final space that places ownership (or custodianship in some cases) with the state body or a museum that is not indigenously controlled. These changing circumstances of *taonga* affect their interpretation as material markers of identity that are bound to a history of cross-cultural exchanges between Maori and Europeans (see Thomas 1991).

McCarthy (2007) argues that the existence of *taonga* in museums is an ever-evolving aspect of Maori cultural and political life. McCarthy explains that *taonga* participated in a history of power in Maoridom that has fluctuated through time, but now issues of representation, exhibiting, and the giving of gifts are interpreted under a lens affected mainly by the recognition of colonial intrusions into culture and legal rights over culture (2007: 29). Early on *taonga* were historically given to museums and important Europeans as a means of extending relationships. An early example of the kind of power *taonga* participated in through gifting can be found in Davis' *Maori Mementos* (1855), that narrates the gifting of *taonga* to Governor George Grey on 22nd December 1853 after his valedictory speech in Waikato. About twenty chiefs passed on their highly special *taonga* pieces such as 'Tuohungia- An ear-drop presented by Ta Kerei Te Rau, a Chief of great

rank and influence' (Davis 1855: 15).²² Each *taonga* was accompanied by in-depth ancestral *korero* relaying its journey through time and the history and actions of its connected ancestors. These early presentations of cultural knowledge forwarded Maori intentions of partnership, which had expectations of reciprocal inclusion in political endeavors. In another instance of political exchange, in Whanganui in 1859 missionary Reverend Taylor recorded in his journal that his request to the Queen to give presents in return for the ones chiefs from the region gifted her had been accepted, and the chiefs were to receive staffs with the royal arms in silver with their names engraved on them (WRM, 5 December 1859, Journal of Rev. Richard Taylor). This speaks to the recognition of the need for reciprocity in the exchanges of *taonga* and the presentation of gifts intended to extend social relationships.

When an elder Whanganui woman Mona (Kaumoana) from Nga Paerangi *hapu* explained her experiences with *taonga* while looking at Smith collection images, she also related a narrative about her personal interactions with *taonga* from her childhood home, and her motives for giving her *pounamu hei tiki* (human form carved pendant of greenstone, either a memorial to an ancestor, or the goddess of childbirth) necklace to her European neighbor when she moved into town. A *hei tiki* is significant and connected to the ancestral pasts as family heirlooms that are passed on within hereditary lines (Hamilton 1901: 151). When looking at the Smith collection *pounamu* (greenstone) pendant with the fitted gold mounting (PRM 1923.87.243), Mona described how she was reminded about her childhood growing up in Kaiwhaiki with her grandfather. The style of the Smith *pounamu* is called *kapeu*,²³ and the necklace references a more modern twist on the *kapeu* bird shape that was used for older *pounamu* ear pendants before the fitting of gold was added to jewelry (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009).

When Mona was a child, she and her sister were raised by their part Scottish grandfather. She explained that he used to have a lot of *pounamu* pendants such as the one in Smith's collection. She described how he used to put the *taonga* in a glory box, and

²² The story behind 'Tuohungia' in Davis (1855) was explained as being lost, but then 'later, however, a gale uncovered the pendant, and an old man, walking from one village to another, found it. Rejoicing in his prize, he bore it away to a safe hiding place. Later, however, he told the *tohunga* of his discovery, and the news soon spread abroad that a valuable greenstone pendant had been found. 'The whole village was speedily aroused, and at sight of the much talked of *pounamu* loudly demanded, when to the dismay of the old man and the joy of the multitude it was recognised as the long missing 'Tuohungia'...on its reaching Te Wherowhero, his daughter Te Paea was despatched to fetch...A loud and long mourning ensued,...finally presented in 1853 to Sir George Grey' (15).

²³ Augustus Hamilton (1901: 304) identifies the greenstone ornament with a curved end as an ear pendant called *tautau*, *tara*, or *kapehu*. Though this looks like a necklace pendant with the gold mount, it was confirmed by *taonga* Maori expert Che Wilson it is called *kapehu*.

how she used to think that one day those pieces would belong to her. Then her grandfather passed away and her stepfather burnt down the house with the *taonga* in it. She was never sure of the reason why, but that she always wanted to know if any *taonga* survived and were taken somewhere else. She said there were many similar *pounamu* necklaces to the one in the Smith collection (Fieldnotes, Mona's house, 21 October 2009). She later explained that she used to have a giant *pounamu hei tiki* and that once she moved to the city as a girl at the age of 15, her neighbor in Castlecliff asked her if he could buy her *hei tiki*. She refused to sell it, but agreed to give it to him. Twenty-five years later while picking watercress on the side of the road she saw the mailbox with the name 'Getty' on it, which was the last name of the man she gave the necklace to. She went in to see if he remembered her, and he said no, but felt like he should. She asked for the necklace back. Getty brought it out to her in a box, and it looked the same. He had loved and cherished it for all those years and he showed her the others he had also collected. She took the necklace, but felt uncomfortable and uneasy with it after a while, so she returned



Figure 3.2 Pounamu pendant PRM 1923.87.243

to give it to him again. When her sister found out, she was mad that Mona had gotten rid of the *hei tiki* again, and asked for her to get it back. Mona did for the final time and gave it to her sister (Fieldnotes, Mona's house, 28 October 2009).

When Mona first saw the images of the *pounamu* pendant (PRM 1923.87.243), she was reminded of her grandfather and partial childhood on the *marae* in Kaiwhaiki. She continuously proclaimed not to have any knowledge in connection to *taonga*, but

reminisced about her childhood and family at the sight of various Smith collection images. The ideas behind Mona's story of exchange also resonates with ideas that there is a much stronger relational element behind some gifting of *taonga*, as well as the fact that the reciprocal aspect of *taonga* binds two parties in their exchange. In later years, when Mona was curious about her *hei tiki* it was returned to her because of the reciprocity her former neighbor upheld, but she also did not feel it could be as well cared for by her and so she returned it. These implicit notions of kinship and care are very similar to Crook's (1999, 2007) elucidation of care, the exchange of knowledge, and bodily power that emanates from such exchanges empowering growth in social relationships.²⁴ In such colloquial exchanges, the real crux of power for *taonga* in Whanganui was its continued ability to reconnect ancestors to the living, especially when issues of ownership were more flexible and less defined outside of a museum structure.

On another register, when such Maori knowledge is presented in more western structures of museum control, or in western research projects, a different slant to the understanding of *taonga* emerges that becomes much more about power and the ability to control one's own culture through recognized authority over material culture. Endeavors to reengage with museums or other cultural repositories of Maori knowledge are taken up with specific goals of regeneration and preservation, but also righting the perceived misappropriations of historic knowledge and ancestors through *taonga*. The control understood in these state/indigenous interactions becomes a point of contention as whoever is associated with caring for the *taonga* and therefore Maori ancestors, should have the appropriate values, principles, and most advantageously, indigenous heritage.

Reflections on *taonga Maori* in Whanganui as platforms for knowledge

A. The political contexts of knowledge connected to *taonga*

Some people viewing the *taonga Maori* photographs from the Smith collection in Whanganui had more artistic interests as traditional and contemporary artists, whereas those re-connecting with *te reo* language focused more on older words and ways that

²⁴ Crook's analysis surrounds knowledge and its exchange in Bolivip, Papua New Guinea for the Angkaiyakmin, who do not have a word for sociality or social relations. Through social interactions, physical interactions with persons and things, as well as exchanges of knowledge (not in the Strathernian sense of a mediated 'gift'), an assumed and unspecified relationship grows (2007: 27-29). This growth pertains to ontological growth, but also to the physical growth of plants in Bolivip.

taonga referenced things they had not heard. Others enjoyed being exposed to the historic photographs of the landscape and ancestors, while others wanted to speak about how such objects from the Smith collection were symbolic to the struggle for land reclamations. There were many different ways that people took their personal interests as an impetus for relating to images of *taonga Maori*. Reactions to the Smith images were often tempered by the ongoing political struggles in the community to regain land rights and control over elements of cultural heritage. Such contexts immediately referenced the other colonial



Figure 3.3 Canoe bailer (tata or tiheru) PRM 1923.87.14

losses being faced, in which the Smith collection served as a reminder of a need to regain lands, fulfill obligations to ancestors, and settle community affairs related to issues of *taonga* (see Tapsell 2003).

The Smith collection being relatively unknown sparked community interest in learning more, but also revealed ways that previously unknown (or unidentified) knowledge from the Smith collection could be useful to community endeavors. For example, one of the key talking pieces was the canoe bailer (*tata*) that afforded the opportunity to attract many people with divergent interests based on the *whakapapa* and artistic connections to the piece. Smith collected the *tata* (PRM 1923.87.14) or canoe bailer, which was recorded as being given on 30 November 1886 by a possible Nga Paerangi descendant named Ropiha. Smith called the piece a *tata*, but canoe bailers in Whanganui are usually called *tiheru* in the regional dialect as several local scholars mentioned (Michelle Horwood, personal communication, 11 August 2009; Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009).

Smith noted that the wooden canoe bailer shows a 'more modern style of carving, [with] the under surface being also carved. This belonged to the large war-canoe "Taringamotu"' (Related document file for 1923.87.14, Pitt Rivers Museum), which was from Paekakariki.²⁵

When Ken saw that Ropiha had owned the bailer, he tried to place Ropiha among the *tupuna* (ancestors) connected to Nga Paerangi. He suggested that the Ropiha who gave the bailer might have been the Ropiha from across the river. There are many Ropihas though, and the bailer is supposed to be connected to a war canoe in Paekakariki, which is relatively far away from Kaiwhaiki. Not being able to place which Ropiha the *tata* might have been connected to, contributed to the enigma about the bailer (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki, 17 September 2009).

Later Ken also commented that the bailer from Ropiha was interesting because he had never seen one with carvings on the bottom side of the scoop, and wondered out loud how the carvings had not worn away with the scraping motion that would have happened on a war canoe with this kind of bailer (interview, Ken Clarke 4 November 2009).

Questions about the genealogical connectedness of the bailer continued for the extent of my time in Whanganui as people tried to pinpoint exactly where the 'Taringamotu' canoe might have ended up, as well as which Ropiha could have been the one who gave the piece to Smith. Much of this questioning about the named ancestor Ropiha, and going through knowledge of *whakapapa* was similar to what Ken described in the process of researching tribal knowledge to present as evidence. There was a process of questioning and fitting specific ancestors into time periods and actual locations of land occupation, and then drawing out those connections to descendants today (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki, 17 September 2009). The connections between history, ancestors, and *taonga* from the past were all elements useful to supporting claims to land in the courts in accordance with *kaupapa Maori* goals on behalf of the *marae* group, but also became a way for someone like Ken, who was heavily involved in the claims process to add to the knowledge of the land he has already attained.

I met Bill, a carver who makes traditional style carvings from many materials, and also creates modern art that references traditional tribal themes. He observed that the bailer looked like an amateur carving attempt that had not been finished. He said that it did incorporate some of the distinctive themes from Whanganui, such as the *haihai* patterns, which are the stylized shapes of flounder swimming into a net. This pattern is repeated within many of the geometric carvings from the area. Bill could tell that the *taonga* was not actually finished because the story was not completed through the carving. He tried to convey the importance of carvings telling a narrative such as the canoe migration or even ways groups stored their food. Talking more about the bailer, Bill explained that there are Maori people who make 'traditional fakes', but he learned from an elder the proper way, and so had a certain responsibility to make his carvings appropriate to the

²⁵ Paekakariki is a town just outside of Wellington and quite far from Kaiwhaiki, so it interesting element of the movement of *taonga* to many different areas of the country.

circumstance. He then explained that Maori carvings can only be made by Maori people, and that Maori should not be teaching outsiders these practices, or be making carvings themselves without the proper instruction, because this continues the production of 'traditional fakes' (Fieldnotes, Bill Ranginui, 28 November 2009).

When Bill recognized the unfinished carvings on the bailer and the piece's inability to communicate a historic narrative, he began to discuss the importance of keeping such traditional knowledge skills 'at home' and not sharing them with outsiders. As another claimant in the wider Waitangi Tribunals for his *hapu* (Ngati Hineoneone), his more protective stance on knowledge in connection to *taonga* could be attributed to his longstanding connection to land claims. He also emphasized the importance of these knowledge bases stemming from *taonga* and access being necessary for those with the proper heritage from which to recognize such encoded knowledge. This concern over knowledge also connects to the varying understandings of *taonga* over time, as they can now be seen as markers of identity, especially in the political context. The Smith *taonga* images served as a platform from which such views could be expressed, but also ways individual opinions could be articulated about the control of knowledge.

When I met Noel Osborne, a carver and also a manager [or kaitiaki Maori, see McCarthy 2011: 104] of the *taonga Maori* collections at Te Papa, he became interested when I told him Ropiha's *tata* was connected with a war canoe named 'Taringamotu' in Paekakariki that could possibly connect with his own personal *taonga* interests. Noel confirmed that the bailer had been naïvely carved, and stated that there was no way that the bailer had been actively used. He suggested it might have been used, and then re-carved or possibly practiced on before it was given to Smith. He again reiterated that the narrative was not being fully expressed or told through the designs. He offered to show me examples from the Te Papa collection from war canoes (which were very much larger), and from smaller canoes that were similar to the shape and size of Ropiha's bailer. He discussed how the patterns on some of the other canoe bailers had been worn down (around the handles, top, and the underside of the scoop). Noel also explained that carving of a *tata* for a war canoe was the epitome of carving for the skilled carver, of which this *taonga*'s situation had not been (Fieldnotes, 14 January 2010).

The disconnection between Smith's recorded narrative about a Maori war canoe, and a Maori nuanced ability to read the *tata* image may have to do with what story Smith was told, or again his misunderstanding of the narrative. This also relates to the way a *korero* about an object might change over time. As some people in Whanganui picked up more on the artistic disconnection between the bailer and the *korero* that Smith had recorded for it, and so challenged this knowledge. Within Kaiwhaiki, people stated a need for an understanding that no other *hapu* could speak on their behalf, but the knowledge from other Maori sources (other *hapu* communities, or in connection to kin-related *taonga*) at least presented the format from which such historic knowledge could be debated. Appadurai (1981) discusses the past as something that cannot be constantly reformulated,

but can be party to debates that are dependant on one's 'authority, continuity and interdependence, which govern the terms of the debate concerning the past' (217). In this sense, *taonga Maori* become a useful stimulus of historic memory where multiple interpretations are available within the knowledge of people with different capabilities.

Concerns over the control of knowledge can be seen most clearly in situations of the indigenous community in juxtaposition with a state authority holding ownership over their cultural heritage. The movement for more inclusive and collaborative power for Maori in museums is gaining influence. When Kaiwhaiki community elder Morvin explained the Whanganui involvement with the collaborative exhibition '*Te Awa Tupua: The Whanganui iwi*' (29 November 2003- 1 May 2006) run at Te Papa Tongarewa, he explained that he and his family were also asked to move down to Wellington so he could provide the *kaumatua*ship (community recognized elder in leadership role) to act as the voice of the collection.

Morvin explained that the objects chosen for the collaborative exhibition came from the Te Papa collections because it eased the permission process, and the museum already recognized that *taonga* in their care belongs to the *iwi* it is associated with. Morvin continued that there were literally thousands of objects being taken care of very well from Whanganui in the collection. Whanganui *iwi* wanted to focus on the aspects of their *iwi* that showed the skills of the 'old people' such as things used on the Whanganui River integral to lifeways, like the *hinaki* (eel basket traps/weirs) to catch eels. The *iwi* also wanted to focus on historic photographs of the Whanganui River, *taiaha* (warriors staff), *patu* (club), *piupiu* (flax kilts) and *poi* (performance art using balls attached to flax string), which are specifically related to the River communities. *Hapu* on the river also volunteered to give some of their own *taonga* to the exhibition. Morvin stated that the best parts were 'the movies that they took of the River and the old people that were still living and doing their work like weaving baskets and *hinaki*'. He explained his position as *kaumatua* as necessary to guide the viewers of the exhibition and give it a Maori voice (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009).

The recognition of *iwi* control over *taonga Maori* in Te Papa is key to running such collaborative exhibits, as well as taking on community leaders to act as the voice of the *taonga* and in a sense speak for themselves. Such recognized relationships of Maori control and agency in museum contexts are key to interpretations of *taonga* today, and these beliefs are also integral to reactions to the Smith collection. Considering a diverse range of exposure to *matauranga*, *te reo* language, or *marae* based activities, peoples'

responses to Smith photographs ranged from those interested in knowing more about the 'old people', congruent with Morvin's reactions to seeing the old objects at Te Papa above, to leaders and speakers stating that knowledge coming from collections of *taonga Maori* should be controlled by the community.

Though images of *taonga Maori* in the Smith collection received varied responses of personal and political natures, Maori art in the past has generally been linked to a means of political opposition. A history of separating Maori from their *taonga* acted as the catalyst through which practices such as carving and the construction of traditional *marae* became political symbols of rebellion. Sissons (1998) describes the way that ornately carved meetinghouses were most frequently found in areas of Maori colonial opposition such as in the Waikato region of the King Movement during the 1860s and 1870s. In this way, meeting houses not only encompassed the tribal and *hapu* histories in their artwork, but also stood as markers of colonial resistance that solidified activist cultural ideologies used 'to hold meetings with Europeans and other Maori relating to warfare, land acquisition and related matters' (Thomas 1995: 41). The Nga Paerangi meetinghouse (the double gabled 'Whakahawe' and 'Te Kiritahi') remained uncarved²⁶, speaking to ways the *hapu's* history remains distinct in their relationship with incoming settlers. Nga Paerangi's personal adoption of venerating ancestral relations by remaining on their land base, but not carving the meetinghouse speaks to an integration of contemporary and traditional ideals that denote a lack of focus on the actual possession of *taonga*, but steady values placed in staying on the land. The moment in history that Kaiwhaiki *marae* sought an alternative approach to *wharepuni* (meetinghouse) construction by disallowing genealogical and historic carvings does not necessarily draw a divide between them and the other *hapu* of the Whanganui River, but in Kaiwhaiki 'Te Kiritahi' meetinghouse speaks to the polyphonic histories and individual identities needing acknowledgement.

The control of *taonga* in these situations of museum collaboration engages the Maori community and speaks to the history of evolution of *taonga* as a marker of identity (McCarthy 2007: 168). Ideas emerging with a consciousness of indigenous political activism and endeavors towards biculturalism (more in Chapter five) in New Zealand in the 1970s shifted from a focus on *taonga* through transactional approaches (Mauss 1990 [1950]; Firth 1959; A. Weiner 1985, 1992) to a focus on the elements of relatability that

²⁶ At Kaiwhaiki *marae* (14 August 2009) Haimona Rzoska described in a *korero* why the meetinghouse in Kaiwhaiki remained uncarved, which is described below on page 99-100.

enabled *taonga* to stand as representations of the values that have remained the same for Maori, allowing them to now stand as markers of a past disproportionate colonial relationship (Thomas 1995; Tapsell 1997, 2001; Henare 2005a). The ways *taonga* ended up in museum collections can be attributed to varying sets of both social and political acts. Responses to *taonga* often elicit nostalgia for the past and the ancestors who Maori attribute their identity to, which helpfully constructs ways that care for ancestors is connected to care for the knowledge within *taonga*. These interpretations of *taonga* support anthropological understandings of indigenous cultures' connections to history, but also demonstrate that encounters with *taonga* have constantly been redefined through a process of knowledge renewal and regeneration. The way *taonga* may be employed in varying socio-cultural and political situations attests to this flexibility.

B. The personal and familial reflections on *taonga*

The association of *taonga Maori* to the ancestors in effect collapses the boundaries between persons/things that helps internally objectify relationships between *taonga* (Tapsell 1997). In the exhibition catalogue *Te Maori: Maori Art from New Zealand Collections*, Maori Oceanic art expert of Ngati Awa, Tuwharetoa, and Tohourangi descent, Hirini Moko Mead wrote that *taonga* is a 'highly prized possession to which is attached korero (text or story)' (1984: 22), but also went on to describe *taonga Maori* to an innate ancestral identity that links *taonga* to descendants today. Mead states:

as individuals we [Maoris] have no identity except by reference to them [the ancestors]. We are beings only because they prepared the way for us, gave us a slot in a system of human relations, a place in the whakapapa (genealogy) lines, and membership in a whanau (extended family) and in an iwi (tribe). We owe them the culture and traditions that we value so highly today. There is no question that an important part of their legacy to us consists of all the examples of Maori art that exist in the museums of the world. In a sense, we owe them everything that we value highly today (Mead 1984: 28).

Mead's (1984, 1991) cultural explanations of *taonga* are first aimed at a Maori audience in order for them to better understand *taonga*, and in a secondary nature are intended for others caring for or interested in *taonga*.²⁷ Maori scholars have explained the *whakapapa* connected to *taonga* as their possessing 'a mauri or life force and wairua, spirit' (Hakiwai 1991: 116, see also Mead 1984). Paul Tapsell, whose slant on the issue has been well exemplified through his work with his own Maori tribe Te Arawa and *hapu* Ngati Whakaue,

²⁷ Mead's focus on his Maori audience speaks to the shift in the recognition of a need for Maori research, initiated by Maori, for Maori, to fit in accordance with postcolonial reassessments of knowledge in the community and its use.

has promoted Mead's recommendation for more proximity with *taonga*. Tapsell focuses on the connection felt between Maori descendants with their ancestors when coming face to face with *taonga*, as *taonga* actually are their ancestors (Tapsell 2000).

In Annette Weiner's (1992) theories on *taonga Maori*, she discussed the particular power of cloth as a possession that shares the same importance in historical documentation as it does in current authentications of ancestral identity. Weiner contends that wrapping oneself in a sacred cloak acts as a 'cosmological authentication' where a chief actually becomes her ancestors, and her authority and rank is accorded to her through 'her guardianship of the cloak' (A. Weiner 1992: 6). This concept is explained through the notion that there is a *hau*, or life force that exists in personal possessions, which is transmitted from the original and successive owners of *taonga Maori* that accumulates a social life (63-64). Such notions of the sociality embodied in *taonga* speak to the power available from the display and possession of such objects (McCarthy 2007: 12, 26-28).



Figure 3.4 Korowai PRM 1923.87.160

In the Smith collection, a *taonga* that elicited varied responses was the very large *korowai* (cloak) (PRM 1923.87.160) measuring 2.2 meters x 1.2 meters. The cloak is made of flax, and has black pendant strings, but no feathers. In the feathers' place are wool tufts of green, yellow, red and white. The colorful wool tufts placed throughout the large korowai

were a further 19th century departure from previous styles after the introduction of European materials of using feathers and black strings as adornment. The impeccable preservation, extremely large size of the *korowai*, and lack of ancestors named in connection to the piece, at first made the cloak appear as if it were made for no one or unused, but it was confirmed by several Maori scholars that this could not be true as all cloaks were made for a specific person.

Local *whakapapa* expert Haimona, who is a Land Courts researcher as well as someone who has conducted much of the research on genealogical knowledge for Nga Paerangi, explained that the *korowai* might have belonged to ancestral leader Tamati Takarangi. Tamati was a purportedly large man and was well known in Whanganui in the late 1800s. In the photographs included in the Smith collection and in the T.W. Downes' accounts (1915, 1921), Tamati's size is talked about as a defining characteristic. He was the nephew of Te Oti Takarangi who was a chief of Kaiwhaiki before him. Though there are no pictures of Tamati in the collection wearing this specific cloak, it is possible that since Tamati and Te Oti seemed to be some of Smith's close acquaintances who gave/sold him items of *taonga*, that this cloak might also have belonged to Tamati (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki *marae*, 4 November 2009).

Another young cultural leader Che (Ngati Rangi, Nga Paerangi) also confirmed this idea of the *korowai* belonging to Tamati, as he dismissed ideas other people had forwarded that the cloak was a blanket or actual mat of sorts, and further identified that the amount of work that went into making a *korowai* was very intensive and the very bends and curves that were woven into the stitch and camouflaged, were created with a specific person in mind. Che has a distinct interest in museums, *taonga*, and furthering the political cultural agenda for his community. As a leader of the *marae* at Maungarongo near the source of the Whanganui River in the North island mountains, Che rose to early prominence because of his interest in traditional aspects of Maori identity, the way he learned from an intensive *wananga* (traditional Maori learning repository), and his deep involvement in the Waitangi Tribunal cases occurring for the last decade in Whanganui, among other reasons (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009).

Though the actual ownership of the *korowai* remained tenuous, there is a photograph of Tamati Takarangi wearing a very similar *korowai* in the faded Smith collection photograph, PRM 1998.243.4.10. The idea that a cloak had to be attached to a particular person, a particular genealogy, or a particular sense of *mana*, meant that a possible association with



Figure 3.5 'Group at Kaiwhaiki Pa' PRM 1998.243.18.1

Tamati Takarangi created a more active interest in the *korowai* and its possible genealogical connection.

Many Whanganui residents did have large collections of family photographs and mementos around their homes, and so were more familiar with the historic photographs (from the *marae*, in local exhibitions, and from archive research related to Land Court cases) of ancestors in the Smith collection, which were much more easily assimilated into genealogical responses to images. When I showed the Smith collection photographs to people around Whanganui, the photograph 'Group at Kaiwhaiki Pa' (PRM 1998.243.18.1) generally caused the most excitement since it was an image from Smith's private photographs, instead of the widely collected postcards from the nineteenth century. The photograph pictures 14 people, including Charles Smith, and his neighbors from whom he received some of his *taonga Maori*, Te Oti Takarangi and his nephew Tamati Takarangi. Smith or someone else wrote the names of some of the people in the picture at the bottom of the photograph. From left to right, the inscription clearly identifies Tamati Takarangi, 'Te Mete' (which I later found out was Smith's Maori name), and 'Teoti Takarangi' in the center of the photograph. Also along the bottom row and to the left of Te Oti Takarangi, another few names are written but indecipherable. When showing this photograph to people in Whanganui there were very different reactions.

I went to the Southern Whanganui Land Cluster project office one day and showed the *taonga* photo album to a group of the men working on the Maori Land Court cases in the area. Many of the men in the office looked at the photograph section of the album with the most interest. That day when Haimona the local *whakapapa* specialist saw the photographs, he quietly studied the 'Group at Kaiwhaiki Pa' picture for a while and then said that he thought the man in the photograph with the feather in his hair on the right hand side would be his great great grandfather, Teretiu Whakataha (Fieldnotes, 3 August 2009). A few days later while I was presenting the photographs on the *marae* in front of the gathered community, I again showed the photograph, and all of the identified names I knew, including citing Haimona's reference. Upon hearing this, many of the people in the *marae* started cheering and telling Haimona to get up and *korero*. Haimona obliged, and gave a *korero* about the group photograph. He explained that Tamati Takarangi was in the picture, and that the little girl whose hand he was holding was his only daughter, Miriata Te Kahukore, and the little boy lying down in front of them was Tamati's only son, Te Rangai Tamati (who is also photographed in PRM 1998.243.4.9 of the Smith collection). Haimona also clarified that Smith, the European man on the left, had his Maori name at the bottom of the photograph as 'Te Mete', which meant Smith in *te reo Maori*.

Also during the *tupuna* [ancestor] identification, Haimona came back to Teretiu Whakataha. Haimona identified him as his great great grandfather, and *whakapapa*'d back to him through the generations. He said he thought he might be able to identify the women in the photograph, but did not have enough clues about who they were. This made the room full of people collectively sigh, but everyone applauded and was excited to hear the ancestral names and see photographs of their *tupuna*'s faces (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki *marae*, 14 August 2009).

This ancestral identification was then followed by more *korero* about these leaders of Kaiwhaiki, and the historical events that took place while they were at the *marae*. Haimona explained why the double gabled meetinghouse 'Te Kiritahi' was not carved like most *wharepuni* on the river. The story related to the time period when people from Kaiwhaiki were following the prophet movements in Taranaki, and while they were gone, their land was sold off because if people were not present for their Maori Land Court date (which could be whenever), they would come back home to find their land had been sold. As pacifists and followers of these prophet movements, Nga Paerangi tried to undermine the land surveyors work by taking out pegs from the ground, but this later escalated into a violent encounter where many of the Nga Paerangi community were slaughtered or sent off to labor camps. When they did return, they decided to leave the house uncarved in memory of the events that had passed and the *tupuna* lost. Te Oti Takarangi wanted to

carve the house, and when he was denied this request, he instead agreed to wear his carvings on his face, and received his facial *moko* (tattoo) late in life. Haimona was the only person to have any direct stories to relate about the experiences that the 'Group at Kaiwhaiki Pa' image evoked, but people were interested in hearing his knowledge and were inquisitive about the other historic photographs even if they could not recognize all of the people (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki *marae*, 14 August 2009).

When Kaiwhaiki elder Morvin responded to the photograph, he was interested in the dress of the people in the photo, as some of the men wore *korowai* over their European clothing and Teretiu Whakataha held a *taiaha* (warrior's staff), while Te Oti Takarangi held a *pounamu mere* (a short flat weapon of greenstone). The women sitting at the bottom row of the photograph were all in European dress, and wearing European blankets, with the exception of one older woman wearing her rough cloak called a *tatara* or *taratara* (see similar photograph in Hamilton 1901: 331). Morvin commented that he enjoyed looking at it the old people and seeing them with their 'normal and futuristic' looking clothes (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009).

This photograph provoked multiple responses, especially due to the fact that not all the ancestors were named nor could be identified. This prompted the local genealogy expert Haimona to share his knowledge of history and his great great grandfather Teretiu Whakataha. The visibility of some genealogies satisfied people at the *marae*, but the lack of the full information linked to the photograph brought up ways that such knowledge should ideally still be connected to *taonga* today. The photograph 'Group at Kaiwhaiki' helped validate social biographies and operate as a 'memory text' (Edwards 1999: 232), while also engaging the community in issues of partial knowledge due to European interactions. The repatriation of images minimally places the nuances of community history and its transmission somewhat back into indigenous hands.

Issues of ownership of these images reverberated throughout this project. The fact that a foreign museum has legal ownership over *taonga* can become a contested element of indigenous/ museum relationships. After presenting the Smith collection images to people at Kaiwhaiki *marae*, many stated that they needed to 'bring these ancestors back home' (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki *marae*, 14 August 2009). Historic considerations for the environment in which these *taonga* left Kaiwhaiki became part of the personality and tenor of photographs (Smith may have collected objects from gifts and willing sellers, but also during the cultural upheaval during colonialism), which speaks to the need to acknowledge ways *taonga* are currently a product of ongoing cross-cultural contexts. Lyons (2002)

equates the control that indigenous communities exercise over such objects to the control exerted over the remains of their ancestral forefathers, and the compensation sought to recuperate from historic losses to cultural identity and property (117). *Taonga* come to represent their accumulated sociality through their exchanges, movements between related kin, and other narratives that have carried them to the present (Tapsell 2000). Their ability to communicate these *korero* in divergent contexts (the *marae*, museum, in land court evidence) relate to the importance of the knowledge that comes from *taonga* and reasons Maori seek to be consulted over their ancestors and heritage.

Repatriating *taonga*, repatriating ancestors

The control of ancestral identities attached to *taonga* has become important because such information acts as the vehicles by which some Maori groups communicate their historic connection to the land, and assert their political agency. The possession of *taonga* also becomes an issue, because possession of historic objects is seen to confer rights related to ancestral title of the land as a means of political positioning. Settler nations acknowledge that ownership of significant property is an essential part of an individual's or group's existence, which places an importance on who controls and owns history (Handler 1991). British and United States governments historically supported the loss of these materials as another overt measure to control and contain the populations whose religion and culture were divergent from the settlers of the nation (Glass 2004), so regaining control over the knowledge attached to Maori history underpins wider sovereignty goals for claims to indigenous identity. Though there is a less steady diffusion of familiarity with *taonga* Maori in Kaiwhaiki (and some associated *hapu* members around Whanganui), goals to reconnect with culture and heritage are still prevalent. As a point of resistance people stated a need for more Maori directed research initiatives that protected knowledge from outside infringement through *kaupapa* Maori endeavors. Responses to the Smith collection also received reactions that knowledge from *taonga* could be significant to the community, and needed to 'stay at home' for its protection, or at least they maintained that community authority over that knowledge demands prior consultation. This stance on Maori oriented and directed research projects is occurring alongside repatriations of *koiwi tangata* (human remains) and burgeoning protocols over the repatriation of other *taonga* in mutually informing instances.

Circumstances surrounding the availability of research about *taonga Maori* are deeply connected to a history of disempowerment that affects its perception by being connected to museum institutions. Museum projects about indigenous identity and material culture must make considerations for the *mana* of a collection's source community, getting permission, as well as the political circumstances of a community before proceeding (Mead 2003: 318). This establishes historic *taonga* as part of the contemporary concerns over issues of authenticity, land contestations, and ways of getting back in touch with Maori traditional identity. Taking control over important *taonga* is considered integral to regaining access to and exposing the untold and contested histories 'stored within genealogies, within the landscapes, within weavings and carvings, even within the personal names that many people carried' (Smith 1999: 33). Those attuned with their Maori knowledge use resources like *taonga Maori* to find an indigenous means to knowledge through oral and visual sources to tell the multiple narratives of a community. An appropriate researcher would also be one who can identify themselves as Maori in order to provide the suitable motivations and interpretations of knowledge that works towards the goals of *kaupapa Maori* research (Smith 1999: 186). The criteria of being Maori to be involved in Maori research brings another element to the politics of identity in Maori communities into the forefront of any research project, and certainly also applies to the ability of a non-Maori researcher such as myself to conduct research in the community.

When showing Bill Ranginui images of the Smith collection canoe bailer owned by Ropiha (PRM 1923.87.14) he asserted the need to keep the knowledge of carving within the frame of Maoridom, but he also connected the very authenticity of aspects of traditional products needing to be connected with an element of Maori descent. In his comments on foreigners making carvings being 'traditional fakes' even when taught in the traditional manner, he references a connection between a need to learn 'in a Maori way', but also the need for actual heritage to color one's perceptions and responses to Maori knowledge (Bill Ranginui, interview, 28 November 2009). In a similar encounter with renowned cultural leader and museum researcher Che Wilson, when asking him about his experiences around the world dealing with *taonga Maori* in many institutions, he stated that in the future 'curators are going to have to let go of their grip on the objects, and let them come home'. When I asked if his stance was the same for all *taonga*, he elaborated, that there are two groups of people at the museum: Those who are passionate with no knowledge of tradition, who tend to not want the things to come back, and those staunch in *tikanga* who want them home. Those strong in *tikanga* are not going to say every time that the objects

should come home and be buried, but that people need to have access to these *taonga*' (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009).

Che's concerns over the access to collections at museums mainly stemmed from his explanation of *tikanga Maori*, the protocols surrounding the correct handling of knowledge, and the need to care for the spiritual side of *taonga*. He suggested curators take a course to get better oriented with the pronunciation, spelling, and cultural ideas about Maori collection. He noted that the language is what helps connect with the spiritual side of *taonga*, and once curators understood things, they would let a *whariki* (woven mat) leave the collection and go to actually be used (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009). Within more academic Maori research *kaupapa* and tribally based theories on *taonga Maori*, *taonga* is understood as 'any item, object or thing that represents the ancestral identity of a Maori kin group (*whanau*, *hapu* or *iwi*) in relation to particular lands and resources' (Tapsell 2006: 17). These perspectives contribute to the relatability of *taonga* to activities of cultural regeneration as well as establishing historic connections to the land.

For the Smith collection and Nga Paerangi related *taonga*, it was repeated several times that the Smith objects needed to come back to Whanganui by Ken Clarke, and other Nga Paerangi *hapu* members when presenting the images at Kaiwhaiki. I was invited to present the Smith images to elders at a Kaumatua Kaunihera (a group of elders who meet in town to learn *waiata*, discuss *marae* protocols and other community business) meeting at Te Puni Kokiri (The Ministry of Maori Development) by Mona, one of the eldest *kuia* in the group. She suggested that most of the people there would be very interested and have information about such *taonga Maori*, even though she herself did not know much about the collection. Once I had finished my presentation to the group different topics of conversation were sparked privately as people spoke amongst themselves, but also a few people addressed me about their experiences with *taonga Maori* from around the region—mainly involving repatriations of both object *taonga* and human remains. A local Maori priest named Graham talked about human remains that had been discovered nearby, and how he had been called to partially oversee the reburial of those ancestors as it was important to 'put the ancestors to sleep'. Others told me about special *taonga* pieces they had in their family homes. In particular, one woman spoke up as the conversations started to turn more towards information about *taonga Maori*, and put a halt to the conversation. She very firmly told me that no one (despite the conversations that were taking place) was going to tell me anything about the collection, because it was not fair. She stated that the museum (Pitt Rivers Museum) had 'all of our ancestors there, and they have all the

knowledge. Unless you [myself] are planning on bringing these *taonga* back, we can't help you' (Fieldnotes, Kaumatua Kaunihera, 2 November 2009).

Though this interaction was not characteristic of all responses to the Smith collection, it does distinguish the shift in recent politics of identity that integrally links *taonga Maori* to issues of the power connected to cultural heritage and the push to protect such knowledge. Many people were interested to see the collection, but some interests in *taonga* were very focused on the need for repatriation of all museum *taonga* to its source community to be cared for by descendants. The importance of the availability of these historic collections has already been noted, but in certain cases ancestral knowledge also serves as a powerful means of politically navigating negotiations between a kin group and state institution (museum, Land Courts) that can eventuate in repatriation claims for *taonga* in contemporary contexts.



Figure 3.6 'Teremoe' canoe on display at Te Papa Tongarewa, previous owner Matene Rangitauira

A key *taonga* object that was discussed in terms of repatriation attempts by several people in the community was the *waka* (canoe) 'Teremoe' held by the national museum Te Papa Tongarewa. Several times in connection to responses to the Smith *taonga* 'Tunuhaere' (PRM 1923.87.12), several people mentioned the importance of returning the 'Teremoe' canoe to Whanganui. 'Teremoe' is on display at Te Papa now and belonged to Matene Rangitauira, who was also the previous owner of the canoe prow 'Tunuhaere' (PRM 1923.87.12). When images of the 'Tunuhaere' canoe prow were shown, I was often told about 'Teremoe' and the need for it to 'come home'. Local leader Che is related to Matene Rangitauira and explained Matene's history as having originated from *marae*

Kowhai. Che explained that Rangitauira was a *tohunga* (high level chief) and under the tutelage of Te Ua Haumene (starter of the Pai Marire faith). Rangitauira brought the Pai Marire faith back to his people and became a leader of the anti-settler movement on the river. He was the person who commissioned the war canoe 'Teremoe', which was overtaken by Hipango (from Kanihinihi) after the Battle of Moutoa Island when Rangitauira was killed by another Maori (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009). This involved history with the canoe was part of the reason it needed to be returned.

The canoe 'Teremoe' was also mentioned in the Nga Paerangi land claims in Ken's evidence brief (WAI 903, 'Brief of Evidence of Ken Joseph Somme Clarke' #B1, 27 July 2007). Ken described the use of the canoe in the brief as a means of being able to establish the close relationship between Kai Iwi and Nga Paerangi as they shared seabed resources historically, and so also shared the historic canoes 'Tupuna' and 'Teremoe' (Ken Clarke, interview, 4 November 2009, also see Chapter two). Other men researching their genealogies and involved in community cultural heritage endeavors named Don Robinson and his friend Buddy, explained that for the last decade or so they had been involved in getting in touch with their cultural heritage, and especially Don, who had been working with museum collections to discover more about his ancestors. Don is also related to Matene Rangitauira through the Te Kai-o-roto family, and explained that the canoe 'Teremoe' should come back to Whanganui and not any museum, because it belonged to the people and was inappropriately taken. Don and Buddy then transitioned to the 'Te Mata o Hoturoa' canoe that sits in the WRM and belonged to the Hipango family. He said that its appropriation was also inappropriate and it should also be returned (Fieldnotes, WRM, 4 September 2009).

In a similar complex relationship to a significant canoe, 'Te Wehi o te Rangi' has been placed in the care of, but not ownership, of the Whanganui Regional Museum by its *hapu* Ngati Pamoana, but this decision was highly debated. The feelings of loss and aversion to entrusting the canoe to the WRM, is expressed in the poem about 'Te Wehi o te Rangi' quoted in the WRM catalogue of *taonga Maori* as:

*Rather let her go to dust in our
keeping than hand her over to the
Pakeha!
Let her die with us! She is part of us!* (Horwood and Wilson 2008: 98).

The conflicts over the possession of important canoes, and especially Matene Rangitauira's canoe 'Teremoe', speaks to the ability of *taonga* to demarcate historic connections between *hapu* and ancestors, as well as ways possession of such objects

serve as the physical markers of identity in both cultural and political forums. *Taonga Maori* that is connected to the Whanganui River is also of key importance. Ned Tapa, his son Ren, and Quentin Wallace who run a canoeing initiative to get youth in touch with their heritage, explained that, Whanganui people are ‘a people of the waka’, and that the *waka* was a metaphor for family life as everyone had to paddle together, as a community, otherwise the *waka* would not go forward (Fieldnotes, 9 September 2009).

Knowledge of *taonga Maori* is usefully employed in testimony as supportive evidence and also in community *korero*. Though the actions taken so far to return *taonga Maori* has amounted to little, cultural leader Gerrard explained that just mentioning such *taonga Maori* in the settlement processes of the Waitangi Tribunals means that at a later time the issues can more easily be reentered in the future (Fieldnotes, 1 October 2009). The use of *taonga* as a gathering point of knowledge is most pertinent where a tribal grouping is very familiar with the *korero* and relatedness of an object to their own history such as with the famous ‘Teremoe’ on display.

Within my own research on unknown *taonga*, different responses related to the ‘changing relations of power’ that source communities seek in becoming recognized ‘authorities on their own cultures and material heritage’ (Peers and Brown 2003: 1), especially in the contexts of being presented with *taonga* images from well-known ancestors. Peers and Brown (2003) develop the idea of cultural authority grounded in self-defined imaginings of the self, and address concerns over how to pursue more stable relationships between indigenous groups and museums. Asserting knowledge and access to collections as a right has changed how museums interact with communities. New Zealand has especially reinforced the status of *taonga Maori* as a point of negotiation of power for Maori groups, who must now at least be consulted about the care of their cultural heritage.

There are divergent Maori views on the handling of *taonga* in museums and the community (see McCarthy 2011: 219). Ken explained that the WRM has a Maori board called the Tikanga Maori House alongside the Civic House as part of its bicultural structure, and stated that it took a long time for this element of Maori involvement and decision-making processes to be established (WRM, ‘Whanganui Regional Museum Trust governance model and background’, n.d.). Part of the Maori board’s role is to discuss permission over access to specific *taonga Maori*. When researchers want to see objects or photographs of ancestors connected to present day descendants, there is a process that needs to be followed to grant the permission of the descendants. He explained the board

as having relatively minimal involvement, but at least recognized consultation was better than having the door slammed in your face like before (Ken Clarke, phone conversation, 11 March 2009).

Ken also later explained that the two boards of the WRM had jointly decided to lend an important *hei tiki* to a *hapu* in Gisborne that had been bought from a private source. The Gisborne group wanted the piece for their Waitangi Tribunals case, because the *hei tiki* linked back to their ancient *korero*. Now years later, the WRM has been contacted for the repatriation of that piece. Ken said that the WRM was working on the repatriation of the *hei tiki*, but were considering future processes as well since they ‘can’t just give away all the objects without protocol or we wouldn’t have anything [in the museum]’ (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki, 6 August 2009). Ken also noted that there are lots of family feuds, intertwined narratives of ownership of *taonga*, and conflicts over where things should go to, so all of these issues needed to be taken into account.

Alongside the navigation of politics surrounding the return of *taonga* or regaining access to important ancestrally connected knowledge, issues of repatriation also extend to establishing protocols to handle the repatriation of human remains. The repatriation of *toi moko* (preserved heads) and *koiwi tangata* have been repatriated from overseas museums to New Zealand for many years initiated by the work of the Dominion Museum’s Maori board member Maui Pomare in the 1970s and onwards. Pomare created relationships with overseas institutions that initiated conversations about the return of human remains, which has influenced the process of repatriations to Te Papa Tongarewa. The repatriation of artifacts or *taonga Maori* from overseas also occurs, but is handled by a separate team at Te Papa (The Karanga Aotearoa Repatriation Programme). Both artifacts and human remains are held in separate sacred repositories at Te Papa or put in the care of their source community if it can be identified (McCarthy 2011: 217). After human remains have had their provenance thoroughly researched and a related *iwi* can be identified, Te Papa ‘ask the *iwi* or people representing that particular *iwi* to come and be part of the *powhiri* process’ (Te Herekiele at Te Papa, interview, 9 October 2009).

Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi *iwi* have also experienced the reburial process of remains found in unexpected places, such as Graham Putu who explained his involvement in the reburial of human remains in the above narrative of my encounter at with the Kaumatua Kaunihera group. Several people also told me the story of the repatriation of human remains initiated by Te Papa to the *iwi*. Local leader John Maihi described

One day Te Papa rang the group to say they had some remains they wanted to return and they had to find out where to bury them. Jim Takarangi [now deceased, kaumatua of Putiki *marae*] offered to bury them at Putiki on behalf of all of Whanganui *iwi*, as the remains had been loosely identified as belonging to Whanganui, but with no specific *hapu*. The whole thing felt very rushed and no one was fully prepared. All the *iwi* were invited to come welcome the ancestors back and *tangi* [funerary rites] for them (John Maihi, interview, 12 January 2010).

Ken also described the same repatriation of remains. He said a couple of the *hapu* from Whanganui went for a consultation at Te Papa, and it was decided to pick a place to have them buried. Ken described how sad the ceremonies were for the ancestors as if people had actually known the identity of the ancestors. He also mentioned that things were in preparation up until the last minute to accommodate the process (Ken Clarke, interview, 19 December 09).

These new accommodations of knowledge are of course expected, as repatriation ceremonies and the return of human remains are not historically precedented for some communities without the experience. Such issues are similar to the opinions stated by many about concern for the care of artifacts if they came back to the communities, and needing help to facilitate repatriations to teach people about the preservation of *taonga*. Cultural leader John is concerned that *taonga* in storage in the WRM ‘needs to be exposed’, but that if the *taonga* went back to their *marae*, ‘ideally the WRM would stay involved in the museum consultation side of things, as they are the museum experts’ (John Maihi, interview, 12 January 2010).

The *koiwi tangata* have generally been the focus for repatriation attempts in New Zealand over the last couple of decades, based on the issues of historic remembrance and identity being deeply tied to the fate and treatment of ancestors. Repatriations and the emotional reconnection that is available through the repatriation process is a means of situating a new pan-indigenous identity (Hubert and Fforde 2002, Fforde 2004,) where a shared remembrance of the past and a common interest in respecting the dead help situate a material realization of a modern Maori identity. As a healing process, repatriation also focuses on the acceptance of a modern indigenous identity as having a connection to the past (material and spiritual), while being currently informed by elements of both ‘traditional’ and postcolonial aspects of existence within a settler nation.

Alongside national repatriations of ancestors, which remain important because of the importance of *whakapapa* connections to present day descendants, the efforts to control knowledge related to *taonga* aims to redefine the histories and counter-narratives told in relation to Maori identity (cf. Bell 2003). The rights to ownership of *taonga* are argued through the importance of history and the ancestral identities attached to such cultural

property. These ideas have accumulated over time, much like the *korero* attached to *taonga*, and have been added to a legal framework making access and control over material culture a means of regaining social and legal agency.

James Leach (2003) theorizes that the use of kinship models in repatriation requests is useful to understanding the personhood embodied in the contested objects. Framing rights to collections through the possession of materials that sustain identity speaks to past indigenous ownership that references the inalienability of those possessions (see A. Weiner 1985, 1992). The issues surrounding *taonga* have surpassed the theoretical confines of issues between persons and things to encompass dual registers of knowledge. At one level the knowledge tied to *taonga* helps construct the narratives that encompass Maori history, social lives, and *matauranga*, while on another, these narratives are asserted within a European frame of knowledge concerning conceptions of property that must be returned to the group for their well being (Mead 1984: 28, Tapsell 1997: 365). Beyond the use of *taonga* as markers of place and identity, seeking the return of ancestrally important objects to Whanganui is another way that community leaders and elders communicate their social connections to ancestors through seeking the return of *taonga* to the land, much the same way as they are currently seeking these goals for themselves.

Material culture issues are subsets of the larger picture of control sought over language, education, taxation and economic situations, and the return of lands that are related to the framework of Maori identity and are a current focus for many *marae*-based Maori communities. In the next chapter, I will deal with ways that within a cross-cultural environment, asserting a strong Maori and indigenous identity supported by language, knowledge of history, and familiarity with *taonga* helps Maori to engage in political heritage affairs through a Maori way of knowing.

CHAPTER FOUR- The political significance of *taonga Maori* in relation to education, identity, and politics

In Whanganui there was an interest in the process of cultural revitalization that was linked to reclaiming Maori identity and reappropriating the past, while also pursuing political recourse for losses of cultural heritage. During my fieldwork, people in Whanganui were in the process of reclaiming lands through the Waitangi Tribunal hearings, but were also working on the local level to promote a Maori-focused education. This education consisted of learning *te reo Maori* fluently, being taught in it, learning to orate it, as well as being able to express Maori knowledge within a Maori way – which is to say that this way of knowing applied to cultural protocols on the *marae* as well as more formal interactions between Maori. When applying such knowledge to political contexts, however, this particular framework of knowledge was intended to build the *mana* of the community and communicate the importance of such culturally defined interactions in contrast to nonindigenous conventions. This requirement of knowledge is the same with which Maori can orate their connections to *taonga Maori*, as discussed in Chapter two, but also relevant to political involvements as the responsibilities of knowledge promote a need to care for the well-being of the community. This chapter seeks to establish ways that in Whanganui both young and mature community members are pursuing cultural knowledge through its ‘traditional’ guidelines of oral literacy, through which they can act as speakers empowered by the *mana* of knowledge and address community concerns over the losses of *taonga* in its many forms.

When people in Whanganui viewed the Smith images, they gave me expositions of divergent interpretations for *taonga*, but also the means by which *taonga* need to stay within community control (as described in Chapter three). People explained their rights over and connection with the past, while describing *taonga Maori* losses as an exemplification of historic possessions that have been infringed upon. The level of Maori knowledge (*matauranga*) needed to understand the implications of *taonga* was contextually dependent, but also in a sense, a necessary socialization of experience to convey an appropriate accounting of *taonga Maori* as a bridge to the past, the land, and ancestor knowledge.

Learning in this ‘Maori way’ encompasses receiving *te reo* focused and oral transmissions of knowledge through university-like elite education of the *wananga* as a school of traditional Maori learning. Contemporary learning in a Maori way now also includes one’s more personal endeavors to seek out familial knowledge, such as that

which comes from research incited by Waitangi Tribunals claims. Merlan (2009) connects such learning to a 'cultivation of personal and institutional connections', where the indigenous knowledge learned is 'a contingent, interactive, and historical product' (319-320). Familiarity with this type of knowledge in Maori contexts, or *matauranga*, is relevant to the wider politics of identity through which Maori and other indigenous peoples position their personal frames of knowledge as the correct way to handle processes for debating such aspects of identity.

After more indigenous focused experiences of knowledge are generated, *taonga Maori* become supportive aids of culturally based endeavors. By drawing on connections to a web of related ancestors and their past occupation on the land, one can linguistically anchor such knowledge to the land and bring historic knowledge into a present relevance. The ability to collapse these boundaries between history, politics, and speaking on behalf of the community was part of the identity revitalization project that was fueled through engagements in cultural heritage within a specific Maori sense of knowledge. I will be looking at the ways communities are strengthening their kinship ties and knowledge, where these community engagements can then be translated onto the wider politics of the landscape. *Taonga* become useful sites of knowledge employed in these endeavors through Land Court evidence to establish the historic precedence of land occupation and importance of kin relationships continued from the past as a key component of the politics of identity.

Knowledge acted as a type of social capital (Bourdieu 1977, 1984) that accredited a power and validity for people to act as cultural brokers for the community. People who had knowledge of *taonga*, or at least some notion of the histories connected to Smith images, were also those heavily involved in the heritage endeavors of the community in forwarding land claims, getting involved in *marae* based activities, and also on a continuous journey to pursue cultural knowledge. Those in Whanganui reconnecting with their histories found *taonga Maori* derived narratives interesting and helpful to their pursuits, while those acting as speakers on behalf of the community could employ *taonga Maori* to disseminate knowledge related to a rights-based stance towards political disputes. The means by which *taonga* bring the past into the present, requires one to be able extract the historic narratives encoded in the language surrounding the objects (Mead 1984, Firth 1998: 34), and also be able to relate such elements of history to a Maori-directed self-representation underpinning current sovereignty struggles.

At times when elements of understanding *taonga* and Maori history were explained, individuals would reflect that I could not truly understand as an outsider, which inhibited what kind of knowledge I received in connection to the Smith collection. Conversely, it was readily explained that reasons behind the political struggles of Whanganui were related to objects such as the appropriated *taonga* in the Smith collection, allowing *taonga* to also work as historic reference points for issues of the politics of identity. As an outsider asking for historic knowledge, I was expected as a listener to treat the information received in its proper restrictions of *tikanga*.

The encoded nature of Maori knowledge through *tikanga Maori* is restricted in the sense that there is a small distribution of esoteric historic knowledge that creates cultural outsiders even within a community, but also operates on a level that demands acceptance of Maori perspectives and dispositions in a politico-legal realm. In the book *Tikanga Maori: living by Maori values* (2003), Hirini Moko Mead looks at the aspects of *tikanga Maori* and its reemergence throughout Maoridom. He contends that Maori ideals and values are interlinked with *maatauranga*, or Maori knowledge. Anne Salmond (1985) specifies that *maatauranga* is 'reliable knowledge', but that *moohiotanga* is the knowledge of familiarity, and even more specifically, *waananga* is the knowledge of ancestral power, which itself is regarded as a *taonga* because it is a treasure (240-242).

Tikanga works as a means of orienting a Maori person to their environment and surroundings, and in Mead's overview of *tikanga* and its relationship to *maatauranga Maori* as a philosophy, he claims that '*maatauranga Maori* might be carried in the minds, *tikanga Maori* puts that knowledge into practice and adds the aspects of correctness and ritual support. People then see *tikanga* in action, and they do it, feel it, understand it, accept it and feel empowered through experience' (2003: 7). Despite my cultural background, learning in a manner of *tikanga* mainly involved upholding the restrictions people mentioned in connection to knowledge, listening in an open manner, and treating knowledge as a gift (being thankful, respectful, and acknowledging my good fortune to receive knowledge) (Fieldnotes, at WRM with museum educator Awhina Twomey, 24 July 2009; with Ned Tapa at Te Puti, 7 September 2009).

Taonga play a part in the ability of a tribally centered, or *marae*-based, community to negotiate histories that can decide real life outcomes relating to economic and social stability. Part of political negotiations requires speaking in *te reo* and communicating narratives from *hapu*-specific contexts. This task operates at the national level of

interactions with the state, especially in courts of law, but also focuses on the local level of community cultural revitalization through language and education initiatives.

The idea behind Maori oriented education is the deeper establishment of leaders, and strengthening community participation through education schemes, which Mead (2003) describes as the 'kohanga reo (language nest) movement for pre-school education in the Maori language, the development of kura kaupapa Maori (Maori-medium primary and secondary schools) and wananga (tertiary institutions) [that] have also played a very important role in increasing the number of people playing active roles in the Maori world' (Mead 2003: 4). The Ministry of Education in New Zealand has long focused on language regeneration with the understanding that language is the greatest carrier of identity (Penetito 2010: 45). *Kura kaupapa* schools seek to deepen knowledge of one's *tuakiri tangata* (Maori identity) through *te reo Maori* instruction, oral ways of knowing, and knowledge of the land that help students ultimately know themselves (Penetito 2010: 249-252). Gaining this literacy through Maori education can also be equated to gaining cultural knowledge because 'language and culture are inseparable' (Melbourne 1991: 130).

Historically Maori literacy came in the form of myths, ancient genealogies, the symbolic encoding of histories within carvings and weavings, genealogies communicated through *moko* (tattoo), and oral expressions given in ceremonies as well as privately (Melbourne 1991; Hohepa and McNaughton 2007 [2002]: 219). Historic means of disseminating knowledge demanded an oral literacy borne out of social and cultural experiences, and these practices now teach Maori students (young and old) to engage with their history by speaking the language and learning one's *whakapapa*. From these knowledge bases, students become more inclined to be politically involved in the reclaiming of land, resources, and cultural heritage, by having the ability to orate the importance of living within knowledge of the past. This ideology is relevant to the Maori context of knowledge production and the upholding of history, because history is seen as the ultimate cultural possession. In the battle to defend indigenous identities in a contemporary context, European understandings of knowledge must be translated to incorporate the historic Maori context – especially in relation to *taonga Maori* (Mead 1986: 2).

Handler (1991) gives the example of Quebecois national identity as being described by sentiments that their culture and history are theirs alone, which is why their divergent Canadian identity is their most 'prized possession' (66). History or its occasional equation to culture can be possessed through material heritage 'such as buildings, works of art, ceremonial objects, and antiques', where cherishing significant objects authenticate a

nation's or ethnic group's identity (Handler 1991: 66-67). This perspective is undeniably a western view of issues surrounding cultural identity politics and issues of history. From a Maori perspective, contestations of history and struggles for self-representation have been focused on issues of reclaiming the lands and cultural property in a public forum. The enactment of this process has presented interesting issues in inter-community politics of the authority in historic narratives, and ways distinct identities are defended within individual *hapu* and *whanau* groups. Contesting history in land courts means such knowledge must be in legal evidentiary form, or 'legalized' (see Belgrave 2005), but the oral nature of Maori history was not intended for subversion into a singular form. By orating history, speaking in *te reo*, and learning orally, leaders situate historic knowledge as adaptable to various situations. Upholding this flexible element of history is part of the cultural revitalization that focuses on *matauranga Maori* as a means of regaining social agency (Tau 2001).

Penetito (2010) talks of the public and private personae of Maori identity as the complex reality of identity today, because identity in a capitalist Western society demands an ability to navigate the worlds of European cultural conceptions as well as Maori ones (Karetu 1975: 44-45). The notion that gaining literacy in a European language helps Maori gain advantages in a contemporary context is now tempered by the idea that it is equally as important to mirror this disposition in a Maori context. Claims to an indigenous identity can only be forcefully communicated through *te reo Maori*, deep knowledge of historical exegesis, and the ability to historically relate to ancestors and the land. Individual knowledge of oneself, *ko au*, works in relation to understandings against *ko matou*, as the collective identity of a Maori group (Penetito 2010: 40). By learning diverse interpretations of Maori history, it can be reordered through a Maori approach to solving different issues facing the community. On the one hand, knowledge of history brings one's cultural consciousness to the forefront and strengthens group identity through traditional actions like 'speaking *te reo Maori*, showing respect to elders, attending *hui* (meetings, gatherings), helping without being told, sharing things that are valued, spontaneously expressing emotion, standing up for their *whanau*, singing *waiata*, being humble but never bowing their head to another, and eating *kai Maori* (Maori food)' (Penetito 2010: 41). In an alternative context, historic knowledge serves as the evidentiary basis for land claims and is given in public western legal forums to defend indigenous rights to material and intellectual properties.

Implementing specific Maori-derived learning and research initiatives to discover ancestral histories has occurred in preparation for the Waitangi Tribunal hearings, where grievances are brought in front of a tribunal panel to redress the past breaches of Treaty of Waitangi (1840) agreements. Through joint initiatives of local governing and *hapu* coalitions, many in Whanganui have engaged in activities to regain historic knowledge through various endeavors. Different levels of knowledge specialization delineate ways knowledge dually connects while differentiating people within their group (cf. Keen 1994). In recent tribunals interactions, some conflicts arise between nearby *hapu* groups with overlapping land claims, as these 'legalized' histories position the historic accounts of one group against another (Belgrave 2005: 5, 18). The existence of divergent histories being claimed by Maori *hapu* implies that Maori knowledge must be orated in different contexts of orality, remaining open to the processes of debate and the discussion of alternate histories that are not available through the written historic record.

A return to focus on oral literacy is a means of embodying cultural values by acting and speaking as ancestors in the past would have, and integrating *taonga Maori* knowledge into this framework is integral to positioning oneself within history by breaching the divide between the ancestral spiritual realm and the present milieu. *Taonga* enables political claims to the land to illustrate historic connections to ancestors, history, and their material culture as a recognized way of communicating identity. Historically the Native Land Courts (later renamed to Maori Land Courts) and now the Waitangi Tribunals have been forums to address grievances with past and present Crown relations, but also specific kinship identities based in *whakapapa* and *mana* of the group (Belgrave 2005: 4). The tribunals consider evidence where *hapu* can represent their existing and historical *whanau* and *hapu* structures, give oral histories describing the landscape and its importance, cite *urupa* (burial) locations, reveal the names of ancestors (in appropriate circumstances), and connect special pieces of *taonga Maori* to the history of the land in the community (Young 2007). This western legal accommodation of Maori knowledge speaks to ways Maori have effectively asserted their contested histories publically as a need to privilege Maori ways of knowing.

Participation in cultural leadership activities and asserting claims requires Maori oral literacy so that people are able to strongly engage in identity issues within Maori linguistic and historic frames of knowledge. The activism inspired from Maori losses of lands has encouraged the education initiatives needed for community members to redefine their historic knowledge effectively to benefit groups seeking to redress the past. After such

socializations of knowledge are engendered, the more political aspect of cultural heritage can be extended to land claims, and greater control over other resources in regards to an indigenous connection to history and the land.

In Whanganui, though the pursuit of land claims takes the forefront of indigenous heritage and sovereignty endeavors, the pervasive nature of *taonga* in aiding legal claims to land, cultural heritage, and ways to explain one's history and identity remain an aspect of *matauranga Maori* that act as a bridge to the past. Through eliciting points such as the ancestral landscape and its *taonga Maori* connections, engagements with the state navigate the politics of inter-tribal or group relationships just as much as they address European and Maori relationships (Belgrave 2005: 24). Community members become adept at translating cultural concepts through their own personal and *whanau* perspectives to present histories that continually reassemble knowledge, and enables people to actively participate in culture through their exchanges, public discussions, and debates that contribute to *tikanga* in the community. The past becomes tangible through issues of the land, or lost *taonga Maori*, and through these platforms, legal rights can be claimed through the corporeal losses of culture, which are communicated through a dual register of knowledge.

Confronting Maori history in the present

A. An encounter with history in the field

Understanding the different ways that *taonga* were used in Whanganui involved understanding the way people perceived knowledge and the need to gain it within specific Maori ways of knowing. When asking people to respond to images of *taonga Maori* it became apparent that responses of Maori knowledge to *taonga* could not always be readily given, and that aside from having the appropriate genealogical connections, both Maori and outside researchers needed to be dedicated enough to pursue the difficult journey connected to gaining these narratives. The historic knowledge in connection to the Smith *taonga*, or aspects of *taonga* in general, denoted a certain level of learning that plays into the politics of knowledge and ways it distinguishes community members.

When I first met Don Robinson, a man in his 60s working with land issues and his own genealogical research in the Whanganui Regional Museum, I found out that he was related to Matene Rangitauira- one of the past owners of the 'Tunuhaere' canoe prow

(PRM 1923.87.12). He explained his role as the director of the Te Ati Hau Incorporation,²⁸ and his other political endeavors for his *hapu* in Pipiriki such as his involvement in the Waitangi Tribunals. He invited me to talk to him further about the Smith collection. He set a time to speak with him while on a car ride to the upper reaches of the Whanganui River, where he and his friend Buddy, an elder also involved in family history research endeavors, were going to participate in the ceremony to commemorate the opening of the Parapara Road Bridge. Don participates in *te reo Maori* language classes, and both of the men use early Native Land Court records, as well as the local archives to find information in connection to their family histories. These late-life learning endeavors were a common trait for several of the older generation that I met because of a lack of focus on the particularly Maori aspects of identity such as language instruction, *marae* protocols, and oral histories during their upbringing.



Figure 4.1 ‘Tunuhaere’ prow closeup, PRM 1923.87.12

While in the car, I showed both men the images of *taonga Maori* from the collection, but specifically they fixated on the ‘Tunuhaere’ prow because of its direct connection to their ancestor Matene Rangitauira. I asked both men what they could tell me in regards to the history of the prow, Tunuhaere as a site of importance, or their ancestor Rangitauira, and they gave me a very blurred exposition of history. At first neither man said anything about the prow, but asked me for information about where I had come from. Giving them my usual where I was born and where I had grown up

speech, they both pressed me for more information. Where were my parents from? What about their parents? Did they tell me stories of their origins? All of my answers were severely disappointing to the two men. They conferred and decided that I had been heavily Anglicized so could not comprehend their appreciation of history. Don explained that ‘we

²⁸ A land trust for the people within the Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi boundaries of the Whanganui River that is run by appointed community members.

[Maoris] like to give genealogy of 1000-2000 years' because the links mean a lot. Buddy went on to elaborate and said that he stated his history from 1350, and took this as his starting point of reference, although he confirmed the story of his ancestors went way beyond that date. Buddy described the 5 canoes that made it to Aotearoa and others that went to Easter Island.

In relation to the Smith collection photograph of the 'Tunuhaere' prow, Don and Buddy relayed snippets of information about the area we were in at the time by describing local trees and features of the land. They also talked about a Smith that they assumed the *taonga Maori* had been collected by. Don told me about a 'Smith' who was a European settler of German origin named 'Smite' whose name was improperly translated, and was contracted to the Crown as a land surveyor during Governor Grey's time. Then the stories moved back towards the canoe prow 'Tunuhaere' and histories relating to the former owner Matene Rangitauira, whom the men explained was actually from Pipiriki where they were also from.²⁹ Rangitauira fought in the Battle of Moutoa on 14 May 1864 as a commander, and Don communicated that the stealing of the former commander's head when he was killed during the Moutoa conflict was still a point of contention for his family. Then the men switched back to issues that Maori had with the settlers and surveyors around Pipiriki in the nineteenth century, but also ways that 'big missionaries' from the area like Reverend Richard Taylor had the largest land holdings and were frequently in contact with people like Smith. They then started to discuss their *hapu's* battles in the Land Courts, and personal land holdings in connection to their ancestors, which then transitioned into a recollection of familial *whakapapa* of nine generations from their line of descent (Fieldnotes, 7 September 2009).

After hours of having most of my questions about specific pieces in the Smith collection answered in this manner, I realized just how much of an outsider I was. Some of this knowledge was communicated to me as if the history would be clearly comprehensible to me, and so did not need to be contextualized or explained within any timeframes or dates. Some of the information was whispered in hushed tones as the men stopped talking to me to converse amongst each other. This feeling of communication in a dislocated manner, in fluctuating time periods, moving between histories tenuously related to former Smith *taonga* owners, alongside current community political endeavors, which never concluded in a complete story was quite disorienting. I was left feeling like I could only grasp parts of

²⁹ The complexity of *hapu* and clan orientations due to complex *whakapapa* links means many places and people might claim a historic figure.

the story. From a Maori perspective this inability to understand what was being said is a reflection of my own historical comprehension (or incomprehension). The idea of piecing together the information I would need to understand the overall *korero* was very foreign. The men communicated any histories connected to the Smith collection through oscillating time periods in history, legends of the Whanganui River, and metaphors connecting Whanganui *iwi* to the land through poetic philosophy while connecting such knowledge to the ongoing politico-legal affairs in Whanganui. Implicit in my asking for knowledge, was that I should also be taught it in accordance to *tikanga Maori*, just as a Maori person might have received the knowledge and be expected to listen (although it was communicated to me in English).

Much later in fieldwork, I was told that this fragmented manner of telling history was integral to a 'Maori way of learning' where a person would retain everything in his/her head capable of reciting this knowledge without mistakes upon command. It is expected that the student will make sense of and appropriately order the knowledge he/she has been given within their own contextual frame of reference to their environment, upbringing, and familial knowledge. Again at this time, it was highlighted that this open way of learning and adopting one's personal understanding of knowledge was very different from my own way of learning 'by taking notes and having to refer to them in order to *know*' (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009, my emphasis).

Interpretations of history that developed were to be understood as a truth relevant to a person's particular background, and the recital of this knowledge became a key feature that persuaded the ways in which history was interpreted. The focus of Don and Buddy's interests rested in the Smith collection's possible ancestral link to Pipiriki, their *marae* base, and their interpretations of collection pieces also reflected this home centered perspective that intended for the knowledge generated from the *taonga* to aid current attempts to reconcile history in their own community.

In a similar anthropological situation of dislocating exegesis, Crook (1999) explains that the communication of Angkaiyakmin knowledge in the Min region of Papua New Guinea is a process through which one example is given after another, so that the new knowledge will help explicate the previous knowledge 'as if the inside of one were revealed by the other' (226). Crook reflects that the anthropologist must take on the thought process by which new knowledge is learnt as a result of seeing the answer in other things, 'as if there were a background that needed to be gathered together so that it could be cut away' (Crook 2007: 27). Discovering more personal and community histories related to *taonga*

Maori was also treated as a journey towards finding a Maori way of knowing the past, and ensuring knowledge was disseminated in a *tika*, or correct way. I needed to prove my dedication, motivations, and acceptance of the Maori knowledge I was given. The myths and narratives I received were referential points that extend into the present realm to define identity in particular Maori perspectives through flexible histories that relate to individuals and groups. My interaction with Don and Buddy displayed the level of knowledge and particularly Maori education that the Whanganui community is pursuing for young and older generations, but also ways that separate *whanau* interpretations of land based or historic knowledge can create conflicting accounts sparking debates over knowledge in the community. Debates over and pursuits of knowledge relate to the wider politics of indigenous identity that is integral to the inter-community politics of differentiating speakers, as well as internal/external relations of asserting control over heritage through a rights-based history.

B. Language initiatives and their importance to communicating Maori knowledge

There is an obvious connection between the knowledge of one's cultural language and the understanding of the traditions in a community. Not being able to speak the language means that at any Maori *marae* gathering, ceremonial occasion, or *hui*, the entire *karanga* (welcome call), *korero*, and *waiata* are lost to the listener, nor can they participate in these aspects of social life. Members of the Maori community who cannot participate in *te reo Maori* are in a way missing out on important aspects of culture, where negotiating history defines legal outcomes for 'material well-being' by communicating their history and position through cultural representatives (Belgrave 2005: vii) These negotiations call for a person's ability to speak of the *mana* of *taonga Maori* in relation to a community, making it an evidential vehicle from which to posit issues of repatriation, ownership, and the contestation of history. This combination of both linguistic and cultural knowledge form the literacy through which individuals participate in culture, and have become important principles stressed through the teaching of indigenous children (Hohepa and McNaughton 2007 [2002]: 218). Many of the older generation as well as other younger leaders in Whanganui stressed the importance of *te reo* in conducting Maori affairs, and indeed it was the language spoken at many community gatherings of ceremonial importance for at least part of the procedure led by key leaders. Language initiatives in New Zealand have long focused on educating Maori children in specific senses of pedagogy to enable not

only the regeneration of language, but also ways that cultural knowledge promotes closer ties to the land and ancestors, which in turn leads to more familiarity with knowledge of *taonga Maori*.

A focus on language initiatives was prevalent in Whanganui through established Te Kohanga Reo (learning nest) and *kaupapa Maori* education (Maori-based education initiatives) on *marae* along the Whanganui River, with a Kohanga Reo also located on Kaiwhaiki *marae*. The modification of education practices in New Zealand has occurred since colonial teaching, where the ban on the use of *te reo Maori* was intended to modify the way children learned and progressively teach them English that changed patterns of literacy (Simon et al. 2001). In the 1940s-1970s Maori language use was reaching an all time low, but its reappearance through years of language revitalization in communities is supported by the growing diffusion of *te reo Maori* in homes and schools. The Te Puni Kokiri (Ministry of Maori Development) reported in 2002 that adults were increasingly fluent, and 'that 19% of Maori adults who know some Maori speak to preschool children in Maori for half or more of the time, while 16% use Maori with primary school children to a similar extent' (Hohepa and McNaughton 2007 [2002]: 225). Further statistics revealed that in 2002

[a]bout a third of Maori children in early childhood programs [were] in settings that use Maori language for 80 to 100% of the time – the majority in *Te Kohanga Reo* (Maori language nests). The emergence of Te Kohanga Reo had a critical impact on early childhood education more generally in Aotearoa New Zealand, as well as internationally...nearly 25% of Maori school-aged children are in programs where 30% or more of instruction is through Maori (Ministry of Education 2005). Around 4% are in Kura Kaupapa Maori, schools designed by Maori for Maori operating from Maori values and beliefs, where the national curriculum is delivered in Maori language (Hohepa and McNaughton 2007 [2002]: 225).

Aside from more recent developments to stress primary and tertiary education in Maori linguistic and cultural knowledge, many who did not have the opportunities to follow such education paths or chose not to³⁰ are now attempting to get involved later in life. The motivation to get in touch with knowledge bases and language often relates to a desire to regain perceived lost knowledge, and the ability to participate in heritage endeavors, where coming to know the past becomes a means to knowing oneself (Denning 2000: 139, Gegeo 2000: 68). A postcolonial shift in identity politics in Whanganui, has also motivated the development of a more politically conscious younger generation. The younger leaders

³⁰ A large contingent of Maori populations have stayed within European mainstream schooling that does not specifically privilege any sense of Maori knowing or experience, besides rudimentary language lessons, or visits to nearby *marae* (Penetito 2010).

(in their 30s) emerging in the Whanganui community are well versed in the historic *korero* of the region, their *whakapapa*, as well as the political affairs of the community through a sense of *wananga* learning. Meanwhile a renewed focus on community education and the development of programs to introduce youths in urban centers to their heritage is also occurring. Targeting troubled youth through initiatives to learn traditional activities such as taking Whanganui River trips in a *waka* (canoe) encourages children to participate in the activities of their ancestral *marae*, and learn *te reo Maori* to carry on tradition.

Being able to linguistically link oneself within the *whakapapa* spectrum of one's heritage requires a specific breadth of Maori knowledge, as discussed in Chapter two. The efforts to gain more familiarity with Maori language also relates to the shift in indigenous political awareness, not only that language education with other community initiatives is the key to cultural revitalization, but the wider awareness that developed of other indigenous political movements gaining momentum around the world in the 1970s (Niezen 2003: 30). Maori followed suit though by bringing out their grievances over the treatment they received during colonialism, the outcomes of that history, as well as aspects of the Treaty of Waitangi (1840) that were not upheld (Orange 1987, Steven 1989) as issues demanding review during this period. In this reassessment of Treaty interpretations, older terms written into the Treaty like *taonga*, were approached within a cultural frame that references the entire estate of Maori cultural treasures to also 'include cultural possessions such as *te reo*, the Maori language' (Belgrave 2005: 82).³¹ The conceptual meaning of *taonga* has come to encompass much more than material culture or important knowledge, but many other forms of intellectual and material properties (Henare 2007: 49-50).

The idea that colonization has alienated Maori from their background feeds the endeavors that Maori cultural identity can only be strongly asserted 'in their own ancestral language' (Melbourne 1991: 130). Despite the divide stressed between written literacy connected to European culture and oral literacy considered specifically Maori, Melbourne (1991) draws attention to ways Maori were historically surrounded by inscribed language that expressed the ancient histories of *hapu*, cosmological aspects of culture, and genealogies that were visually recalled through the carvings on the *marae* structures, great war canoes, the patterns of *taniko* (border of cloaks with woven design), and other traditional arts involving the communication of narratives (also Mead 1984: 27, Mead

³¹ In endnote 107, Belgrave (2005: 346) cites that '[t]his occurred most notably and effectively in the Te Reo Maori Claim where *te reo* was described as a *taonga*, Waitangi Tribunal, *Findings of the Waitangi Tribunal Relating to Te Reo Maori and the Claim Lodged by Huirangi Waikerepuru and Nga Kaiwhakapumau Reo Incorporated Society (the Wellington Board of Maori Language)*, Government Printer, Wellington, 1986'.

1986). The memorization of speeches, histories, and ritual replies was a specifically Maori means of transmitting knowledge and very important to it, but ancient Maori lived in 'a world in which a variety of forms, written and oral, gave vivid and complex expression to a culture' (Melbourne 1991: 132). Taking this history of linguistic and oral knowledge into account speaks to the way that today Maori seek to utilize both archival written sources alongside the knowledge derived from *taonga Maori* to explain a sense of *matauranga* connections to the land and an identity based in history.

Connecting to artistic, linguistic, or *whakapapa* aspects of *taonga Maori* are important and reclaiming *taonga* has been equated to taking 'control of the language of definitions and descriptions and to have members of the culture speak for themselves' (Mead 1991: 165). The ability to know things about the past and the ancestors in a museum setting is a relationship helpfully mediated by *taonga* objects and photographs. The language used in Smith's documented narratives alluded to the orality and performance that was significant to understanding how *taonga Maori* are positioned today in ceremonial speeches and legal occasions. Anatuitui, a famous Maori dancer and singer, saw the photograph of the 'Tunuhaere' canoe prow (PRM 1923.87.12) and described how the word *Tunuhaere* rang up something special. Smith categorized the canoe prow as a *tete*. Though Anatuitui confirmed that the word '*tete*' was indeed very old and not in use, she explained that the language would tell me everything I need to know about the *taonga* (Fieldnotes, Rangitunoa's house, 17 August 2009).

Such older linguistic links found in the names and narratives with *taonga Maori* help link contemporary populations to a past even beyond Maori migrations. Words such as '*tapu*' link Maori to greater Polynesia and traditional knowledge that has been passed on for generations (Mead 2003: 20). An example of ways linguistic references to the past exist as relevant to the present is the reformulation of the word for preschool level Maori education *kohanga reo*, which means the 'learning nest'. It is a modern creation intended to sound old by linking it to 'older aspects of the language system, yet refer[s] to contemporary activities' (Mead 2003: 21).

This reinterpretation of words and narratives is a means of representing one's kinship group interests in the present with knowledge of the past, and has become necessary for articulating Maori rights. This has been ongoing since the influx of teaching European literacy and Christianity (McKenzie 1985, Melbourne 1991) as Maori incorporated new

perspectives into their own religious practices and beliefs.³² Such amalgamations of knowledge have also been ongoing in engagements with the state through early contestations of land appropriations where the use of oral histories as evidence was accepted in *te reo Maori* and English in early Native Land Courts. Maori have had to linguistically accommodate European knowledge within their own sphere of understanding and ideology, while simultaneously expressing their views on a world not so clearly defined by boundaries of the physical and metaphysical realm to fight for legal recognition. *Taonga* help bridge this gap as the embodied historic records that help people orate their connections to specific history and ancestors. Narratives connected to *taonga Maori* still allow for a more adaptable and oral way of knowing. In comparison to written records they facilitate a more present-tense political discourse in forums such as land courts and museums where tribal authority over historic material culture is asserted in various ways (more in Chapter five).

The way groups seek to learn, formulate, and assert knowledge publicly and privately then becomes important to the way that historical narratives pursue agendas of knowledge reclamation and eventually claims to resources. When seeking out an agenda of indigenous agency, the construction of specific semantic formulations of historic knowledge must also operate on the level of local and political recognition in order to communicate flexible ideals in western laws and within *tikanga Maori*. In a similar way, the descriptions of genealogical connections to *taonga Maori* served as the literal image referents to a physical and visual grounding of identity in a sense of historic present. In order to articulate these connections appropriately Maori must ideally communicate in *te reo Maori* in order to establish their way of knowing through their specific *marae* base, ancestral reference points in time, as well as their current endeavors. Learning orally enables a person to negotiate their historic knowledge in public, which can be continually renewed in response to specific contexts (Borofsky 1987, Friedman 1992, Denning 2000). When such knowledge was communicated about *taonga* on behalf of related groups on the *marae* or in courts it was received in a historically constructive manner. On the other

³² Speaking on early Maori literacy during the period of Christianization, McKenzie (1985) states that the translation of the European veneration for the Bible was transcribed into Maori consciousness as a book of ritual reverence and *mana*. Even other books were seen being carried into church services such as an almanac or leaves of newspapers to protect the carriers from harm. Reverend Richard Taylor missionary of the Whanganui/Manawatu district described in his 1839 (28 April 1839) journal entry that he saw leaves of mission papers 'rolled up and thrust through holes in the lobes of [Maori] ears' (McKenzie 1985: 30). The fusion of ideologies and material culture has been an ongoing product of cross-cultural influences that has enabled the survival of new, but historically grounded elements Maori practice.

hand when individuals asserting their own knowledge of Maori history communicate *taonga*-based knowledge, questions may arise over the rights and authority that person has to the knowledge, as it is considered detrimental to a community's identity when incorrect information is disseminated.

C. Conflicts in community knowledge

The regeneration movement has focused on cultural elements that are considered integral to Maori identity such as language revitalization and controlling the dissemination of knowledge. The realities of the distribution of knowledge in a community must account for ways community social life is undergoing continuous changes, and also recognize that knowledge (or knowing) is in flux. As a community resource, knowledge is constantly being restructured, restated, reinterpreted (Borofsky 1987), and used towards varying means to further Maori objectives in various forums. The debates stimulated about community knowledge are a means of community interaction, but also fundamental ways knowledge remains a living entity. *Taonga* also relate to these principles of knowledge, but have added cultural controls of hereditary ownership and responsibility upholding the correct dissemination of knowledge in the appropriate places.

Images of Smith *taonga* sparked discussions on ways people's personal *taonga* came into their own possession, as well as issues with the pathways of community *taonga* under museum care. These images also led to a few conflicts in Whanganui about specific genealogies as well as narratives connected to the Smith collection. The oral transmission of knowledge is privileged as the Maori way of disseminating knowledge, for historic reasons previously mentioned, but the infiltration of written language has long affected Maori life. Though writing was considered a beneficial aspect of European influence at first (McKenzie 1985),³³ more recent interpretations see written histories as inflexible and denying the performance necessary to communicate knowledge appropriately by only allowing for singular interpretations of historic narratives (cf. Hereniko 2000, Hau'ofa 2000: 456). In Whanganui the histories accompanying the Smith images evoked memories of other *taonga* connected to the *iwi* and how partial knowledge (Firth 1998: 35) imparted by outsiders from specific *hapu* were inappropriate.

³³ McKenzie describes the early Maori fascination with writing as the ability to put their ideas into a letter, and to send their thoughts to another place in a spatial extension of their power. Letter writing later proved useful in communicating between chiefs in organizing plans for the wars of the 1860s. The changes written accounts made to the shaping of history were, and are still resisted (1985: 19).

Maori sought to write down and preserve their history in times of upheaval and turmoil for future generations, which froze a moment in time according to the dispositions of the writer. Today many of these histories do not fit with the contemporary views and needs of a community, because history is continuously in flux through the nature of oral traditions and changing political circumstances. Contestations of historic knowledge may arise not only between Maori and cultural outsiders about representations of history, but also between Maori groups, extended families, and individuals. The oral tradition of narrating history allowed for its negotiation, whereas writing history down meant the '[g]enealogies, land titles, customary practices, secret rituals, disputes, religious beliefs (and so on) that were previously embedded in social relations are no longer subject to change or modification' (Hereniko 2000: 84). In Borofsky's (1987) comparison of indigenous understandings of history and the formation of the social organization called the *Akatawa* in Pukapuka, he explains that conflicting histories are not the issue, but instead the recognition of 'the dynamic nature of Pukapuka knowledge regarding the past, [and] how Pukapukans, in the process of learning and validating their traditions, continually change them' (Borofsky 1987: 2). Borofsky argues that there is no singular point of reference for adherents of tradition, so reference to what is currently relevant is creatively synthesized and changed (1987: 122-125).

When the new museum catalogue for the Whanganui Regional Museum was published, it was accompanied by the histories of the Whanganui area in relation to pieces of *taonga Maori* partially narrated by local young leader Che. These histories included significant elements of orality that connected the reader to the *taonga Maori* and history of the region in 'the way we [Maori] think' (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009). The history given in the pages was intended to take the readers, especially from the Whanganui community, 'on a journey of discovery, uncovering the hidden histories and stories behind place names and people and the *taonga* they revere' (Horwood and Wilson 2008: 7). For the Nga Paerangi community, not only did they dislike the lack of attention paid to their *hapu* in the book, but also felt that the story explaining the coming of the *poi* (performance art using balls attached to flax strings) to their community did not match up with their accounts of that *korero* (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki, 14 August 2009).

The catalogue stated that the *poi* came with Wi Pauro, who brought it to Kaiwhaiki after being a supporter of the *maramatanga* (spiritual movement) at Parihaka (Horwood and Wilson 2008: 111). In contrast, the people of Kaiwhaiki told me their version of how the *poi* came and became integrated into their religious traditions long before that and not through

Wi Pauro. The Kaiwhaiki community upheld their version of this story, but more than anything, they were troubled by not being consulted as the authorities of their own history. They deferentially had nothing to comment on the writings in the catalogue on other *hapu* histories, because they felt that their perspective would not be as relevant as someone actually from the area. The community expressed sentiments against putting this misrepresented historic interpretation into print because that narrative was an integral part of their identity. As the writer of the story of the *poi* was not present, he could not comment or debate others about this knowledge (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki, 14 August 2009).

Even the reflection of the need for orality in the writing of the histories that the authors acknowledged (Horwood and Wilson 2008) is representative of the insight of taking one's audience into account. Of course it was likely that different readers would have different versions of the histories in print. In Tau's (2001) explanation of *matauranga Maori*, and its comparison to academic histories, he explains *mana* as the driving force behind historic interpretations. Tau explains that upholding the *mana* of one's ancestors means telling their version of history and it is 'not the duty of the storyteller and community to take into account another group's perception of the same event' (Tau 2001: 63). There will be different emphasis on different names of places, characters, and historic details across different Maori families, and this is something one accepts with a socialization of Maori knowledge (Tau 2001: 64). As an outside reader, the piecing together of multiple narratives to create a cohesive historic picture of Whanganui's confederation of *iwi* makes the museum catalogue interesting, but its intention was to speak to the *iwi* audience's historic sensibilities.

Such conflicts based on heritage reflect the close connection between the land, knowledge, and identity, but also these debates over knowledge were positioned in a ways to maintain the ability for Nga Paerangi to represent their own histories. This is similar to Hanson and Hanson's (1983) observation that quarrels and disputes between kin help 'establish that the participating parties are indeed symmetrical by demonstrating that none of them is about to allow itself to be bullied by another' (107). Within Che's representation of historic knowledge in the catalogue as a Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi *iwi* representative, but from outside of Kaiwhaiki (although still related to the Nga Paerangi group), the feelings expressed about the incorrect narrative being given in text still received relatively tempered disparagement. This does not relate to how the past is completely flexible, but to the boundaries within which the debate and management of historic knowledge between

Maori kin can function (cf. Appadurai 1981: 202-203), as opposed to assertions of cultural authority by institutions and individuals seen as completely outside of the culture.

Drawing from Friedman's (1992) examination of the formation of cultural identities, he suggests that there is no real objective history, and that the memories and emotions connected to the past socially construct the interpretation of history in the present. He uses the example of Native Hawaiian culture, which was once integrated into the imperial structures of society by the colonial regime. Native Hawaiians now contest their situation of imposed identity, and present themselves as the embodiment of opposition to Western cultural practices. By opposing outside cultures, the Hawaiian community construction of a body of knowledge acts as the autonomous shaping of memory making, which will be socially absorbed as future memories, political discourse, and historical knowledge for the group. Future memories are then based on the current objectives in the Hawaiian community today that will continue developing through perpetual cultural renewal. The re-possession of the Native Hawaiian past is a goal articulated through the means of land repatriation, and control over the production and dissemination of cultural knowledge, such as through heritage like museum objects, art, and writings.

The ability of *taonga Maori*, writings from *tupuna* (ancestors), or recorded songs and histories to stand as the platform from which to articulate a means to self-determination also relates to issues of claiming history as a key possession of agency in Maoridom. I showed people the *hoeroa* (club made of a jaw of a sperm whale) photographs, which Smith noted as belonging to Te Wherowhero Kingi (or King Potatau) and after him, his son Tawhiao Kingi, who were the first nominated Maori kings and came to prominence during



Figure 4.2 Hoeroa handle closeup, PRM 1923.87.5, Photo credit PRM

the Land Wars (see Belich 1986). Some people were very interested in the *taonga* based on its connection to history, the Land Wars, and well-known ancestors that could be related to. Although Whanganui tribes remained autonomous in the Land Wars and each *hapu* decided their own affiliation, I was told by Don and Buddy that the *hoeroa* was probably found in Kaiwhaiki because Potatau te Wherowhero and Tawhiao had a lot of *mana* and so came down to persuade people in the region to follow them in the Kingitanga movement against the Pakeha settlers (Fieldnotes, 7 September 2009). Local leader Che, on the other hand disagreed that such a *hoeroa* would have belonged to those leaders because it would have been too *tapu*, and so did not believe the *korero* connected to the piece (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009).

When interacting with the repatriated Partington photographs during the closing ceremony for 'Te Pihi Mata: The sacred eye' 2007-2009, people in Whanganui had varying reactions to different photographs. In particular Don, the cultural heritage enthusiast from the above narrative, stopped by the photograph of his grandmother Hariata Te Kai-o-roto and the accompanying picture of her sister Huia, but before talking to his grandmother, explained that Huia was not Hariata's sister because she did not have one. The local historian Haimona had done many of the *tupuna* identifications and he most likely had received the information from another source, but Don insisted that it was the wrong *whakapapa* information (Fieldnotes, WRM, 21 September 2009).

The slight difference in genealogical information and claims to correct knowledge become an issue as *taonga* stimulate different narratives, and people respond to images according to their own sense of historic background knowledge. Issues then of protecting the *whakapapa* related knowledge from *taonga* (see Smith 1999: 172), in turn meant that names connected to the Partington photographs were also potentially debatable. Similarly, with the incorrect names and genealogical connections that were pointed out in connection to the Smith collection, I was warned that misinterpreting spellings and ancestor connections would 'get me in trouble' (James Walker, interview, 21 September 2009). Photographic images must also be protected to maintain ancestral potency for personal reasons, but a photograph of an ancestor can also revisit issues of tradition and more autonomous social histories. By bringing the past to the forefront of the attention of researchers and indigenous communities, photographs have highlighted the presence and importance of unspoken indigenous histories (Bell 2003). More political interpretations of this control over *whakapapa* knowledge have helped transmit a defense of personal

histories within property-oriented interpretations of *taonga* as party to the protection of group history and place.

Other Pacific groups have also sought out a way to reconcile cultural history from the disputed European versions into more indigenously guided understandings of historic knowledge. In the example of *kastom* (as referring to culture and tradition) in Melanesia, it is frequently disputed and privy to the lens of different regional perspectives. Government officials, Christian priests and believers, as well as people trying to live 'traditionally' and counter to Western influence have invoked *kastom* within various understandings and contexts. For years the Kwaio of Malaita have attempted to 'straighten out the kastom' in order to provide a cohesive doctrine from which people can settle disputes, follow the traditional path in life, and shirk off government control (Keesing 1982b: 358). Straightening out the *kastom* is an issue that many of the authors of the 1982 *Mankind* special edition discussed in relation to the re-assertion of control that was occurring from the 1960s and onwards in Melanesia, as writing it down endeavored to codify *kastom* as a kind of customary law that could sinuously be followed (Burt 1982, Keesing 1982b, Larcom 1982). For Kwara'ae populations, finding a true version of *kastom* was difficult because it required reconciling the multiple versions of history that have been handed down through the generations being interpreted differently (Burt 1982: 396).

Divergent material culture interests in Aboriginal Australian communities also extended to claims for historic agency through accessing the archival records and material culture that support such issues in legal forums, much like the Maori situation. Engagements with historic materials to substantiate land and sovereignty claims have increased in varying contexts and degrees to further politico-legal goals (cf. Povinelli 2002). Bolton (2001) has pointed out that Aboriginal Australians have varying interests in their material heritage in cultural centers and museums, and projects are largely initiated by notable community members (2001: 223). She links this trend to a means of negotiating aspects of identity through possession of material objects. The authority exerted in these situations may hold varied significance during the initial endeavors towards control, and hold little impact for locals who are less involved in the return of heritage (Bolton 2001: 225).

The pursuit of knowledge becomes a way that people seek to identify themselves as traditional custodians of knowledge, and within these contexts Maori communities seek control over their *taonga Maori* as representations of the past. These visible referents to identity can be employed as evidence in land court hearings (on slit gong rhythms in Vanuatu, Larcom 1982), and the repatriation of *taonga Maori* becomes required in cases

of misappropriation where an affront to cultural knowledge and identity has been made. In New Zealand, both Maori and Pakeha communities support this consensus on protection of the cultural treasures that are seen as promoting a viable means of reconnection with history (McCarthy 2007: 169). Today, political endeavors translate Maori concepts into a European frame of knowledge, but are first informed by specific linguistic and historic education systems that inform a discursive level of Maori knowledge. At times differently informed perspectives may conflict and be debated within a community, but nonetheless form the backbone of ways indigenous knowledge promotes rights based in history and connections to the land and ancestors through varying approaches. Gaining the authority to speak for the wider Maori *iwi* (tribe) and indeed, one's own community, then requires a level of assimilation of knowledge from various sources of ancestral authority in *te reo Maori*, which relate to community history.

Historic Maori *wananga* teachings and education today

Learning in a specific Maori way entails a certain level of literacy through language comprehension, skills of memorization, and the important aspect of being chosen to have the knowledge in the first place. The early concept of learning esoteric history in Maori communities was encapsulated by the *whare wananga* that early European scholars of Polynesian history during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries attended to as the 'secretive' knowledge schools (Percy Smith 1913a, 1913b; Best 1924). These scholars, with the profound aid of their Maori informants, learned about the organization of the *whare wananga*, where scholars and high-ranking members of Maori society were chosen to receive esoteric knowledge (*wananga*) and safeguard its transmission for its wellbeing. The *whare wananga* was intended to develop scholarly levels of knowledge amongst a selected population through proper customs of *tikanga Maori*. Wareham (2001) describes the principles of Maori knowledge as being 'understood and governed by a system of principles including *tapu* (forbidden or sacred, taboo) and *noa* (familiar), *kai* (nourishment), *mauri* (spiritual energy), *wairua* (spirit) and *mana* (authority, power, influence)' (Wareham 2001: 31). The house, its teachers, and students were all *tapu*, because the process of learning itself was considered risky due to the power accorded to knowledge (Mead 2003). Though past elements of the *whare wananga* such as what was taught and who may attend have changed, the principles of educating youth through the more available *kura kaupapa* initiatives continues. These instances of early education and

socialization into Maori culture can then be augmented by the *wananga* process thought of as a university level for Maori knowledge, which designates cultural specialists and leaders of the community. This type of knowledge specialization plays into the politics of Maori identity that is relevant to uses of *taonga* for supporting heritage claims and regaining access to historic materials, which puts people in closer connection to their Maori identity.

Early Maori pupils of the *whare wananga* were often the elite children of chiefs and priests. In Best's (1924) account of Maori cultural history and practice, he explained that participants had to be reputable people because the knowledge transmitted was connected to the gods, and therefore rendered the recipients of this knowledge *tapu* (Best 1924: 65). Much of Best's information was taken from the studies of his contemporaries such as White (1889) *The Ancient History of the Maori, Vol II* and S. Percy Smith's writings (1913a, 1913b). In Percy Smith's (1913a) study of the *whare wananga*, he translated the teachings of Te Matorohanga, recorded by scholars H.T. Whatahoro and Aporo Te Kumeroa, who had been educated at the Mission schools. He describes how the majority of teachings never escaped from the *whare wananga* and were kept from being dispersed. Te Matorohanga further described how the god Tane originally created knowledge, and that this knowledge must remain secretive to keep the *wananga* as 'valuable property', and ensure that the 'strengthening knowledge' will enable future generations to 'hold [their] own in the *marae* of strangers' (Smith 1913a: 108). The idea that important knowledge must remain guarded in order to protect those who are not ready to receive it is another theme that continues today, but in light of efforts to strengthen Maori education in *te reo Maori* and other cultural aspects, a much more open perspective to education as been adopted in Maoridom.

In support of *kura kaupapa* initiatives, Penetito (2010) describes the importance of a 'Maori-inclusive system' that considers 'Maori ways of knowing (language, organisation), ways of thinking (evaluations, accountability), and ways of doing (pedagogy, reciprocity)' (69). Further from *kura kaupapa* initiatives, the *whare wananga* style of learning is intended to work within 'a Maori perception of learning and knowledge systems' outside of structured education initiatives (Tau 2001: 66). The ideals of Maori schooling faded during colonial dissemination of teaching ideals, and education moved from a family and *marae*-based focus on learning through debate, memorization, and speaking publically, to a focus on reading and writing. Use of a *wananga* type of learning today enables the appointment of leaders for the community with an ancestral knowledge base, its corresponding *mana*,

and speaking the way the ancestors did where the past is an ever present reality (Tau 2001: 63).

At one level there is the differentiation between the ideologically involved and practicing Maori population, and which pupils are ready to take on the task of learning such sacred knowledge in the *wananga* (formal or informal gathering to share knowledge) as a process of cultural specialization (in oratory, arts, *whakapapa*, etc.). On another level, there are Maori pupils who learn cultural knowledge through simple exposure in an informal manner (e.g. living on a *marae*) that cannot be equated to a socialization of education, but whose breadth of knowledge is just as important. Many Maori do not necessarily identify as tribal per se, but might still have a sense of identification with a history related to group ideals. In reality, a large portion of the Maori population lives in urban centers, pointing to a diverse centering of lives not necessarily on *marae* bases or even near strong *whanau* relations. In his critique of the continuation of traditional structures of Maori organization in the face of widespread urbanization, van Meijl (1995: 318) posits that at least 70% of Maori live in urban environments. A focus on the *marae* as the touchstone of Maori culture is true from an ideology point of view for some, but in reality many do not have contact with such elements of heritage and do not feel a part of the typical activities involving the use of *te reo Maori* and knowledge of protocols because they lack this kind of education and exposure (van Meijl 2006).

The growth of Maori populations in urban centers continues, and in 2006 it was estimated that 84.4% of Maori live in urban areas (New Zealand Census 2006). A large portion of Maori encounters with contemporary New Zealand society locate them as members of the minority population facing widespread problems with addiction, education, crime rates, low incomes, and other socio-economic hardships (van Meijl 2006: 919). While these issues have supported education revitalization movements that reference the losses of cultural knowledge through colonialism, some urban-based leaders seek to focus more on gains made from claims that do not focus on the local level of *marae*-based education and organization (Tapsell 2002: 290).³⁴

³⁴ van Meijl critiques that a focus on the *marae* and 'traditional culture' is exactly what makes other urbanized Maori feel disconnected from their heritage, as the 'dominance of *marae* communities in the constructions of identity not only organizes but also restricts the multiplicity of possible identities in the public arena of Maori society' (2006: 930). It is not within the scope of this research to explore the experiences of urban Maori in comparison with my *marae*-based fieldwork in Whanganui (as there would be an 'urban' context for Maori in Whanganui town as well, but such contexts were less helpful in my research on conceptions of *taonga*). Instead I draw on Metge's early work where she points out that there was not a distinct dichotomy between urban and rural groups, and in fact, there was a circulation and movement between some families from rural to city environments (1964: 250).

There are still 'special knowledge' schools that Whanganui *iwi* members, or other tribal affiliates can attend (Young 2007: 8). Maori go away for weekends to attend a *wananga* to improve their *te reo* language skills, or meet with people from different tribes around the country and collectively *wananga*, as described to me by the WRM museum educator (Awhina Twomey conversation, 23 September 2009). There are many ways to *wananga* (as the action of sharing knowledge) in informal and formal settings. More intensive *wananga* are implicitly for the purposes of producing new leaders to carry on the traditions of their group or region through knowledge that they must assemble on their own through years of teachings. Whanganui community leader Che told me that he had been chosen to join a *wananga* and intensively learning from his elders for 20 odd years. When the last of his teachers had passed away, his schooling was finally considered complete (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009).

Kaiwhaiki elder Morvin Simon explained the contemporary form of a *wananga* as getting together to discuss ideas and learn as a coalition. He explained that knowledge should be passed on from his generation to the next, but that the depth and diversity of knowledge would be dependent on what one was trying to find. Morvin further explained that

People come together and they're pursuing a particular thought of knowledge, and ensuring all is covered so that- when we say for example the various levels of learning include: The physical, then spiritual, that part which appeals to our soul, and there is the mental, that deals to our mind, and then there is the family thing. There's a *korero* which says *Ko te kai a te rangatira he koa* – that the food of the chiefs, the food of the aristocracy even is dialogue.

Ko te kai a te ngakau, and the food of the heart...are the unseen things like love, and sharing, and caring. *Ko te kai a te hinengaro*, and the food of our intellect of our intelligence- *hei whakanui i taua hinengaro*, is to enhance and project and deepen that knowledge. *Ka mutu mai i te kai a te wairua*, and that is complemented by the food of the soul... to give thanks for who you are and from which you came. So it's all those sorts of things. That's what we talk about when we talk about *wananga* (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009).

In *The Coming of the Maori* (1966 [1949]), Maori scholar Te Rangi Hiroa also acknowledged the *wananga* as a significant tenet of Maori esoteric knowledge comparing it to the highest education available in present day universities, but Tau (2001) has more recently emphasized that *wananga* are more in tune with Maori epistemologies than a university based education. The *whare wananga* historically taught the art of sacred carving to disciples through long apprenticeships. The god of the sea, Tangaroa, controlled the knowledge of carving and cultural hero Ruatēpupuke was chosen to bring it back. His accomplishment was symbolized by this bringing back of a carved *poupou* (*wharepuni* post) from the house of Tangaroa (Walker 1986: 74). The binding together of

the spiritual realm and its relationship to knowledge on earth connects the importance of knowledge transmission and balancing a reverent relationship with the gods in the present. Through observation and practice, carving apprenticeships incorporate these esoteric teachings of the gods, making the carver and that which he carves *tapu*.³⁵ The *wananga* focus on connecting a spiritual and secular education with Maori values uses the spoken word and *te reo* as its expression to symbolize thought (Tau 2001), much in the same way as carvings express the ancestral histories of the *iwi*. The connections between *taonga*, knowledge, and cultural regeneration have existed since colonialism and current knowledge regeneration initiatives are another side of the quest for reclaiming indigenous identity.

A focus on the more historic elements of knowledge through education and learning in a specifically Maori focused way through oral histories has also helped differentiate what kinds of knowledge determine speakers of the community. To be considered knowledgeable one must actively seek out knowledge from other *whanau* (family) and community members, learn *te reo*, and must heavily commit oneself to these endeavors. Piecing together this information to construct a coherent *korero* is also part of the process of attaining knowledge in the traditional manner of the *whare wananga*, even when it comes from more contemporary archives and written records. Upholding these knowledge restrictions and being able to speak in *te reo Maori* grounds an orally literate understanding of representations of the past (Hooper and Huntsman 1990: 18), where a much deeper historical literacy goes hand in hand with a position of political activism based in Maori agency. I must note that the majority of people I encountered in Whanganui did not all share such *wananga* experiences so I have selectively used all epistemologies of knowledge that I was offered in responses to *taonga* as they relate to feelings towards history, politics, and *taonga Maori*. Despite so many continued efforts to reclaim resources and heritage, there remains a dislocation from Maori land bases that dually promotes the regeneration of more traditional teachings, while also politically motivating the use of Maori

³⁵ In Buck's *The Coming of the Maori* (1966 [1949]), he narrates his encounter with famous Whanganui carver Hori Pukehika, and how Pukehika gained his carving apprenticeship when he watched a carver working on Te Paku at Putiki *marae* on the lower part of the Whanganui River. The master carver was working on the *tekoteko* (human ancestral figure on the top of the front house post), and he was carving the tattoo lines into the face. When the carver left his work to get lunch, Hori Pukehika wanted to finish the carving very badly, and so he began to chisel the other side of the *moko* lines into the face of the *tekoteko*. When the carver returned, he looked at young Pukehika's work, and told him to meet him on the river bank before sunset the next day, where they waded naked into the water, the carver recited a chant, and after his initiation, Pukehika became an apprentice (361-362).

knowledge to protect one's kinship group by seeking sovereignty goals. By activating individual as much as community knowledge of history into evidence for the return of land and resources, a dehegemonic approach to indigenous identity becomes a way of negotiating empowerment within a rights-based approach of social expression (see Gegeo 2000).

Language, history, and cultural revitalization within the politics of identity

Issues of language, history, and wider politics of identity in New Zealand are significantly connected to issues of *taonga* and ways it acts as a marker of identity and issues of cultural property. Social activism sparked by land alienations brought forth several cultural revitalization efforts. Efforts are focused on *matauranga Maori*, language regeneration and learning in a Maori way to regain social agency (Tau 2001). Part of this cultural revitalization burgeoned in the 1940s and 1960s with more indigenous presence and involvement in museums where 'Maori involvement in government sponsored events in earlier decades, suggest[ed] that Maori sought inclusion – even if, at many levels, they were effectively excluded' (McCarthy 2007: 116). With the appearance of arts focused legislation (Maori Arts and Crafts Board 1926, Antiquities Act 1970) and schools set up for traditional carving in Rotorua in 1927 (Ngata 1940), wider interests appeared in Maori art. In the 1970s the official classification of modern school-trained Maori artists exhibited their work around New Zealand (McCarthy 2011: 40). Such modern artists alongside political groups developed in Maoridom, and focused on the museums are appropriators of *taonga Maori*. It was in 'the 1980s, after the Te Maori exhibition, that a turn to more directly Maori subject matter, radical politics and marae-based practice is seen' (*ibid.*). These developments occurred at the same time as the Treaty of Waitangi was being reexamined and reinterpreted by Maori and legal officials seeking to accommodate extensive Maori grievances about their losses to the Crown (Orange 1987, 2004). Maori identity was also being strongly asserted in connection to the *iwi*, *hapu*, and *whanau* relationship to *whakapapa*. Claims to the land became more focused on the smaller group rights through the return of lands as an element of universal human rights (Niezen 2003: 120, 134-136; Belgrave 2005: 85), but also the need to foster tribal identity through both the material and immaterial resources of specific *hapu*. Representations of distinct *hapu* identity or individual possession of cultural knowledge were usefully emphasized by the ability to understand, interpret, and at times possess *taonga*. Language skills, knowledge of history,

and ability to narrate historic connections publically are tools employed to combat heritage losses, and connecting this contemporary identity in political forums like the museum or public speeches, lends more credence to legal claims to the land and other resources.

While Whanganui communities often emphasize their interrelation to 'everyone on the river', the disparity between *hapu* interpretations of encounter speaks to the navigation of the politics of sameness and difference that focuses on local and global indigeneity in different contexts. A past of political engagement with the state demanding indigenous rights is not new in Maoridom or for the populations of other settler nations. *Hapu* groups and individuals alike in Whanganui are seeking out their familial histories and identities, today largely as a consequence of the engagement with the Land Courts, but are retaining their varying ancestral histories as markers of change, cultural resistance, and sociality against a homogenizing Western identity. The main grounds for eliciting action have been the past loss of land and the demand 'for the return of "all Aotearoa" to the control of the Maori' (Greenland 1984: 92). Greenland (1984) emphasizes that generally ideas centered around being 'other' was to be the antithesis of white/Pakeha culture, such as the case in Samoan and Fijian contexts, was also intended to situate a common origin amongst indigenous people in the Pacific (Greenland 1984: 94). Now the embrace of cultural knowledge from adopted and modified Maori histories are creatively employed through the tribunals, but also accept the modern aspects of identity that are integral to the telling of Maori history.

In the past and currently, land has acted as the emblematic bridge that symbolized Maori connectedness to Aotearoa and the promises that have not been kept by the Crown through the Treaty of Waitangi. The Treaty stated that Maori were due their rights of self-determination, and has become the backbone of the activist arguments against Pakeha institutions (Ward 2000). In the situations of indigenous perceptions of being the minority culture and treated as such, especially in Hawaiian, Australian, and North American circumstances, the perception of democracy as failing to protect 'diverse interests and identities' has created a widespread disillusionment with typical legal procedures to reclaim lands (van Meijl 1998: 390).

Attempts to reclaim lost lands are furthered through the local efforts of cultural revitalization in attempts to stop losses of *te reo Maori* language and learning in a Maori way. The dispossession of Maori from their cultural heritage included a need to again become 'rooted to the land' and regain their language and literary traditions (Dewes 1975: 49). The knowledge processes required to orate connections to the land and one's

ancestors also engenders a wider participation on the *marae* so that people maintain their ties with activities and ancestral land base. This understanding of a traditional connection between ancestors, their descendants and the land has been embodied by the concept of *tangata whenua* (people of the land) (Sahlins 1985: 58). The term *tangata whenua* also establishes personal connections to Maori identities that require a perceptible effort to attain, while also connecting to the inherent indigenous origin of Maori in connection to the land.

Merlan (2009) describes indigeneity as the

first-order connections (usually at small scale) between group and locality. It connotes belonging and originariness and deeply felt processes of attachment and identification, and thus it distinguishes 'natives' from others. Indigeneity as it has expanded in its meaning to define an international category is taken to refer to peoples who have great moral claims on nation-states and on international society, often because of inhumane, unequal, and exclusionary treatment (304).

For Whanganui community members who would like to become more involved in regaining community lands and strengthening identity, the repossession of indigenous histories has been a means of coming to terms with postcolonial identity. In New Zealand, the *tangata whenua*, people of the land, have been claiming back their *mana whenua*, authority over the land, which itself has become a complex process of treaty negotiations (Ward 2000: 413). The definition of *taonga* in the Treaty of Waitangi has been interpreted in more legal contexts denoting a continued ownership of all Maori cultural property, which led to 'a period when *iwi* sought the repossession of alienated resources in Treaty claims, made demands for repatriation and fostered debates about intellectual property rights' (Hedley 2004: 94-5; Henare 2005: 94-5, cited by McCarthy 2007: 177).

Framing history in Whanganui in terms of important people and places within histories are enabled for some by the use of *taonga Maori* as an anchor and referential point. Within the anthropological view of a Maori way of knowing, the metaphoric knowledge evoked by *taonga Maori* help substantiate claims to history, connections to ancestors, and the importance of knowledge held within such prestigious objects. At the Southern Cluster Hearing for Whanganui *iwi* 2007, in the testimony of lead Nga Paerangi claimant, Ken Clarke he described the land features of relevance to Nga Paerangi and the location of the important sea canoes 'Otamakariwaiwai' and 'Tairatu' used historically by all Nga Paerangi members at Aramoho (WAI 903, 'Brief of Evidence of Ken Joseph Somme Clarke' #B1, 27 July 2007). He also commented on the area of Puketutu whose name was changed to Mt. Featherston on behalf of the Pakeha settler who lived there after its purchase. There were losses of large amounts of *taonga Maori* at that site, including important *mere pounamu*

[greenstone clubs] (WAI 903, 'Brief of Evidence of Ken Joseph Somme Clarke' #B1, 27 July 2007). Ken explained to me that of the importance of mentioning the *taonga* was not intended to claim back the canoes or lost Puketutu *taonga*, but to illustrate the historic connections between ancestors, and the continuously existing loss felt for *taonga* connected to sites of importance (Ken Clarke, interview, 4 November 2009).

In the Waitangi Tribunals evidence for the Ngati Pamoana *hapu* case, local cultural leader John Maihi gave testimony as to the borders for Koriniti *marae* and other Ngati Pamoana cultural interests. He then transitioned into the *korero* related to the *hapu's* canoe 'Te Wehi o Te Rangi' now held by the Whanganui Regional Museum. John detailed in his evidence how the canoe first belonged to Paraone of Ngati Maniapoto, and from there it went to Roka Tihore of Ngati Maniapoto and Ngati Pamoana. From Roka Tihore the canoe passed on to her *whangai*, or adopted, child Rora Te Oiroa and became the main interest and property of the Ngati Pamoana *hapu*. Then John described how the canoe was used in the Taranaki Wars, to pursue Matene Rangitauria at the Battle of Moutoa in 1864, and at the Battle at Pipiriki in 1865. He detailed the canoe's continued use, importance, eventual restoration by local carver Hori Pukehika, and the debates went into the passing on of its care to the WRM, where it rests today 'subject to an agreement establishing a trust with trustees from Ngati Pamoana to ensure that iwi control is maintained' (WAI 903, 'Brief of Evidence of John Niko Maihi' #B48, 16 August 2007).

During an interview with John, I asked him why he brought up 'Te Wehi o Te Rangi' in his evidence brief, and he replied that there was a need to bring the Whanganui Regional Museum treasures to the surface. The museum holds a lot of treasures that the community does not know about. They must be made known. The history is important and it was important to show the tribunals that issues of *taonga* still relate to the people and their identity. He hoped that it was a good thing to mention the *taonga* in the tribunals (John Maihi, interview, 12 January 2010).

Taonga remains associated with land sites, and indeed those land sites are also important because of the *taonga* found at them. The use of *taonga Maori* in the courtroom can be equated to ways that material culture of indigenous origin serves as a point of historic reference to metaphysical qualities of ancestral ties to the land. It is helpful as well that western dispositions recognize material qualifiers of identity as being particularly valid, and so both perspectives are accommodated despite being divergently valued. The identity-centered approach to the politics of indigenous possession over heritage has established claims for material culture as a means of asserting political, social, and

economic agency. Cultural patrimony and its journey becomes the locus for a sense of group or object life histories based on multiple genealogies of identity (Pottage 2004). When certain cultural heritage appears as lacking, group identity is perceived as weakened and possibly affecting the continuation of that identity for future practice (A. Weiner 1985).

If a record or knowledge of an object has been lost in the social sense, the importance of that loss may not be highlighted until the situation has become one in which the re-appropriation of that knowledge might factor into present life structures. In New Zealand, cultural reforms taking place in the 1970s reviewed the misappropriations of land, and efforts to regain control over language and education gained steam. The focus of heritage regeneration eventually shifted to the reconnection with *taonga* as well as aspects of important heritage, which resulted in a review of the Antiquities Act of 1975. This was later changed to The Protected Objects Act, which ‘superseded the Antiquities Act in 2006 with a revised definition of “taonga tururu” replacing the word “artifact”’ (McCarthy 2011: 41). The more political interactions with *taonga Maori* elevated them to recognized markers of identity at the national level, but also as key parts of the negotiation of rights for Maori people.



Figure 4.3 Taiaha closeup, PRM 1923.87.1

When showing some images of the Smith *taonga*, often the loss of such aspects of historic knowledge were more readily interpreted in a political undertone of the overall theme of Maori history being misappropriated by European interpretations. When viewing the *taiaha* (warrior's staff) (PRM 1923.87.1) from the Smith collection, for example, Whanganui leader Che responded to the image with statements that control over *taonga* is important to deflect Western ideas that have inappropriately confined the ability of the *korero* to be stimulated from such pieces. He continued that museums have historically denied indigenous groups access to *taonga Maori*. While talking about his work with *taonga Maori* in museums around the world, Che spoke about ways objects like the *taiaha* in the Smith collection needed to be made available to Maori people in museums. Not available to look at, but to experience the connections to, as he was able to experience at the opening of 'Power and Taboo' at the British Museum (September 2006- January 2007), where he held a historic *taiaha* (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009). The ownership of the *taiaha* (PRM 1923.87.1) in the Smith collection was recorded as belonging to Titokowaru, then Hori Kingi te Anaua, then Taitoko te Keepa te Rangihihinui, and finally Te Oti Takarangi (see, p.54 above). Taitoko te Keepa te Rangihihinui was popularly known as Major Kemp (Belich 1986: 212), and a carving in commendation of him and his *tupuna* stands in the Maori Court of the WRM today. He was highly regarded amongst his people at his Ranana *marae*, which he established to discuss land confiscation issues in the 1880s (Horwood and Wilson 2008: 88), and in the Whanganui region generally. (Michelle Horwood, interview, 11 August 2009). When I spoke with Kaiwhaiki elder Morvin about the collection, he was surprised that this *taonga* had belonged to Titokowaru, as 'one of the cleverest guerilla commanders', as well as Hori Kingi 'who did so much good work on the River'. He said Hori Kingi would not have passed on such a special *taonga Maori* to Te Keepa had there not been some genealogical connection between them. He explained '*taiahas*, *patus*, *hei tikis* and walking sticks were what most people actually still had in Kaiwhaiki, but they kept these *taonga* to themselves and within the family' (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009).

When I asked Che about the associations with the *taiaha* and details of the war, he was quick to point out that Maori groups and their history are nothing like what Europeans would like to portray them as. He continued that European history seeks to separate Maori groups against one another and he derided my attempts to figure out what side of a war the past owners might have been associated with as a product of Western knowledge. He said that all Maori did what they thought was best for their community and that any other

interpretation was not appropriate to an understanding their situation (Che Wilson, interview, 8 December 2009).

The reactions to the Smith collection *taiaha* (PRM 1923.87.1) speaks to ways that *taonga* help navigate politics of identity when such material objects link directly to prominent ancestors and key historic events such as the Land Wars (1859-1870s). This piece also connected to people's sentiments that the knowledge behind such *taonga Maori* has been lost to museums abroad, and such objects are reinterpreted within the relevance of an indigenous sense of identity today. The control over that knowledge is also important, as Che described ways European interpretations of historic events like the Land Wars are often interpreted from one perspective that does not fit with Maori dispositions to knowledge and their ancestors. His explanation of historic events mirrored the type of historic knowledge given by Don and Buddy (see above, p. 116) who conceded that I would need a better understanding of Maori knowledge and history in order to understand their perspective on ancestral histories.

Explicating this view within a Maori way of knowing in relation to the Smith *taiaha* would involve taking knowledge from multiple sources while upholding one's own personal knowledge base and background in relation to the object. In more local interpretations of *taonga* like the *taiaha*, such physical links to history and famous ancestors uphold historic narratives, while the connections between history and current ownership challenge issues of cultural practice and rights (cf. Warren 1999).

Maori rights over the past and material culture have been recognized on behalf of indigenous cultures through international forums such as the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). The Working Group on Indigenous Populations (WGIP) recognized that indigenous peoples have rights over ownership and control of 'cultural property', which also includes human remains (Fforde 2004). The UN has set up safeguards against misappropriation of cultural heritage, and has also helped to internationally articulate stances that set and define what it means to be an indigenous person. A UNESCO panel has also stated that special measures of control should be enforced to protect cultural property as an integral factor of one's identity (Tsosie 1997). Such internationally recognized connections between identity, material culture as property, and wider issues of Maori ownership have in turn led to scrutiny over the issue of indigeneity and inherent rights.

The politics of identity undertaken within forums such as the UN's WGIP have promoted agendas of self-definition in order to emphasize the distinctiveness of

indigenous populations within settler nations. The flexibility of indigenous representations, even down to the nature of the term indigenous, politically supports a multiplicity of identity that encompasses aspects of 'authenticity *and* invention, subsistence *and* wealth, traditional knowledge *and* new technologies, territory *and* diaspora' (Tsing 2007: 33, emphasis original). Adaptable strategies of self-definition have been the focus of studies that seek to bring indigenous voices to affairs concerning identity (see Smith 1999). As Sissons (2005) explains in his writing on the global politics surrounding indigenous issues, indigeneity is not solely an alternative to Western identity, but is deeply connected to the issue that incoming European populations historically sought to eliminate indigenous identities. The surviving elements of cultural heritage therefore 'represent a particular form of modernity that is characterized by an affirmation and conscious re-appropriation of tradition in opposition to the modernity proclaimed by post-settler states...indigeneity has become more than heritage; like settler nationhood, it too is now a project' (Sissons 2005: 12-13).

Bringing Maori claims of identity to the political forefront has situated their historically formed representations in terms of authenticity debates, but in New Zealand it is now more widely recognized that indigenous ways of knowing are a valid form of political engagement. Political engagements in cultural heritage are approached through the issues of ownership, care, and relatability to *taonga* as land or as museum objects. *Taonga* help situate sovereignty issues through cultural heritage and cultural property that other global indigenous groups also seek to position themselves within. These concerns over *taonga* do not extend to the entirety of the Maori population of course, as even in Whanganui the specialization in cultural knowledge and self-directed interest drove only some people to pursue *taonga*, knowledge of their familial histories, and *te reo Maori* in order to express their indigenous identity. At the moment, interest in the economy is an inevitable requisite of the postmodern context of survival. Attaining autonomy of economy, political freedom, as well as the self-determination of culture is a goal for the sovereignty movement. Some Maori leaders also lament the contested pasts that intensify divisions within the community (Ward 2000), which negates the resources from the goal of unifying and reconstructing a shared history. Some also feel as though the initiatives to return *taonga* could better be spent pursuing more sound economic endeavors within the state (Tapsell 2002: 284).

Many aspects of indigenous identity are flexible, not to the point of total negotiation (Friedman 1992), but to the extent that by promoting a Maori way of learning, speaking, and defending rights to resources enables a strategy for cultural confrontations with a

colonial past. A driving motivation of revitalization efforts become learning and activities that foster a relationship with past ancestors, such as the hosting of events on family *marae* as the embodiment of values tied to kin, generosity, and hospitality (Cory-Pearce 2005: 78-79). These performances of Maori culture are also seen in the treatment of ancestors at *tangihanga* (Sinclair 1990), but also now in the repatriations sought of human remains, or *koiwi tangata*, where shared interests in respecting the dead help situate a material element of Maori identity. Such physical anchors of traditional identity such as *koiwi tangata*, *taonga Maori*, and *taonga* as land are how communities today can tangibly frame debates around wider representation issues. The political and economic importance of regaining such lost heritage is an actual step towards the consultation and inclusion being sought in the recognition of a Maori frame of knowledge.

The employment of kinship terms to define a connection with a continuous existence in history and the possession of *taonga* becomes necessary to verbalize the losses to personhood considered necessary to identity (Leach 2003). In the next chapter I will discuss ways that these conceptions of personhood and identity are translated into the political forums of the museum and Land Courts, also using *taonga Maori*, to reclaim space and place through culturally informed interactions.

CHAPTER FIVE- Claiming Maori cultural space and performances of identity: rights over *taonga*

Researching *taonga Maori* and how such objects were viewed in Whanganui led to a larger focus on the knowledge and *korero* attached to *taonga*, and ways those cultural perspectives were negotiated within a community. A cultural base exists for the regulation of knowledge in a community, which is also informed by the political lessons that Maori have encountered over the years. The *matauranga* that knowledgeable Maori hold, corresponds to the necessary ideologies needed for understanding the integral ways *taonga* are ancestrally entangled, and therefore, can be employed by individuals on behalf of their larger kin group to position a rights-based stance of support for indigenous claims, as I have been discussing in previous chapters. These responsibilities of *matauranga* holders to their knowledge and community are culturally reflected in the treatment of *taonga* in relation to ancestor acknowledgement through ritual practices. I will be examining how recognized Maori leaders (*tohunga*, *kaumatua*, *kuia*), whose knowledge is shaped by local histories and traditional protocols, place their cultural beliefs on a larger global and visible scale in the rituals they enact and viewers participate in. These performances held in museums and Land Courts commemorate and uphold ancestral relationships to the land, act as a means to differentiate Maori knowledge within a western space, but also reclaim cultural space through the exposition of identity.³⁶ Through the reactivation of ancestral ties in museum exhibition openings and closings by singing *waiata* (ritual songs), *karakia* (incantations, prayers), and addressing the ancestors connected to *taonga Maori*, the *whakapapa* connections Maori feel are displayed as are integral to their identity (Tapsell 2005: 155, McCarthy 2007: 193). These cultural expressions also construct Maori knowledge as the framework from which *taonga* are must be handled, and because of the historic precedence of such knowledge, identities and rights must be acknowledged.

The location of such performative assertions in museums, Land Courts, or in relation to important land sites, is salient for inscribing the types of control that Maori seek to enact in particular contexts of heritage. The evolution of such political and cultural displays in

³⁶ Clifford (1997) argues that the museum is a 'contact zone' (taken from Pratt 1992, who focuses on the historical negotiation of European centers and borders based in dominance) for identity politics, and indeed there is a wide interaction between many cultures in New Zealand museums, and not merely a paradigm of 'us and them'. Within such forums many are reexamining issues of reciprocity, cross-cultural relationships, and overall political goals as they affect Maori cultural life. The role of the nonindigenous audience is just as important in the display of such rituals in a cross-cultural environment (cf. Scheffelin 1985).

museums (see McCarthy 2007) as well as issues of sovereignty claims through Land Courts (see Orange 1987, 2004; Belgrave 2005) cannot be fully explained here as an entire historical accounting for these processes, but keeping this past in mind, I would like to think through ways cultural identity is defended through a discussion of economic disadvantage, the legality of past land transactions, subsequent land losses, and hereditary legal rights. These positions use a western framework of knowledge that argue for democracy and principles of fairness, but highlight the connections Maori still carry to *matauranga* and their notions of a need to control such knowledge through *kaupapa Maori* perspectives. Maori knowledge is displayed as valuable through the particular ritual language used to surround museum objects, augment occasions where kin groups gather on the *marae*, and assert the continued social relationships Maori share as key aspects of their identity. In the relationship between power and knowledge, Strathern argues that ritual claims to such categories simultaneously denote the powers that can be displayed, while drawing attention to aspects such as political authority that people are lacking (1985:62). Navigating the politics of land in relation to *taonga* during ritual presentations given before Land Court proceedings, seeking to rename ancestral land sites, enacting ceremonies in the museum, and the employment of *karakia*, *waiata* or other ritual linguistic behaviors in connection to *taonga*, are particular performances that convey agency through Maori ways of knowing. Within these practices, notions materialize that the momentum for the return of land and the control over *taonga* is underpinned by the long history of Maori concern for the care of ancestral *mana* and *whakapapa* expressed by the ritual treatment of *taonga*. In assertions over the importance of the ancestors and a need to be involved in decision-making processes about *taonga*, as well as control cultural resources, the representation of control through ritual or knowledge classifies the underlying goals of community self-governance (see Strathern 1985: 63).

In part, public rituals denote the level of control that communities are seeking, while they also make visible ideas that Maori must conceptually bridge into something translatable to Pakeha knowledge. The type of possession expressed over heritage makes statements of political authority and control that often influence debates over cultural property and issues of authentic identities that are inappropriate to indigenous contexts (Handler 1991: 66-67, Coombe 1993: 254). Cultural property rights are argued within a legal discourse surrounding history and the cultural representations of indigenous group identity, but also confer the right to expressively construct these discourses within contemporary sociopolitical contexts. This can be especially difficult in Maoridom where

fractious *hapu* communities must assert their hereditary concerns with, and at times against, their neighbors with overlapping and divided claims to authority (Belgrave 2005: 84-85).

Issues of cultural property (both intellectual and material senses of property) are connected to concerns with land and *taonga Maori*, especially in light of the Wai 262 legislation that details the kinds of resources Maori consider under their ownership. The Wai 262 claim has been forwarded by six *iwi* representatives in 1991, and ‘asserts treaty rights to all indigenous flora and fauna, and to Maori cultural and intellectual property’ (Wareham 2001: 42). By seeking the recognition of rights over knowledge and other concepts relating to Maori culture under the umbrella term *taonga*, Maori are enabled to continuously position their history and heritage as a means of addressing social losses, based on group associations with ancestors who pass on their hereditary rights. Tapsell (1997) connects the continued importance of *taonga* being defended in the Waitangi Tribunals as tribal groups effectively demonstrating the breach of agreements laid out by the Treaty of Waitangi (1840) ‘to protect Maori leaders’ *rangatiratanga* (chiefly authority) not only over their lands and villages, but also their *taonga*’ (362).

At the local level, goals to strengthen knowledge of the past through museum *taonga*, land knowledge, *te reo*, learning the art of oral expression (as *karakia*, telling *korero*), and promoting *kura kaupapa Maori* as a means of learning and disseminating research (Smith 1999), helps translate elements of personal histories and individual abilities into the realities of cultural heritage. To recognize ways that knowledge works at the local level of community discourse, the potential of *taonga* and the cultural capabilities that construct notions of rights to cultural heritage must be explored. This is partially in reference to Strathern’s (1999) explanation of ‘potentiality’ being important to securing and controlling current ideas and also future uses of those ideas (which is relatable to issues of intellectual property rights), but also references how specific Maori ways of knowing enable ritual and symbolic expressions that transcend into the political realm of power negotiations. Reflections on *taonga Maori* in the Smith collection were communicated through narratives of historic conflicts, community *korero*, as well as current political reflections on issues with the land. These topics led to people’s explanation of their personal pursuits of knowledge and desires to enact cultural authority by keeping proper protocols during rituals on the *marae* (Fieldnotes, Kaumatua Kaunihera, 2 November 2009), being included in the museum in a truly inclusive manner (Ken Clarke, phone conversation, 11 March 2009), participating in the Waitangi Tribunals, and other cultural

elements to assert their *mana* on the landscape in both politically and culturally focused frameworks.

While themes in the Smith interviews continually emerged of the importance of history and current political reflections on the land and rights, knowledgeable Maori often told me that knowledge related to *taonga* was specifically restricted. As discussed in Chapter two, some of these restrictions pertained to ancestor names, genealogies, or histories of land sites in the areas that were connected to the Smith collection. The issues of restricted knowledge in the Smith collection and other *taonga* in Whanganui, alluded to the possession of family history and knowledge, that needed to stay within Maori confines of authority (see Chapter three). In the legal realm, some Maori knowledge can be used to draw upon histories, land boundaries, insufficient land resources as evidenced by past Maori Land Courts archival records (Rose 2004, Young 2007), and express a vision of land and *taonga* as the material representations of these issues, which communicate in 'a language that power understands' (Handler 1991: 71).

Aside from the necessities of expression in western legal knowledge, Maori are able to re-order their knowledge and representations of cultural identity by using *taonga* as a platform for these expressions. Through statements that *taonga Maori* are the embodied ancestors of their former makers and owners, and therefore objects from which powerful connections can be made to the past as well as the present, the continued presence and importance of the spiritual side of *taonga* and the land is read as a confirmation of social identities as well as a commentary on indigenous agency (Strathern 1985: 65). In museums, the rights to such knowledge are symbolically performed through the ritual behaviors intended to care for the ancestors and keep them 'warm' by 'cloaking them in knowledge and prayers' (Tapsell 2003: 245, see also Tapsell 1997: 330). This speaks to the ideals of *kaitiakitanga* (guardianship) (McCarthy 2011: 104, 168-169), that enable the statements made about identity and authority to encompass the actions of taking care of ancestors through *taonga*. Those leading such ceremonies on behalf of the group articulate their specific connections to ancestors as well as more general ones for others to situate themselves in the *whakapapa* of the event. The orally disseminated knowledge of genealogical connections substantiates performances that bestow rights over the ability of a descendant to carry out their community position, perform and organize the ritual, and transmit their hereditary knowledge to the group (Harrison 1992: 235). If cultural performances in the museum involving *taonga* are thought of as a re-enactment, where orators can publically display their abilities to creatively interpret situations, but draw from

the preserved knowledge and associations of the past (Dewes 1975: 53), then cultural presentations given in ritual language enables symbolism to substantiate political claims that depend on the forum and audience as much as the speaker conducting them.

The performances surrounding *taonga* also have a great effect on the negotiation of their meaning as Pakeha and Maori together witness the ritual, flow of information, and actions surrounding *taonga* in museums, which greatly affects both parties' opinions and views on Maori identity. This formation of symbolic power occurs through performances conducted 'in a social rather than cognitive space' where participants and audience members engage to create the tension and atmosphere from which such cultural associations are later drawn (Schieffelin 1985: 707). The notion that identity is performed through *taonga* (on general material culture- Lyons 2002; on *taonga Maori*- Tapsell 1997, 2000) is based on the representational abilities of objects that encompass identities of past people in specific places. With *taonga* resting in museums, their social place is inscribed in the carvings, patterns, narratives, age, and ancestor connections adding to an object's *korero* and *mana* that must encircle the community in such ancestral knowledge (Mead 1984), but also locates Maori knowledge within the representational space and practices of the colonial past. By conducting *powhiri* for museum openings and closings, the *tapu* surrounding objects is lifted so that people can safely interact with the *taonga* (Mead 1984: 36), but the *korero* given publically also inscribes these objects as part of the landscape and Maori history. Cultural processes maintain these ancestral links to the land through ritual exchanges, which also position museum *taonga* as objects of power by creating a type of *marae* ritual space.

In Whanganui, the issue of the loss of ancestors and knowledge is usefully located in the *taonga* that have survived. The control exerted over *taonga* communicates a unique Maori identity within historic knowledge in opposition to outsider control (cf. Harrison 1999: 241-242), where objects or monuments are elements of cultural belonging that are 'part of the person's identity' and are 'indissolubly linked to his or her own activities' (Strathern 1988: 157-158). *Taonga* is understood through *whakapapa*, but also the ability for *whakapapa* to ground one's identity in the inalienable aspects of culture such as 'the soil, the clan, the family, and the person' (quoting Mauss, A. Weiner 1992: 46). In this sense, pursuits of knowledge that are taking place in the community relate to the mindset of fulfilling *kaitiaki* (guardian) over land, resources, and *taonga* as the hereditary roles demand of Maori. Heritage endeavors have become inextricably intertwined with the relational aspects of regaining ancestral knowledge, but of course also have real life

outcomes as they enable people to make claims to the land and continuously assert control over self-conscious reflections on culture (Linnekin 1992: 253).

Though the integration of Maori into the museum structure has been ongoing since the reexamination of treaty rights in the 1970s and 1980s, policies of biculturalism have been little altered (see Coster 1994, McCarthy 2011). There have been incremental shifts in how accommodations of Maori ritual knowledge, inclusion in research, and access have increased, but the assimilation of policies to protect *taonga* on the basis that they are Maori ancestors and therefore their descendants must look after them, has not been accepted by all museums in New Zealand (McCarthy 2011). Recognition of the importance of Maori knowledge has been observed within the national museum Te Papa Tongarewa through the inclusion of Maori in the governance and functioning of the museum to develop policies on 'display, exhibition, protection, repatriation and general treatment and respect for taonga' where 'Te Papa has set the standard for other museums to follow in working in collaborative partnerships with Iwi' (Solomon 2007: 23). The advancement of biculturalism has led to Maori asserting increasing power over *taonga* based on their need to protect ancestors through the principles of *kaitiakitanga*, where the acceptance of ritual performances and blessings have been further expanded to a need for actual control being handed over to communities who want physical contact with and use of *taonga Maori* (McCarthy 2011: 74-75).

The requirements that *taonga* exist in an appropriate cultural setting are also supported by ritual claims to *mana* and identity, but these performances function as more than demonstrations of social relations. The engagements enacted between cultural leaders and an audience – be they judges and Crown representatives at tribunal hearings or those who have come to view *taonga* in the museum – exist as creative formulations of history and culture that link Maori to a more recent history as well as traditional origin. This creates the cultural impetus where Maori expositions of knowledge and power must be 'talked into' points of fixation such as carvings or the landscape (Salmond 1982: 84). Motivations to turn western spaces into *marae* space is also an affirmation of a continued spiritual presence on the land, that emphasizes things like *matauranga* and the relationships to the land that have remained the same. The accommodation (however small) of Maori practices of hereditary rights, *haka* (vigorous dances with actions and rhythmically shouted words) performances, or other cultural acknowledgments of ritual actions, speaks to the cross-cultural relationship between the Pakeha and Maori parties that further makes such practices emblematic (Thomas 1997: 188). The presence of an

audience in these situations helps complete the exchanges of knowledge, where outsiders can distinguish and acknowledge the concepts surrounding *taonga*. The re-enacting of ceremonies connected to a Maori past, draws parallels with the historic precedence and autonomous foundation for Maori claims to aspects of their cultural heritage. By asserting a Maori way of knowing as the context within which both cultural and political processes must operate, communities are defining themselves in particular representations of identity that maintain a perception of autonomously derived and constructed knowledge.

Supported by these cultural expositions, Maori can more effectively communicate their grievances over the loss of the land and demand agency over *taonga* (as treasured objects, knowledge and cultural resources) in politico legal contexts.

Ritual expressions of identity that define Maori cultural space

A. Renaming and claiming the land for ancestors

It is through ritual expressions of Maori identity that cultural brokers, whose knowledge is based in local histories and wider kin group traditional behaviors, can assert their cultural and political authority. Maori ritual performances of identity help link the ancestral landscape to *taonga*, history, and overarching political rights based in traditional connections. A *powhiri* as a Maori welcoming ceremony is usually performed in the context of welcoming visitors onto a *marae*, but also intended as a way of opening up the means of exchange by testing the intentions of visitors. Through the ritual presentation of *koha* (presents) to *marae* hosts and exchanging *whakapapa* and *korero*, the extension of relationships between two parties are enabled where a host will extend their hospitality to visitors (Salmond 1975; Mead 2003; Tapsell 2002: 288). By reciting *karakia* before the exchange of knowledge in the sense of a *hui* (meeting, gathering), or after the exchange by reciting a prayer in *te reo Maori* (Fieldnotes, 17 August 2009, 12 January 2010), the discursive symbolism helps establish the nature of the situation and the reverence needed. Ritual expressions also ‘establish an order of actions and relationships between the participants through restricting and prescribing the forms of speaking...in which they can engage so that they have no alternative way to act’ (Schieffelin 1985: 709). The performances of Maori ceremonies in relation to acknowledging ancestors on the land and attempts to rename land sites to their ancestral names are connected as efforts to reorder structures to a Maori sense of knowledge. By renaming sites, performing rituals in relation

to the land, and also bringing these frames of knowledge into Land Court proceedings, Maori are claiming their ritual space in various ways through discourse and practice. This process was something I witnessed in several situations that prefaced community interactions with *taonga* (as land and treasured objects), such as before my presentation of the Smith collection to the Kaiwhaiki community. Similar rituals and process were witnessed at the Whanganui Regional Museum during the closing of an exhibition, during the opening of a bridge, and over disputes throughout the Whanganui region about the proper naming of ancient Maori sites of importance that was addressed on several occasions.



Figure 5.1 Walking towards the Parapara Road Bridge

On the 7th September 2009, I accompanied Don and Buddy who invited me to interview them while on our way up the Parapara Road driving from Whanganui to Raetihi. They were on their way to the opening of the Parapara Bridge (see above, p. 117), which once there I found out was to be officiated by various Maori cultural leaders from the region, as the construction workers stepped aside. The ceremony took place at 8 in the morning and was conducted as an adjusted *powhiri* type of ceremony as a *mihi whakatau* (ritual greeting, in place of the powhiri that takes place on the *marae*). Before the ceremony began, people took measure of who one another were by introducing themselves (by giving the names of their parents and further kin relations), and I assume it had been quietly decided that Buddy would give the *korero* from our advancing side – being the most

elder *kaumatua* there. The priest Graham advanced in the front to do the blessings and *karakia*, followed by the women, and then the rest of the men. One group of Maori people advanced, walking from the direction of Whanganui, while the other group of older women gave the *karanga* (call onto the *marae*) from the other side of the bridge as our group advanced. The situation was similar to a normal *powhiri* where elder women call visitors onto the *marae* with a preceding *karanga*, and visitors advance to a designated area until the two parties are face to face. As a ceremony led by local *iwi* members, not specific *hapu*, there were more general protocols upheld. I was on the advancing side with Don, Buddy, and others who I briefly met such as Graham a local priest, who I met again participating in the Kaumatua Kaunihera group. Local leader Tony Waho and others had also driven up for the ceremony were on the other side of the bridge. Then Tony Waho began the *nga mihi* (acknowledgements) from his side in *te reo Maori*. Next it was our side's turn to respond through a representative speaker. Buddy began the *whaikorero* (formal speech connecting *iwi* to the land, and using ritual language), and everyone showed him great respect, even though just meeting him. He orated the ancestral connections that Maori have to the land and its river and mountain features in *te reo* (this was translated loosely to me by Graham). As he became increasingly animated, people seemed to nod their heads in approval of the speech, and a few people voiced words of agreement. At the end of the speech, there was a supporting *waiata* sung. The ceremony concluded with the *hongi*, or pressing of noses to exchange the breath of life.

Before walking to the far end of the bridge in order to eat *kai* (food) and break the *tapu* of the ceremony, a woman named Joy who called herself a spiritualist, meaning she could see spirits, said she saw the spirit of an old warrior from the area down on his knee. She said he was very appreciative of what had occurred on the bridge that day. In complete silence, Joy described how the warrior was very happy, and she said his ancestors were also pleased. An elder woman standing next to her, who was intended to sing the concluding *waiata*, started crying, and was unable to continue the ceremony, so everyone retired to the eat *kai* (in order to break the *tapu* of the ceremony) understanding that the woman had been too greatly moved with sadness for her ancestors. While meeting others during the post ceremony sharing of food and socializing, a few people asked me questions about if I was working with objects at the Whanganui Regional Museum (WRM), and there were a few statements about how Maori often disagree with decisions made about the *taonga* in the collection, and a need to respect the *tikanga* Maori house [the Maori branch of the WRM's bicultural structure] (Fieldnotes, 7 September 2009).

Such ceremonial proceedings for a bridge opening (cf. Gluckman 1958 [1940]: 53-58) are just one aspect of ways Maori exercise cultural authority in New Zealand through a juxtaposition of cultural processes that influence political situations concerning land and *taonga*. Engagements with the land by first conducting ritual acknowledgements of ancestors assert a need for those involved to work within Maori contexts of knowledge, defines what sense of knowledge is deemed culturally appropriate (or *tika*), and denotes certain speakers (on a path to knowledge regeneration like Buddy, or those involved in gaining a political and economic footing for their kin group) to position their knowledge as a way to connect to cultural identity. Maori participants in the Whanganui Kaumatua Kaunihera group of the Te Puni Kokiri (Ministry of Development), which included the priest Graham who gave the prayers during the bridge opening, also voiced concerns over not just knowledge (see above, p. 103), but overseeing that the correct rituals and acknowledgement of Whanganui process was upheld on the *paepae* as a forum for speakers on the *marae* (Fieldnotes, 2 November 2009).

Part of these ritual engagements with the land of course strongly relate to upholding the *mana* of ancestors who were there previously. At the end of the ceremony when Joy stated that she saw a spirit on the bridge, a particularly heightened moment of emotion was solidified not only by the ritual language that inscribes ancestor relationships, but also in the emotions expressing the loss of kin relations and social relations to the land.

Current politico-legal situations have caused cultural knowledge to be reevaluated and reformulated linguistically in a confrontation with politics. In the beginning of Whanganui *iwi* Waitangi Tribunal proceedings, there were *karakia* (incantations) and in the Nga Paerangi case, a *haka* was performed. The Nga Paerangi *haka* 'Te Matapihi' was written by community leader Morvin Simon and preceded the hearings for the group. Such performances help create a metaphor of space by breaking down the boundaries between European space and the *tikanga Maori* that applicants want the legal system to recognize. Historically, *haka* could be performed as visitors gathered at a host *marae* and 'the two groups would defiantly challenge each other and perform the terrifying war dance' (Hanson and Hanson 1983: 106), and *haka* were also used to mark other ritual occasions and gatherings. Hereniko (2000) draws the connection to expressions of song and dance being the more typical 'repositories of the past and present' in Pacific communities, and that these ritual performances are more applicable to an indigenous epistemology of history and knowledge (79). Having some of the Whanganui hearings held at various *marae* in the region, and also surrounding the judges with the ancestral portraits and *taonga Maori* from

that *marae* (more later), further amalgamates Maori ritual space in western legal proceedings through the assertions of Maori process and knowledge.

By bringing the ancestral past into the present by exemplifying connections to 'fragments of artefacts, dances, songs and rituals' (Wassman 1998: 3), a sense of cultural difference is displayed that relates to connections between a particular indigenous identity and *taonga Maori* within knowledge of the past. Maori knowledge is displayed in the process of enacting such traditional standpoints on history, ancestors, and rights to the land as expressed through ritual anger and sadness over losses of *taonga* communicated through *haka* performances, *waiata* sung (e.g. Che explained that he wrote the *waiata* given during the exhibition 'Pasifika Styles' 2006-2008, referencing the call of *taonga* for its people to come and care for it, [Fieldnotes, 8 December 2009]), or other ancestral acknowledgements. These accommodations of cultural knowledge are positioned through ritual language, the presence of historical *taonga*, and the cultural space that is created to draw out the significance of ancestral precedence and hereditary rights. The performance of Maori cultural traditions is germane to the knowledge of Maori cultural insiders, who in displaying these aspects of identity speak to a more overarching definition of Maoridom and history, but also their personal rights through such personal ancestral precedent.

Living within historic traditionalism of practice and ideology entitles one to have an empowered voice supported by history and experience, whereas others in the community are left living only in the here and now (Sahlins 1985). In order to communicate this historic knowledge and act as representatives to disseminate evidence in the Land Courts, a speaker must communicate within a Maori way of knowing, while effectively translating *tikanga Maori* into European terms fluidly and coherently. In community leader Gerrard Albert's (n.d.) position paper on the effects of current land claims, he writes that the tribunals are socially divisive for the community. The cases must include claimants living at home and away, find knowledgeable elders and leaders who can give evidence on behalf of the *hapu* of the river, and negotiate elements of divergent histories. Albert identifies the divisions of the tribal community as Ahi-kaa-roa (the *uri* [descendants] who live on or near the tribal land and are actively involved in the community), Ahi-kaa (the residents that do not live on the tribal land but do participate in heritage activities), Kare-ahi (*uri* who live on the tribal lands but do not participate in heritage activities), Koni-ahi (who have been raised elsewhere but identify with Whanganui and return periodically), Whenua-Matao (*uri* who do not know their descent, or if they do know, do not acknowledge it), and Tahutahu-ahi ('those *uri* who are rekindling relationship by making Treaty claims as *whanau* or *hapu*,

and whose mantle may not have had an obvious profile within tribal affairs for the past 50 or so years') (Albert n.d.: 2). As Albert (n.d.) further examines, the categories of Ahi-kaa-roa and Ahi-kaa tend to be the main leaders and decision makers in the communities without incorporating the majority of the other *iwi* members who also have the rights to join in on Waitangi Tribunal claims. Having only a small percentage of community members with the ability to speak for and make decisions for the wider tribal grouping creates inequalities that cannot consider the perspectives of those *iwi* members who fall outside of the categories of historic knowledge acceptable to the courts, but increasing recognition of this distribution of knowledge is inciting others to become more involved in cultural heritage endeavors.

As part of the land claims negotiations at the end of the tribunals, Ken was seeking the renaming of key land sites connected to Nga Paerangi, such as the site formerly called Mount Featherston. The site was named after the early Pakeha provincial secretary who lived there in the past, but traditionally its name was Puketutu, which Whanganui *iwi* still know it as today. At a meeting with the Nga Paerangi claims lawyers, Ken the main claimant, gathered Nga Paerangi elders involved in the claim (Bubbles, Mona) and another principal claimant (Dyan) to give their input for what they would like to see come from the claims process. Ken stated amongst other points that Mount Featherston site needed to be renamed as an imperative. He also mentioned to me that there is a Mount Smith near Te Korito where Charles Smith was living. He said eventually the tribe would want to change that name to something else. Puketutu on the other hand, Ken said was always known about in the Paerangi *rohe* (territory) for ages, and they want to keep the ancestral names connected to land sites for the knowledge of future generations (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki, 21 September 2009).

Along similar lines of keeping control over naming, the biggest battle being faced for the Whanganui community was the issue over the correct spelling of the town's name as 'Whanganui'. When I arrived, the town was spelled 'Wanganui', without the H, and the general region, river, and *iwi* name retained the spelling of Whanganui with the H, which the *iwi* contested was also applicable to the spelling of the town. At the time the National Geographic Board was looking over the evidence about the contestation of the spelling, which when spelled correctly meant 'big harbor' or 'long wait' in *te reo Maori*, depending on which *korero* was accompanying the narratives of the naming of the town. People explained that Wanganui without the H, did not mean anything in *te reo Maori* (Fieldnotes, Kaiwhaiki, 17 September 2009; 'Te Pihi Mata' closing ceremony, 21 September 2009).



Figure 5.2 Perepere PRM 1923.87.188, Photo credit PRM

When showing the Smith images of the *perepere* (PRM 1923.87.188)³⁷ to carver Bill Ranginui with the name 'Taikapoa' carved on it, Bill told the story of his own carving that helped fan the flames surrounding the debate over the correct spelling of the name of Whanganui.

Bill described how he was commissioned to make a carving for the [former] Mayor Michael Laws to go over the doorway of the office of the mayor in town. Bill explained he made the carving to provoke interest but not to be provocative. On gaining this commission, he commented that a government office is the inappropriate recipient of a traditional Maori carving, but that with the consultation of the *iwi*, they agreed that the carving could be hung over the entrance of the doorway as long as the spelling of Wanganui was written as Whanganui. He explained that all carvings were made with an intended purpose, which had to be enacted, and so when Mayor Laws rejected the carving because of the spelling of "Whanganui", Laws broke protocol by not accepting it. The carving started a public uproar, mainly by the mayor, but also in the town generally (Bill Ranginui, interview, 28 November 2009).

³⁷ Roger Neich (1996) has published an account of this *perepere*, in the article 'Carved Entrances of Maori Semi-Subterranean Storehouses'. Neich identifies that the *perepere*, or possibly *kopani*, has carved *pakura* (spirals connected by ridges) patterns on the right side of its body, but is unfinished on the left side (or worn on the left from usage). Bill Ranginui, as a carver, recognized the different patterns in the hands of the human figure represented in relief on the *perepere* as having three fingers on one hand and four on the other as a characteristic of a much older style of carving (Fieldnotes, 28 November 2009). McEwan (1966) also relates that Whanganui carving patterns often used three-fingered hands, and often different numbers of fingers, mainly on doorway carvings (426).

On 18 December 2009, the decision of the National Geographic Board was announced at a presentation made at Pakaitore.³⁸ The presentation was preceded by local leaders John Maihi who conducted the *karakia*, Ngati Rangi leader Che who gave the formal welcome to the group *in te reo Maori*, and then Ken Mair (leader from upper reaches of Whanganui River) made speeches on the *iwi* history and their long history of fighting for rights to the land sites partially in *te reo Maori*. Mair then transitioned into English for the general understanding of the audience, and announced that the current battle over the recognition of the spelling had been won. 'Wanganui' was to be spelled 'Whanganui' in official circumstances by the Crown and their agencies, but Mair warned that the process would take adjustment, like with the renaming of Mount Egmont to Mount Taranaki (90 km to the west and previous case of landsite name reclamation). The NGB's decision still allowed for people to decide which way to spell the town's name for themselves in the early stages,³⁹ but the recognition was victory enough, and it was then that the speakers called for everyone to go to the Whanganui River nearby for the ritual river blessing. Some people waded into the river while the group sang and chanted *karakia*, and then touched or lightly splashed water onto themselves. After people took turns touching the water and celebrating the river, there was the usual *kia ora* (greetings) and conversations to conclude the ceremony (Fieldnotes, Pakaitore, 18 December 2009).

By negotiating aspects of history and rights to it within specific performances of identity based on ancestral connections that link Maori to the land, ritual language and ceremonies work to solidify and collapse metaphors of knowledge into the present tense. Through efforts to rename land sites within knowledge of the past, the symbolic rituals that reify this connection between indigenous peoples and history, self-validate historic rights to it at the same time. The renaming and reclaiming of lands is mutually enforced by the performances of indigenous identity generated from a love of the land and its ancestors, which facilitates a more political recognition of rights. The gains made in such acts of self-representation (be they by leaders on behalf of the larger community or from a smaller kin group), can be extended to museum and *iwi* community relations as well. In the museum knowledgeable Maori seek to enact these ritual behaviors of language, ceremony, and respect in a similar way. Asserting cultural authority through ritual presence has partially constructed the acknowledgement of connections to cultural heritage, but these

³⁸ See Chapter two, footnote 13, for more information on Pakaitore.

³⁹ See for comments on how non-Maori plan on handling the name change - http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10616306

interactions are also dependent on the role of the audience as well to create a cultural space.

B. Claiming cultural space

Taonga are integrated into various levels of society as objects from which to position history in Land Court proceedings, as family and personal heirlooms, in political debates over cultural property, and as museum objects needing protection over their *mana* by their source community. In museums and more formal community settings, the proliferation of care for *taonga* are aspects that demand the more traditional recognition of ancestors through *powhiri* or at least *karakia* (chanting)/ *waiata* (songs) to commemorate those who have passed but are still ancestrally present through *taonga*. Perceived as representatives of state authority, the museum and legal courts becomes particularly powerful places to situate these meanings, where Maori can claim their cultural space and rights through cultural assertions that strengthen political endeavors.

During the closing tribunal hearings that partially took place in Putiki *marae*, not only did the location of the hearing in a *marae* bring a western legal forum physically into Maori ritual community space, but the *taonga* that is housed in the *marae* also stood as a reminder of the *mana* of ancestors and their omnipresence during the community's land claims process. On the 15th December 2009, the panel (Tribunal panel: Carrie Wainwright, Ranginui Walker, Angela Ballara, Wharehuia Milroy) heard the Crown closing hearings at Putiki *marae* to settle any disputes and bring up contested evidence brought forward by the tribe. Behind the tribunal panel hung the *taonga* portraits of important ancestors from Putiki, alongside influential *taonga* objects that they owned. During a recess, the tribunal panel asked for an explanation of the *taonga* on the wall. Ngati Rangi community leader Che (who also has close ties to Putiki) came in to give a brief *korero* about the *taonga*. Che explained that the Union Jack flag on the wall was *tapu* in connection to Porokoru Patapu whose portrait hung on the wall near the flag and died in 1914. The *pounamu mere* positioned underneath him belonged to the Patapu line (Ngati Tupoho, Ngati Rangi). Che then identified the portraits of Tahana Turoa as an influential *rangatira* (leader). Next to him was a portrait of Taitoko Te Rangihwinui Meiha Keepa, a *rangatira* of the area (also connected to *taiaha* PRM 1923.87.1 from the Smith collection), who fought in the Land Wars. His war medals were also situated on the wall of the *marae*. Next to those two men was Te Mawae, another famous leader of the river, and next to him a portrait of Raua

Mata Kaihoe wearing her *hei tiki* pendant, *kapehu pounamu* ear pendant, flax cloak, and huia feather⁴⁰ in her hair. Beneath her portrait was her *mere pounamu* (named 'Aokehu') along with her *taiaha*. Next to her was a portrait of Mete Kingi (Hori Kingi te Anaua), whose *taiaha* sits below Raua's. Che explained that a *taiaha* was made for a particular person in mind and it is as long as a person is tall- therefore Mete Kingi was quite tall. The portraits next to Mete Kingi were of Takarangi Mete Kingi and Whani-Mete Kingi, Hori Kingi te Anaua's sons (Fieldnotes, Putiki *marae*, 15 December 2009).



Figure 5.3 Inside of Aotea building at Putiki *marae*, for Waitangi Tribunal closing hearing

The tribunal panel seemed very pleased to hear the details of the *taonga*, and thanked Che for the narratives he gave. They also acknowledged the presence of the ancestors in the room during proceedings.⁴¹ These acknowledgements of Maori process were pervasive despite the types of divisive disputes that arose over the renaming of 'Wanganui' to 'Whanganui' as the placement of land issues by asserting ancestral and ritual prerogatives to rename the land can be seen as 'contentious and never wholeheartedly accepted by the wider population' (Merlan 2007: 142). During the closing

⁴⁰ The huia bird's feather was a symbol of social status, but is believed to have gone extinct around 1907 (see Horwood and Wilson 2008: 52).

⁴¹ Sitting on the Whanganui panel at the Waitangi Tribunal, Ranginui Walker calls the settlement of Treaty claims the 'remaking' of New Zealand society. He firmly believes that Maori self-determination is a 'force that cannot be resisted'...' (McCarthy 2011: 29, describing comments of Ranginui Walker).

hearings, the Whanganui spelling with H was also recognized with the panel pronouncing the 'f' sound that corresponds with the Maori 'wh' instead of the regular 'w' sound for the town's name. *Taonga* has become a regular and integrated part of the legal process in supporting *korero*, connecting ancestors to their place on the land, and their actual presence in proceedings demarcates the power and authority of ancestors who owned them.

Whanganui Regional Museum curator Michelle described the ways that traditional weaponry continues to be used in ritual manners during ceremonies, but also in the conferral of rights over other *taonga*. She described how,

On a *marae* when you have a welcoming party on, a warrior comes out and you have a *wero*, which is like a challenge, and he'll be holding a *taiaha*, and he'll challenge the people in quite a frightening way, with the facial gestures etc. And then he lays the *taiaha* down and a leaf or something, to invite the people on. So that shows the *taiaha* in the traditional way, of issuing a challenge and he's prepared to follow through with it if people aren't going to play the game (Michelle Horwood, interview, 11 August 2009).

Michelle further explained the use of the *taiaha* she witnessed in the protection of important *taonga* during the move of the canoe 'Teremoe' (see Chapter three) from the old Dominion Museum to the new Te Papa Tongarewa during its ceremonial removal.

...when "Teremoe" in Te Papa, was moved from old museum to the new building. They took it from down the street to the new building, and they had been up for days talking about the history of it amongst themselves. And then in the ceremony they took it to the new museum, and it was surrounded by people traditionally wielding the *taiahas* and ready to protect the very special *taonga* on it's journey from one place to another, and the cameraman got in the way. All the media were told to stay well clear and away from the men protecting that *taonga*, because they would have no concern with using the *taiaha* in any way. What happened is the cameraman got seriously whacked with the *taiaha*. These guys are trained and they take it really seriously. And they were trying to do something in a certain way. They would have had a guide, or advisor to tell them exactly what their responsibilities were in this journey and that was to not let anyone near this thing. And you know what media are like, and they wanted to get the shot, and the guy just flicked him with the *taiaha*. And there was all this media coverage of the incident, but the media had been warned. So they are used in that way but not in one to one combat (Michelle Horwood, interview, 11 August 2009).

The processes through which *taonga* are revered and protected as symbols of culture, become actualized in practice with rituals and ceremonies surrounding them to bring their historic importance into the present environment. At the WRM an actual *marae* structure has been emulated in the permanent exhibition in the Maori Court, focusing on the *taonga Maori* of Te Atihaunui-a-Paparangi. The hall was constructed in the style of a *marae wharepuni* (meeting house) that mirrors the construction of the *marae* with a *tekoteko* (carved figure at the apex) as the head of the building and *maihi* (barge boards) as the arms of the ancestor, which came from the *wharepuni* 'Te Waiherehere' at Koriniti (Horwood and Wilson 2008: 94). Inside of the court there are *poupou* (carved figures) in

the walls of important carved ancestor representations, and *tukutuku* panels (woven panels with tribal patterns from the region) that were constructed in conjunction with local weavers and other participants. The opening of the 'Maori Court' at the WRM was a process that required reconstructing the cultural knowledge that went with the making of woven panels for the *tukutuku* in conjunction with knowledge of *pingao* (native plant with golden-orange leaves), *kiekie* (native vine with long leaves used for weaving), and making the dye from trusted artists and elders who contributed their knowledge from outside of the regional area because people had not made these panels for long enough that the knowledge had been dormant (WRM OHA/TMIOLP, 8/4/1994 12/7).⁴² Constructing the part of the museum that holds the *taonga* from Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi as a *wharepuni* is a means of welcoming the Maori presence in the museum, as well as speaking to an understanding of Maori inclusion.

In the closing ceremony for 'Te Pihī Mata: The Sacred Eye' 2007-2009 of photographer William Partington's 100 year old photographs of Whanganui ancestors and the Whanganui landscape, a *powhiri* was conducted put the 'ancestors to sleep'. The photographs had been repatriated after the halt of their sale at auction. Local leader Che Wilson described the opposition to the sale of the photographs as an easy decision because the community 'saw our *tupuna* [forebears] on sale...normal reasons our people would get upset' (Tahana 2007, *New Zealand Herald*).⁴³ The protocols of entry into a *marae* space were customarily followed. Ritual *korero* and prayers were given before the crowd entered the museum, along with elder *kuia* singing on the way into the museum. As people walked through the exhibition touching and speaking to the photographs of ancestors, Che gave brief *korero* about *whakapapa* information and narratives connected to individual histories. For the most part the overarching narrative of Whanganui *iwi* and the individuals photographed was the impetus of the exhibition, as well as the collaboration that occurred between many different *hapu* in the region and the museum. The ceremony *tapu* was broken with the eating of *kai*, followed by many people telling histories in *te reo* - one of which was translated briefly for me about stories of why Whanganui was intended

⁴² Artist Cliff Whiting got involved once he heard of the project, as well as Pine Taiapa from Gisborne, a master carver who was also involved in the Putiki Church. The Whanganui *iwi* group gathered *pingao* from the river, *kiekie* from the bush, and then prepared and stripped it for use. Pine Taiapa did the carvings at the front of the Whanganui *mumu*. The *mumu* are the squares (and the amalgamation of all the *tukutuku* patterns in one square). The patterns consisted of *purapura whetu* patterns as the stars, tears of the albatross, and *poutama* as the stairway to heaven. The women of the area worked at Putiki *marae* for over 42 weeks and as they worked more interest from others grew and they joined forces in the panel weaving endeavors (WRM OHA/TMIOLP, 8/4/1994 12/7).

⁴³ See article at - http://www.nzherald.co.nz/arts-literature/news/article.cfm?c_id=18&objectid=10481046

to be spelled with the 'Wh', referring to the long wait of the first Maori who went there and waited for the tide to change in order to leave the harbor. After each person spoke, the group joined in and sang appropriate *waiata* to accompany the *korero* and strengthen it (Fieldnotes, WRM, 21 September 2009).

Though the above narrative relates to the WRM closing ceremony, similar aspects of traditional process take place at other *taonga Maori* exhibitions in New Zealand, such as Hirini Moko Mead's (1984, 2003: 89) description of the opening of 'Te Maori' before it was presented to the public in different cities. Special *taonga* had to be touched and filled with life when being presented to a Maori audience or any other Maori descendants. This reactivation of ancestral ties is acknowledged in museum exhibition openings and closings through the singing of *karakia* and addressing the ancestors directly by talking to the *taonga* on display. Through group remembrances in situations like exhibit openings and closings, the Maori community position their loss of cultural heritage alongside a compelling need to be responsible for the care of their *taonga* and ancestors. The ritual openings conducted for *taonga Maori* in 'Te Maori' along with other political changes occurring to legislation on the Treaty of Waitangi and *te reo* endeavors, all worked to facilitate a 'continuing regard to protocol, and recognition that the gallery became a *marae*, a ceremonial meeting ground, for the duration of the exhibition' (Thomas 1999: 191-192).

Such traditionally focused exhibitions of Maori art home in on a viewer's expectations of certain ritual aspects of culture, that can arguably be stated as being the overarching representations of historic narratives for Maoridom despite specific representations not being made.⁴⁴ Having multiple narratives and multiple discourses expressed about cultural heritage is an accepted part of Maori ways of knowing (Smith 1999: 33), and of course cannot always be expressed through the more totalizing images of the past, representations made, and narratives told in the national and local museums holding *taonga Maori*. It is with this in mind, that specific rituals of traditional encounter posit a *hapu*-based counter-knowledge of cultural heritage in specific histories and narratives. The recognition of the validity of these processes has derived from a long-history of changes to the political landscape in New Zealand, where the contested accounts of culture and history come to define Maori identity. 'Te Maori' alone cannot be overemphasized as the

⁴⁴ Thomas (1999) points out that there was a lack of any art in 'Te Maori' from after 1860, and so was more essentially traditionalist in orientation. Neither contemporary nor neotraditional artistic representations were made, nor any of the more amalgamated styles that developed as a result of colonial influence (188). Other exclusions such as women's arts like weavings had their lack of presence explained partially as being too fragile to travel, but Thomas contends that this was a post-exhibition reflection (1999: 193).

only defining factor for relations with *taonga*, especially today as Maori are still striving for broader goals of sovereignty where museums must not only accommodate protocols around *taonga*, but allow for the control that is sought over cultural heritage today to move past the goals of postcolonialism (Hanson 1989: 896, Thomas 1999: 195, McCarthy 2011: 235).

In museums, the more cohesive narrative of Maori history is displayed, but through discursive practices, the symbolic insertion of *taonga* into land claims, and the ritual protocols followed in regards to acknowledging the power of *taonga*, kin groups can also display more individual representations of identity. As legal courts and museums have come to symbolize the confines of western authority, asserting rights in these forums in various ways plays a part in the construction of the performances where the audience of outsiders or non-Maori can participate or at least witness the efficacy from which a *hapu* or *iwi* defend their cultural identity. The ritual ways *taonga* and ancestors' *mana* are cared for in museums solidifies ideals of cultural identity based in historic connections, while in legal courts these actions and concerns are translated to the direct hereditary rights needed for descendants to maintain such social relationships. On the *marae* and in family homes, *taonga* can be taken care of directly by their descendants, but in the museum identity is saliently debated through a position demanding inclusion and eventually the rights to act as *kaitiaki* (guardians) over ancestors. Within legal and economic debates over the land as well, these cultural interpretations of personhood are invoked as part of the Maori adaptation of knowledge into a politico-legal framework.

The recognition of Maori cultural property rights and political authority

A. Maori authority over cultural representations

In tribunal hearings where *taonga* are presented as evidence for the way they symbolize historic place on the land and strengthen *korero*, there is a clear legal impetus for the need to restore the hereditary protection of *taonga*. Links displayed between *taonga* and the land continually self-legitimize rights through very specific usage of bodily metaphors, continually bringing the past into the present, and acknowledging the presence of ancestors in *taonga* and land. These issues are usefully constructed in the 'contact zone' of the museum (see Clifford 1997) where Maori rituals become an integral part of certain procedures. Historic performances of memory within familial, community, or public

contexts bring poetic sensibilities of language and history into the realm of 'reality'. In Mitchell's (1990) parlance, the divide that exists between the frameworks of 'meaning' and 'reality' constantly affects the way societies frame their ideals and beliefs as opposed to actual practice. The music, texts, and oratory performed bring the unphysical realities of indigenous life like *taonga* to stand in opposition to the material realities of the present. Mitchell (1990) argues that this is linked to the diminishing focus on locally produced and locally centered lives, which in Whanganui is part of the goals of *kura kaupapa* and *wananga* initiatives for children and adults to instantiate a sense of local knowledge and identity. Becoming knowledgeable participants in cultural heritage must operate in the wider framework of Maori traditions and protocols, but how do symbolic endeavors to ritually acknowledge *taonga* legitimize political authority, when the legitimacy is the very right to employ symbolism in the first place (Harrison 1992)? Drawing from a parallel where Maori knowledge operates on multiple registers, the long history of Maori and Pakeha interactions seem to test the political flexibility of legal and museum regulations, but also integrates cultural notions of ancestral identities into a framework for the eventual return of land and *taonga*.

Maori communities did not passively accept the land dislocations in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Steven 1989, Belich 2000, Ward 2000). The Native Land Court established in 1865 was intended to settle who the traditional owners of land sections were in order that the European prospectors who wanted to settle on them could appropriately compensate the right people. Much of the dealings with the courts were mainly addressed towards the needs of the European buyers, but at the very least gave Maori the opportunities to redress their claims (Fieldnotes, Whanganui land claims office, 3 August 2009; see Belgrave 2005). The process of reclaiming the lands originally lost through purchases that took advantage of Maori and their misunderstandings of European ownership, has been undertaken through the Waitangi Tribunals from 1975, which also helped establish the policies of biculturalism. Bringing the political needs of the Maori community into the foreground, namely through land re-possession, is a crucial drive today. Land has always been the emblematic bridge for Maori people symbolizing their connectedness to Aotearoa in terms of relations to the ancestors and history. The outcomes of politico-legal battles in New Zealand can be understood as the means by which Maori concerns have been translated into western discourse to raise awareness of indigenous rights on a national level.

Issues of cultural representation are also fought within the same realm as land rights and other indigenous rights as a counteraction to Western histories and representations. Smith (1999) connects the research and familiarity with the records needed in tribunal claims to inspiring a much wider interest 'by Maori communities to regain or hold on to Maori language and cultural knowledge' (169). Through the long Maori history of political interactions with the state from the time of the Treaty of Waitangi until now, and exhibitions like 'Te Maori' that brought *taonga* issues to the national forefront (Thomas 1999), the division between Maori and Pakeha in regards to the Treaty and biculturalism 'retrospectively constitutes two parties, as two parties are indeed arguably constituted, in a rivalrous and contradictory relationship, by the process of settler colonization itself' (Thomas 1995: 28). As a relevant space to address cultural representations, the 'awakening' of *taonga* that took place during events like 'Te Maori' became a recognized element of Maori cultural inclusion in the museum as a *marae*-space as well as part of the ritually enacted behaviors that come to be expected of other museums involved in the care of *taonga Maori* (Tapsell 2011).

In museums, the long battles for equal recognition has resulted in a bicultural structure, where Maori communities are consulted over the way *taonga* are handled. The ethos of biculturalism in New Zealand is essentially the effort to accommodate the relatively dualist perspectives of Maori and Pakeha and be inclusive in government and society in recognition of principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. In the museum, such issues involve the governance of the museum and its collections, as well as the inclusion of Maori into these processes. At the Whanganui Regional Museum, their dual structure of governance is divided into a *Tikanga Maori* house and a civic house that were established in 2001, but the structure has been negotiated since 1999 (WRM, 'Whanganui Regional Museum Trust governance model and background', n.d.). The board is comprised of even representation for Maori and the rest of the community. WRM curator Michelle explained that the Maori population was about 20% in Whanganui, but if voting was based on population statistics 'Maori would only get 20% of the vote and they would be outvoted. In this [structure] Maori have 50% so they can't get outvoted by a dominant group' (Michelle Horwood, interview, 11 August 2009). In general though, Michelle clarified that all the museum decisions were made by consensus between the two houses.

Apart from the Whanganui example, there have been debates about access to museum collections and control of *taonga* since the mid-1980s. At the Annual General meeting of the Art Galleries and Museum Association of New Zealand (AGMANZ) in Whanganui April

1989, it was decided that the association's name would be changed to The Museums Association of Aotearoa New Zealand Incorporated – *Te Ropu Hanga Kaupapa Taonga* (Coster 1994: 22). Biculturalism was intended to actually incorporate Maori into the decision-making process, profession, and structure, instead of just wider acceptance of 'Maori rituals of encounter' in the museums (Coster 1994: 23). The goals of making the museum structure a more '*marae*-like' place that works within Maori frames of knowledge and tradition, was helpfully facilitated by such ceremonial inclusion into the care of *taonga* during exhibition openings, as Tapsell points out in 'Aroha mai: Whose museum?' (2011). Tapsell describes *taonga Maori* as the vehicles through which such community inclusion in ethical approaches to tribal concerns can address the need for protection of *whakapapa*, *mana*, *tapu*, and the narratives surrounding *taonga Maori* located outside of their ancestral homes.

Great strides have been made towards greater Maori community inclusion in the museum structure and process, but also there has also been much development over the years as a result of tribunal hearings, to include a more empowered approach to cultural heritage. The Wai 262 claim was submitted to the tribunal by six *iwi*, which

asserts Maori interests in *taonga* including indigenous flora and fauna, genetics and genetics derivatives, silica sands and cultural motifs, as well as items identified (by claimants and others) as "traditional" objects of value. This latter category includes the Maori language, Maori knowledge or *matauranga* in general and the knowledge, skilled practice and artefacts of processes including carving and weaving... (Henare 2007: 49-50).

In relation to museum collections, *taonga* under the control of the state have been construed in terms of cultural property in rights-based arguments (not cultural). The knowledge connected to *taonga* is also controlled in ways related to property terms, which have been interpreted through the Treaty of Waitangi and legal claims in changing ways (Belgrave 2005). Expanding these issues to ways Maori also claim their hereditary rights to the land, is supported by ritual performances in relation to *taonga* (as land and museum objects) that are positioned in terms of the historic precedence of such process and knowledge as an autonomous construction, but argued within western legal semantics.

B. Intellectual property rights, and different registers of knowledge

Matauranga as the knowledge-based element of cultural heritage has also come to be understood as a type of cultural property and is helpfully supported by this recognition of Maori ritual and process in western forums. Rights asserted over the control of

matauranga speak to the ethical issues of research and a history of perceived loss, but also the cultural and familial controls extended over knowledge. In Harrison's (1992) comparison of various ritual elements and arguments of cultural ownership, he describes the way a ritual may display solidarity, but is also the product of 'changing and contested power relations within the group itself' (225). Harrison's argument construes rituals as the intellectual property of a group, and looks at ways these property rights are similar to instances of ownership in 'gift economies' where goods are connected to the identities of those performing as well as ways to maintain their social relationships (1992: 226). He gives the example of the potlatch system in Northwest Coast American Indian culture, where the competitive feasts and wealth-destruction validated the non-material possession of ancestral names, titles, and other ritual privileges (Harrison 1992: 236). In performances of potlatch rituals practices existed that could only be enacted by rightful descendants who could literally impersonate their ancestors and in a sense, reincarnate them by drawing on ancestral identities while projecting them to create a space of entangled social relationships (Harrison 1992: 239).

For Northwest Coast American Indians, part of the enigma of how such ritual displays confer a legitimate political persona is within the power connected to potlatch objects of exchange, similar to the special status of certain *taonga* in museum collections. The means of power contained by *taonga* is connected to powerful ancestors or events, which transcending time and space can be drawn upon as a marker of identity. The control of this connective knowledge in the political sense is a prerogative of the descendants who have had these rights passed to them. When Maori assert the symbolic wealth of *taonga* through performances that display the importance of ancestors and family, integration into a museum's bicultural structure, or through the very design of the museum structure reproducing a *marae*, western spaces are culturally re-claimed. Harrison (1992) questions how such symbolism 'legitimises their control of these symbolic resources in the first place', and concludes that 'deploying the symbols of national identity cannot itself create legitimacy, but can only *test* it, because legitimacy includes – perhaps, in fact, it ultimately *is* – the very right to employ this symbolism in the first place. There must already be a publicly accepted entitlement to the use these symbols before they can be utilised to any political effect' (236, emphasis original).

In the case of *taonga Maori* in New Zealand, it has been long recognized that ritual prerogatives such as holding ceremonies before an opening of an exhibition, or giving *karakia* before handling a piece of *taonga* in the museum (Mead 2003: 89) is part of the

museum interactions recognized through bicultural policies (McCarthy 2011). In New Zealand's special relationship to their indigenous population and endeavors such as the Wai 262 claim which legally frame control over *taonga* as a necessary step towards Maori sovereignty (in recurring reinterpretations of the Treaty [Belgrave 2005]), adaptable and integral relationships Maori have formed with *taonga* (as museum objects, land, nature, and general Maori knowledge) are asserted in varying registers of knowledge.

Property rights in New Zealand under the Wai 262 claim have been consolidated by the Crown to include the categories of *matauranga Maori*- such as arts, history, *te reo Maori*, and *rongoa Maori* (medicine/healing). Under the category of cultural property, there are the aspects of culture that the Crown has failed to protect of *taonga*, such as *artifacts*. There are also issues through the Wai 262 claim taken up as intellectual property issues that become problematic for protecting such as traditional knowledge and the need for a sui generis response (Solomon 2007: 6; 19).⁴⁵ These laws are unsuitable from a Maori sense because Maori

do not necessarily consider that their language, art forms, images or designs etc can be regarded separately from the culture and knowledge base underpinning the TK and the resources associated with that knowledge. Traditional knowledge and expressions of that knowledge, as well as the resources upon which the [traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions] are based exist together as part of a seamless whole (Solomon 2007: 24).

Within such negotiations of culture that posit a heritage-based ownership of Maori culture and all of its '*taonga*', in museums the discourse has moved beyond biculturalism towards Maori community members being the *kaitiaki* of *taonga* (Wareham 2001: 39).⁴⁶ This position seeks the recognition of the ancestral relationship between the *taonga* and Maori sociality as issues of *taonga* become blurred between the areas of personhood, history, and contemporary politics.

Several authors critique the use of Western concepts of intellectual property laws to indigenous needs of reclaiming traditional knowledge and identity through the law (Tsosie 1997, Coombe 1993, Strathern 1999). Tsosie (1997) speaks about the issues of cultural property and ownership in Native American communities, and draws attention to the fact that tribal conceptions of property are often communal, whereas intellectual property deals

⁴⁵ For a more in depth discussion of the issues of intellectual property rights and indigenous rights being unsuitable see Coombe 1993.

⁴⁶ The Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights was initiated in 1993 after a joint meeting of indigenous representatives, who decided that national agencies must recognize rights over the protection of customary knowledge as their own cultural property to control and disseminate as they wish. This also extended to issues of archival materials that pertain to indigenous knowledge, which if the sources could not be handed over to Maori control, at least had to be shared with them (Wareham 2001: 28-29).

with more individual rights. She clarifies that 'an individual may acquire superior rights to or responsibilities for part of the collective property by, for example, being entrusted with the care and maintenance of the property' (Tsosie 1997: 7). This is relevant to more contemporary Maori issues with *taonga* as well, as objects in museums are often contested on behalf of the group, and in circumstances of misappropriation, communities often single out individual ownership of a family or community to focus acts of repatriation. Strathern (1999) explains how intellectual property rights law is not the correct vehicle to transfer notions of indigenous rights to Western legal notions of the ownership of group history and traditional knowledge. This is because the cultural impetus that brings personhood into the situation, therefore also brings the transactions between people and personhood in relation to objects in the western legal context. Strathern (1999) makes the argument for a new legal instrument to take on group rights, but also to account for individual identities.

The use of the term cultural property within the museum situates a context of possession, and also defines ways that museum heritage is employed through the 'right to determine the meaning' of the objects or 'prohibit certain meanings and uses' (Bolton 2001: 220). These restrictions frame relationships within indigenous communities as much as the relationship between indigenous communities and museums, especially when museum materials support current community political struggles (Herle 2002: 232). Maori use of *taonga* in tribunal proceedings and as evidence helps situate material links to the past and between ancestors and the land. On a cultural register, these interpretations collapse historic significances into the present tense, by talking to the ancestors within *taonga* and in the land through ritual knowledge and discursive practices that uphold hereditary knowledge and rights. If kinship and knowledge bind people within the community through oral performances of culture and the symbolic presence of ancestors, such knowledge becomes the fabric of kinship in which people seek to continually define and redefine themselves within the wider group. It is from this sense that once a certain level of a socialization of knowledge is present, ownership and a more Maori centered consciousness develops as a need to assert identity within political forums to test outside frameworks of knowledge on behalf of one's wider kin group. Once that familiarity with Maori knowledge is attained, renaming land cites, discovering connections to the land, and reordering Maori knowledge for either ritual or legal procedures helps fulfill kinship responsibilities for one's community on a larger scale.

Personifying the land and hereditary authority

Balancing a relationship with the ancestors requires the adherence to standards of *tikanga Maori* to show the correct love and support for the ancestors through care for the land and *taonga Maori*. The history of items like the Smith collection *taonga* can become contentious and involve issues of ownership over elements of *matauranga Maori* such as history and knowledge, based partially on other losses of cultural heritage and current political struggles to assert identity. Mead discusses ways that kinship relations ‘are fragile and need to be nurtured’ as the principles of *whanaungatanga*, or familial obligations, factors into understandings of *taonga*; including the associated principle ‘of *kanohi kitea*, a face seen, indicating that kin members need to be seen and the bonds of *whanaungatanga* kept strong’ (Mead 2003: 28). In this way *taonga Maori* such as historic photographs or cloaks that come out during a *tangihanga* (funeral rites), or exhibition openings have great significance for the commemoration and care of ancestors, as well as the maintenance of bonds between the living and dead (Sinclair 1990; Tapsell 1997, 2005: 155; Binney and Chaplin 1986). Tapsell describes the use of *taonga Maori* in a *tangihanga* as being ‘performed’ on the *marae* by elders to speak to the appropriate ancestors and reconnect to the recently deceased (Tapsell 2006: 19). The ancestral embodiment of *taonga* can be more politically objectified towards legitimizing legal claims of rights as discussed in the previous section, but *taonga* as embodied ancestors also precludes them from actual ownership in a legal (in a mixed pluralistic sense) or cultural appropriateness



Figure 5.4 View from Whanganui of Mount Ruapehu with Tongariro and Ngauruhoe

sense (Tapsell 1997: 362). This is partially attributed to the ancestor connections that test museum or state legal ownership of *taonga*, but also through the ritual knowledge that is “bound into” specific houses, carvings and heirlooms belonging to the descent group, in a direct and immediate relationship’ (Salmond 1982: 84).

In recognition of the validity of ancestral knowledge bases as a tenet of indigenous sociality (see Barth 1975, 2002; Salmond 1982, 1985; Morphy 1991; Tapsell 1997; Brown and Peers 2006; Crook 2007, etc), museums are adjusting to Maori asserting their *kaitiakitanga*, or guardianship, connections over *taonga*. Objects become mediums for communicating ancestral knowledge of the past as well as contemporary goals. In Whanganui, the familiarity with a corporal sense of knowledge built around *taonga* was observed through interactions with specific objects or photographs that connected *taonga* with named ancestors, which helped support a visual relationship to historic remembrance. In her analysis on the personhood held within objects, A. Weiner (1992) describes how the essence of personhood, the *hau*, lives within possessions, because a person’s ‘social life is fragmentary unless attached to something of permanence’ (64). In Maori social relations, this is most tangibly translated to ancestral connections to the land, where the land itself, is also imbued with ancestral *mana*, but also the actual spirits of ancestors.

As explained in Chapter two, the *mana* of *taonga* and the land are established through the *whakapapa* paradigm that draws upon genealogies stretching from early migration narratives. The continuation of Maori rituals also provides a further channel through which Maori can communicate to the ancestors and strengthen their kinship ties. As a means of communicating this everlasting connection between ancestors, the land, and present Maori descendants, generally upon meeting each other people will introduce the mountains and rivers their *hapu* is associated with. In the case of the Whanganui area, the connected mountains are Mount Tongariro and Ruapehu, and the Whanganui River (Simon 1991). By citing these connections to features of the land such as mountains that are *tapu* and associated with histories and chiefs (Mead 2003: 67), they become further enmeshed into the cultural landscape through the songs, poems, and oratory surrounding the land features which become ‘covered in words’ (Mead 1984: 20). Using speech to awaken connections between ancestors, descendants, and the land enables people to take on the ancestral personas linked with their heritage, and allows others to see how they connect with each other. Kaiwhaiki elder Morvin Simon explains the connection to Tongariro as integral because it is the source of the Whanganui River and therefore lifeways and resources of people of the river, as well as connecting Nga Paerangi to other

hapu of the area who through intermarriage share genealogical connections with them. He also describes Ruapehu as the 'traditional peak of Te-Atihaunui-a-Paparangi' (Simon 1991: 27).

In Whanganui when people begin or end a public speech they tend to say '*Ko au te awa, ko te awa, ko au*', meaning 'I am the river and the river is me', as well as giving a prayer to conclude exchanges and discussions. This metaphor is written on the signs around Whanganui, is frequently repeated by elders, is said at community gatherings, prefaces speeches at the *marae*, and can be found in books, poems, and written *hapu* histories concerning the Whanganui River; more recently it has been stated before the start of the Waitangi Tribunals. As an outsider, I heard many people say '*Ko au te awa, ko te awa, ko au*' while I was in Whanganui, as they tried to explain to me the importance of their spiritual connection to the land and all that accompanies it. This perspective encompasses love for deceased *tupuna* (ancestors) who lived on the land and for whom places were named after, the livelihood that many in the region depend upon, and the future birth of *uri*, or descendants, who will carry on the traditions of today's Maori population. The saying '*Ko au te awa, ko te awa, ko au*' is also a metaphor that creates a naturalistic link between the people of the region and their river and is the allusion that such concepts are considered inherent knowledge for a Maori person.⁴⁷ The importance of the river is linked not only to *whakapapa*, but also to the history and narratives of the Whanganui River itself. Metaphoric incantations of the land, ancestors, and gods can be equated to linguistic and symbolic connections to deeper themes and ideologies, which require a Maori sense of knowing to understand.

In a letter written by Nga Paerangi elder Morvin for the Office of Treaty Settlements, he discusses the metaphoric and practical connections that Whanganui *iwi* share with the river. In his paper, Morvin cites all of the ways that the waterway is important to the region and that it is the responsibility of *hapu* along the water 'to look after' the River (Simon 2003: 3). He also explains that 'the old people' lived symbiotically with nature, and goes on to describe ways that in flood or low tide the river constantly provided. Simon gives the example of his maternal grandfather walking down the River with him as a child, and in a

⁴⁷ In a critique of nature/culture conceptions, Sissons (2005:16-17) discusses the pitfalls of 'eco-indigenism' as leading to questions of authenticity, and opens the categories of indigenous definition to those who share in subsistence based lifeways, when indigenous group have much more specific identities and contextual concerns. Sissons clarifies that indigenous people in settler nation contexts are more concerned with marginalization and continued oppression by the original European populations from colonialism, marking a distinct moral and political argument of recognition.

full flood being able to scoop out the whitebait fish. He then emphasizes that though that was a long time ago, that as historians came to see him to obtain information for the Waitangi Tribunal court proceedings to compile regional history, he was able ‘to have whitebait fritters for breakfast, and freshly grilled eels for tea. We are talking about the “here and now” not the 1840s. The river is still providing as it always has, but for that to continue, the spirit of “reciprocity” has to prevail. ***Manaakitia to awa, a, mana koutou e tiaki*** “take care of your river and it in turn will provide for you” (Simon 2003: 4, emphasis original).

The frequently used metaphor in Whanganui of ‘I am the river and the river is me’ helps construe ideas about knowledge, power, and the identity of Maori on the river that is inevitably linked to the historic landscape and its ancestral connections. The imagery, or tropic construction of the river as symbolic of the region, evokes landed representations in the expansion on the continued importance of the river. It also allows meanings behind the phrase to be altered within people’s own frames of reference. The metaphors connected to the Maori landscape build upon themselves to serve as their own referential endpoints, and it is within a particular specialization of a Maori way of knowing – by connecting land features to ancestors and their history in *te reo Maori* – that such constructions of identity can be saliently formed.

Within the idea that the Whanganui River takes care of people in a nurturing relationship based on ancestral connections to the land and continued respect, is also a metaphor that collapses the distance between ancestors and time by showing their continued *kaitiaki* for the living within the provisions of the land. When *taonga Maori* is located on the *marae* instead of in the museum, it is thought to be enough that ‘once it’s in the house there, the house looks after them’ (Morvin Simon, interview, 17 December 2009). *Taonga* on the *marae* such as, ‘Wakarewarewa’ *mere* located in ‘Te Kiritahi’ in Kaiwhaiki, are thought of as taken care of by being returned to their correct ancestral home. This relates to the innate connectivity between *taonga* and the land as well as the need for proximity based on the tenets of the *whanau* and the protection of knowledge. Before *taonga* has contact with outsiders or those not spiritually equipped, there might need to be *karakia* or a *powhiri* (welcoming ceremony) in the case of visitors (of Maori descent, or foreign visitors) entering the *marae* space. In the museum and before Land Court proceedings, such ancestral acknowledgement functions to demarcate the presence of ancestors and the reverence to their past, but in family homes where ancestral portraits hang, and people keep personal *taonga*, such ritual recognitions become unnecessary and

geared towards simple respect. The embodied ancestral presence on the *marae* or in Maori homes enables such interactions less in the sense where the circulation of goods and their loss has eroded social identities and a need to re-claim such identities (Harrison 1999: 240). It is in these circumstances of outsider possession, where a community feels they must take care of important *taonga Maori*, and knowledgeable Maori through ritual expressions in various forums recognize the spiritual presence of *taonga*.

Leach (2003: 134) speaks of the creativity of *taonga* (drawing from Tapsell 1997) and its cycles of accumulation, loss, and consequent return as cyclical in the sense of power being creatively interpreted in different circumstances with *taonga*, and the ways these negotiations of power change those dealing with it. When speaking with Bill Ranginui about the *taonga Maori* in the Smith collection, Bill described research on behalf of his kin group dealing with Land Courts, and learning what was needed to present evidence briefs as long and arduous over the last 30 years of his life. He had to learn land sites, research land court records, and discover contestations that his *hapu* had in the past and present with the Crown. He said the information and knowledge he needed was what his grandmothers would know, but through his own research endeavors, his mindset had shifted to being more land and culture focused (Bill Ranginui, interview, 28 November 2009).

Speaking about the ancestral landscape through embodied metaphors of identity also draws a connection to ways cultural property issues have become entangled with rights over personhood. In seeking land rights and control over *taonga* through legal means, the specific issues of cultural identity and beliefs are not enough to communicate a rights based stance, but instead arguments are framed as an extraction from historic social relationships in terms of what has been lost economically, politically, and socially when those rights were infringed upon in colonial times (Leach 2003: 138). Such uses of ancestral knowledge locates an indigenous person 'not in a community but in their own person and own relationship' (Strathern 1999: 170), since not only are losses to Maori knowledge bases divergent and fractious, but the histories of Maori groups across New Zealand and their colonial interactions vary greatly. This makes the process of knowledge socialization stimulated within a community, at times, very much part of one's own personal explorations and journey towards knowledge of the land and history, which later extends to the wider kin responsibilities of that knowledge.

Today when kin groups assert their rights over the land, they do so more compellingly when their political arguments are supported by ritual actions and historic *taonga* that

exemplify the indelible aspects of personhood and Maori identity. The historic precedence and independence of such Maori knowledge creates authority when being transposed onto a legal epistemology through which these arguments must exist. Furthermore, *matauranga* brings the significance of language, the land, and ancestors into *taonga* where knowledge is 'bound into them with power of naming that locks them together, and collapses distance in space-time' (Salmond 1982: 85). There are multiple registers of knowledge going on in a community in relation to understandings of *taonga*. Performances on the land and in museums help assert a group-focused vision of identity from a background of built-up knowledge practices, but there is a more individual background to this knowledge as well. Through legal and cultural means, Maori are exerting their control over the landscape to reclaim cultural losses connected to colonialism, and in doing so test western knowledge structures. In the recognition of symbols such as land and *taonga Maori* as elements of Maori historically grounded identities, Maori can assert cultural authority in political forums. With the growing recognition of ideas such as *kaupapa Maori* controlled knowledge and a need for *kaitiaki* over land and *taonga Maori*, New Zealand is adapting to Maori ways of knowing and expressions, but within shifting evaluations that also shape debates surrounding other cross-cultural exchanges in the country.

CONCLUSION

Photo-elicitation and issues of community knowledge

This research on a Maori collection of nineteenth century *taonga Maori* was intended to contribute to past projects of photo-elicitation (Niessen 1991, Poignant 1995, Oberholtzer 1996, Binney and Chaplin 2003, Bell 2003, Wright 2004, Brown and Peers 2006), and practices of visual research in anthropology. By bringing photographs of the collection back to the source community they originated from, this project was meant to explore responses to *taonga Maori* based on previous examples of visual research, such as when Binney and Chaplin (1986) brought photographs of ancestors back to the community of Rua Kenana at Maungapohatu, and faced people's varying responses. Such projects often cite ways that communities respond divergently to photographs of ancestors or objects, and also that people reconnect to their own sense of the past and bring past perceptions into the present. Nga Paerangi *hapu* were addressing issues of losses to lands, resources, and '*taonga*' as referred to in the Treaty of Waitangi through land claims. This led to my questions over community knowledge related to *taonga Maori* and the land, what kinds of knowledge were important to identity, and the political implications of that knowledge.

In embarking on visual research in a Maori community, the cultural politics of working with such materials being collected by a European during the high point of colonialism emerged as deeply connective to the relationship with a postcolonial agenda to appropriate losses of cultural heritage and identity. Though this study was originally intended to focus on issues of museums and the availability of historic collections to produce fruitful research and information for both an indigenous community and a researcher, much stronger political issues emerged as to what my role would be, what people were willing to tell me, different significances placed on *taonga*, and a history bitterly remembered as the reason behind the economic, linguistic, and social disadvantages that Maori in Whanganui were encountering. Even these more political reflections were divergent as people had their own personal views on culture, their upbringing, experiences, capabilities, specialties, and personal dispositions to knowledge. Due to these different perspectives, this research focuses on the issues of knowledge in relation to *taonga*, knowledge as *taonga* (in the sense of a cultural treasure), and the things that people communicated about the issues surrounding knowledge as a means of partially understanding the current sociopolitical picture of Whanganui in relation to *taonga*

Maori. Political contexts, such as being in the process of finalizing land claims, also contributed to issues I discuss in my analysis of people's responses to Smith collection images. These reactions were underpinned by community initiatives to promote learning in a Maori way, and relating oral knowledge for community benefit in political and cultural gains.

In looking at Whanganui *iwi* history, and specifically the Nga Paerangi *hapu*, I found that the focus on a specific place and context was useful to my analysis of a particular situation of knowledge politics in relation to *taonga*, but realize that there are also many other ways in which Maori groups engage with their material heritage (e.g. Te Arawa who are renowned for their carving and weaving). The political changes that are ongoing in Whanganui are strongly foregrounded by ideals surrounding the continuity of identity through language, ritual practices, and upholding protocols deemed necessary for indigenous identity. These changes strongly relate to the kind of authority over Maori cultural knowledge that communities seek to control from outsiders who might not treat it within the proper cultural dissemination, but could potentially also exploit such information to the detriment of Maori communities. It is with this in mind, that I must acknowledge that this narrative cannot account for all of the perspectives on knowledge, *taonga Maori*, or other aspects of Maori identity that I encountered. My representations are inherently partial, and furthermore it has been extremely difficult to illuminate the divergent responses people had to the Smith images in compartmentalized categories of knowing, which seems to be an over construction of such knowledge (cf. Brown and Peers 2006: 110); and as this research is relayed in an academic text, it not communicated in the form or dissemination preferable for such historic knowledge in a Maori community.

My methodology alluded to a time when cultural anthropologists used photographs, such as Boas, but of course now in a much different period of anthropology where the connotations of photographs have expanded, and an indigenous sense of '*Coming to know the past* has been part of the critical pedagogy of decolonization' (Smith 1999: 34, emphasis original). Photographs of *taonga* in the Smith collection as historic images of ancestors and images of treasured objects acted like the family photographs in Geffroy's research where images were '*representations* resulting from the specific meeting and interweaving of at least two sets of culture and tradition' (Geffroy 1990: 379, emphasis original) – both the cultures of photography as a contemporary means of representation, as well as the traditions and familial knowledge that are connected to images of ancestors. This also relates to familial histories and knowledge embedded within *taonga*. By using

such images of a collection with their evocative narratives, I was able to posit research with the collection's source community interested in seeing the images, but my motivation to benefit the community by letting the process guide the outcome, shifted decisively towards my own understandings of ways objects are socially invested with meaning (Appadurai 1986, Gosden and Marshall 1999, Peers 1999), and politically entangled in their colonial associations (Thomas 1991). My project provides an insight into the materiality and sociality embodied in a nineteenth-century Maori museum collection, but more widely contributes to theories of the sociality of objects and the knowledge through which social relationships to history, the land, and objects are constructed through an indigenous framework.

Reconciling such complex responses to material culture and encountering the flexibility of practices is not new to anthropological analyses, especially in relation to indigenous cultures in settler nation territories (see Morphy 1991, Keen 1994, Merlan 1998, Povinelli 2002). These cultural examinations have also come to conclusions that there can be no totalizing ethnographic truths or representations. Strathern (1991) draws on the concept of prior frames of knowledge in terms of resolving issues of naming relationships between people and things, and divergent analogies that people make about them. She argues that anthropologists partially draw upon the knowledge they receive, but not within the overarching frame of indigenous knowledge (103). Taking such issues of ethnographic authority into consideration, I have attempted to frame this discussion of the research in recognition of not only the multifaceted interpretations available to material culture, but in terms of Maori engagements that seek to convert power and a means of gaining equal footing by asserting the precedence of their own frames of knowledge, from which those outside of certain social relationships (to ancestors, land, *taonga*) will not have the full capability of understanding. Even the assimilation of knowledge given to me in the manner of *tikanga Maori*, as oral, fluid, and interrelated knowledge, has been subverted into my own academic making to produce something quite different than the form Maori knowledge is intended.

The control and consultation that Maori communities are seeking in relation to their representations in research, ethnographies, scientific endeavors, or museum exhibitions of cultural heritage are a product of a history of Maori having long been the subjects of ethnographic examination (Hakiwai 1991), and a consciousness that such research is not helping the communities from whom the knowledge comes, just the researchers (Smith 1999). This aspect of knowledge in Kaiwhaiki and wider Whanganui contexts was made

plain to me as people often questioned my motives for research, wanted to know the final outcomes for research, and frequently asserted their need to control cultural knowledge thought of as empowering, but also needing protection. In my receiving this knowledge I was expected within a notion of reciprocity to treat it as a gift, or *taonga*, and so the responsibilities of this knowledge must also be carried on through myself in the sense of *kaupapa Maori* research and ethics.

The current context of an acute awareness of the implications of research as having possibly harmful outcomes for a community has distinctly drawn a line under the amount of authority from which I can present these observations and interpretations of the Whanganui community. My conceptions of Maori knowledge being inherently partial within a particular socio-political context, and coming from research conducted in a particularly powerful period of redefining representations of Maori identity, means that though attempting to add to the discourse on the politics of knowledge, my research is still unfinished. An analysis of Maori knowledge within a community as a means for explaining the maintenance of cultural histories and beliefs in relation to *taonga* is not particularly helpful to the people at Kaiwhaiki. The knowledge generated must be intended to support the community, and promote the *mana* of the group – especially within the political contexts operating in terms of repatriation requests for lands and other significant resources based on the contestations of history and infringements on Maori rights. The fabric of such contested histories can be found within the orally narrated features of the land, the carvings found on the *marae*, the *taonga* that people cherish in homes and the museum, as well the language that stores these ways of knowing within a Maori framework.

The goals of increasing community *mana* and adding something useful to the Nga Paerangi community is difficult, but a necessary goal of this research. The actual synthesis of the knowledge that I received from various people and sources about *taonga* and identity politics must be framed within its current context as an acknowledgement of the aspects of loss and renewal that establish and maintain social relationships to *taonga Maori*. It my hope that this research will add to community knowledge related to the Smith collection or other *taonga Maori* future research endeavors and whatever directions those may take. As Tapsell (2003) explains the process of going through the Waitangi Tribunals and realigning Maori prerogatives today as key community concerns, he discusses how this creates new relationships engendered through a process that will become motivations through which *taonga* will be relaunched and ‘old relationships’ to *taonga* ignited (247-

248). Once the dust settles on the political focus of events for the community, issues of *taonga Maori* might re-emerge, and again become the issues through which a group can work towards common cultural goals.

Ownership and *kaitiaki*

I have argued that reflections on *taonga* are divergent and that people had different impressions and experiences through which they could relate to *taonga*, but often those who were not in leadership roles or speaking as the knowledgeable representatives on behalf of the community were more inclined to talk about either personal experiences with *taonga*, show me their own personal *taonga* in their home, or give some other historic and personal narratives. On the other hand, those with ancestral knowledge had developed a responsibility to that knowledge to orate it, protect it, and disseminate it within circumstances they could ensure would uphold the well being of the knowledge itself. In this context, underlying political associations remain a point of relevance to the interpretation of *taonga*, but simply another component to the complex understandings behind the concepts of *taonga*.

It has become a key part of traditional identity to reclaim aspects of history such as material culture and especially the embodied relations lost with the loss of lands. Partially these different constructions and interpretations of history are available because of the different varieties of history seen in the Pacific that are argued within completely different understandings of a time/space divide, and notions that the past is an integral aspect of identity (Dening 2000). This position of heterogeneity is also the same one that is employed to understand *taonga*, and without acknowledging this, it is very difficult to talk about any semblance of a singular identification of the importance of *taonga*, as such definitions are dependent on people's personal frames of knowledge in relation to the larger traditions of their group, who they may or may not agree with in certain circumstances.

This multiplicity of ideas surrounding the pluralistic outlook on the possible interpretations of history and material culture creates an impasse as indigenous groups attempt to regain control of cultural representations (Lyons 2002). For source communities dealing with their heritage collected during colonialism, reestablishing control over these collections on behalf of the larger group helps to formalize issues surrounding the politics of identity through channels such as repatriation (Glass 2004: 116). Issues of ownership

are wide ranging in their significance to anthropologists working with indigenous cultures. Anthropologists working with Aboriginal communities across Australia have recognized the internalization of concepts of ownership and the importance of these negotiations (Merlan 1998), which have compelled communities to actively engage with archival and museum materials to strengthen their ties to history (Povinelli 2002). These engagements with visual materials inform foundations from which indigenous people seek to consciously order their knowledge within an envisioning of their own internalized goals and community concerns. Of course, the issue of the use of written sources has been problematic and can also come to be contested, and so rights to cultural resources can be most effectively ordered within a Maori framework of knowledge.

In attempts to secure the rights to identity within the settler nation, the emphasis on difference has become the mainstay of political dissention in national politics (and at times between fractious *hapu* groups of an *iwi* over overlapping claims to lands). The key point of difference that is stressed in Maori cultures, and indeed many indigenous cultures, is that kin relationships are different and have a more binding consequence than the non-indigenous people in settler nations (Sissons 2005: 33). It is from these kinship relations that the essences of past spirits are ingrained in the land and the objects of importance such as *taonga*, which continue to exist in inalienable relationships (see A. Weiner 1985). The inalienability aspect of *taonga* in the sense of an object that should not be circulated is problematic because the historical purpose of *taonga* was to bestow *mana* on those who cared for it, but to travel through time collecting more social relationships as well (Tapsell 2005: 169). The history of museum collection and care being intertwined with issues of representation and power at the national level of discourse (see Crane 1997), means controlling *taonga* in a Pakeha institution then becomes part of the display of an oppositionary identity. When Maori enact rituals to assert their connections to the ancestors, they also politically challenge western contexts of knowledge in the museum space. These symbolic challenges to space and place could be likened to the ongoing efforts to challenge the knowledge bases and histories from which European ownership can be argued as well.

Issues of control in the museum, are very focused around the politics of the 1980s and 1990s where bicultural attempts to navigate the politics of identity resulted in requests for the return of *taonga*, *koiwi tangata* (human remains), and Maori seeking a more inclusive position in the decisions affecting their communities. The discussion at this point has moved beyond such tentative steps and instead Maori have successfully disseminated the

ideas surrounding notions of *kaitiaki*, or guardianship, and ownership within different contexts. In situations such as the national museum Te Papa, the museum is the *kaitiaki* (for *taonga Maori* collections, and mainly Maori staff are the appointed as *kaitiaki Maori*) and the source communities are the actual owners of *taonga* and remains. Te Papa has acknowledged these principles in their museum charter (Solomon 2007: 23-24; McCarthy 2011: 114-115, 125). In other instances of private ownership like in the Whanganui Regional Museum, the words *kaitiaki* refer to the communities surrounding Whanganui who are seen as the caretakers of their connective *taonga*, but more in the spiritual sense, and ownership of the private collections is retained by the museum. The goals surrounding proper care of *taonga* in museums might correspond with community members not even wanting to have their *taonga* in the museum in the first place, but once it is there, the notions of loss and a need to redress the past becomes an issue made visible. The symbolic nature of objects in the museum insights their spiritual care as they are away from their ancestral homes, and especially for leaders who have knowledge of the importance of such markers of identity, the care for the future of the objects on others' behalf is very important.

Beyond the Waitangi Tribunals

Through political and local initiatives from *marae* bases to strengthen *te reo* and teach of cultural protocols, Maori interactions with *taonga* in museums have been facilitated to a certain degree, which enriches the museum process, but also asks Pakeha or any non-Maori participating in museum work involved with *taonga* to also take part as the audience/participants during cultural ceremonies and generally acknowledge Maori ways of handling *taonga* (Schieffelin 1985, Tapsell 2005: 166, see also McCarthy 2011: 1-2). By singing along with *waiata* to strengthen a *korero*, or sitting in solemn silence during the acknowledgement of ancestors during rituals, non-Maori audience members take part in the process of the creation of ritual space as much as the Maori participants. During the closing ceremony of 'Te Pihi Mata' in Whanganui, the involvement in the ceremony also consisted of Pakeha working at the museum and other interested Pakeha community members who either added to the singing at appropriate times, or at the least offered an oppositionary identity through their presence, from which Maori *korero* about the losses of land and elements of history could be metaphorically focused upon. Without an outside audience to complete these exchanges of knowledge and culture, there would still be a

respectful treatment of *taonga*, but the positioning of rituals that establish the primacy of Maori knowledge pertaining to the land and *taonga* would not be necessary in family homes and on the *marae* as *kaitiaki* would be secured through its location on ancestral lands.

What I mean to express is that the interactions with *taonga*, the land, or symbolic markers of identity are treated within their specific contexts in varying registers of knowledge, but an important part of this is the implications for the shifts in political boundaries that will occur in Whanganui once current legal endeavors have been finalized. The process of collecting knowledge for the Waitangi Tribunals has helped promote community strength as gathering knowledge from archival sources and other community members has inspired reconnecting to historic knowledge and therefore elements of Maori identity. The tribunals have sparked endeavors to regain this knowledge, find empowerment through indigenous voice, and reconnect to land and ancestors. As these constructions of knowledge and history are able to encompass varying registers of knowledge and contextual importance, in the future, the Smith collection might also come to take on different kinds of meanings in varying contexts as social or political circumstances change.

This brings me to the important question of what happens after the land claims are settled. In Kaiwhaiki, head claimant Ken Clarke stated that the community were seeking to build more homes on the *marae*, so family could return home, and hopefully with the monetary and possible land settlements that might be awarded, the community will have a more stable economic background from which to further other endeavors related to heritage and strengthening the community (Fieldnotes, Ken Clarke, 5 September 2009). These future goals become more available once people settle their outstanding land claims, and the return of important *taonga* might again fit into cultural life (Tapsell 2003).

Such anticipations for the future of *taonga* were also communicated by community leader John Maihi, who stated a need to build museums on the *marae* to house the soon-to-be repatriated *taonga Maori*, to bring the ancestral objects closer to the mind and hearts of the people in the community. Tribal museums also endeavor to focus on more local expressions of culture in specific frames of 'oppositional politics, kinship, ethnicity and tradition' (Clifford 1997: 121). John also communicated the need to work together with the Pakeha after the tribunals, especially in terms of housing *taonga* on the *marae* to help with issues of safety, temperature control, display and upkeep of *taonga Maori*, to use their knowledge of standards of the care for objects (John Maihi, interview, 12 January 2010).

McCarthy (2011) writes that no cultural centers have been launched so far, but Whakatane in the Bay of Plenty is a likely next candidate. Maori development of these centers has been slow while they wait to see if the idea of ‘partnership with museums’ could work or if they would rather ‘go it alone’ (224-225). Quoting Rhonda Paku at National Services Te Paerangi, she explains how Maori,

will develop our own stories and we will produce our own exhibition spaces. Whatever we do with our taonga, it will be drawn from our own cultural basis, from our own cultural framework, and won’t be heavily influenced by museum philosophy and museum practices. Having said that, with any taonga that have to be preserved, we will have to make sure that we have museum skills that are not counterproductive to iwi cultural aspirations. It’s about utilising the best of both (McCarthy 2011: 225).

Aside from speculations on the possibilities for the future of *taonga* endeavors in Whanganui, another aspect of the Waitangi Tribunals process has significant implications for the future – the nature of the evidence presented. As I have discussed, the amalgamation of oral histories, community knowledge, archival sources, and strong orations in *te reo Maori*, were all aspects of tribunals evidence briefs, and important to constructing knowledge in a Maori way. This created personal journeys of knowledge for individuals, but also certain relationships in history and the present were made more apparent in the knowledge that emerged from these endeavors. In the future, the archives of this evidence will also be the remains through which future descendants will call upon to embark on their own endeavors of discovering family histories and knowledge to inform their own sense of rights and identity.

After the passing of well known *kuia*, Te Manawanui Pauro respected elder of Kaiwhaiki at age 103, local Maori Party politician Tariana Turia wrote a tribute about her mentioning her strong involvement in the regeneration of *te reo*, acquaintance with old *tohungas*, presence at important *hui* gatherings and also protests (such as the Pakaitore *marae* occupation in 1995). Turia also drew the connection to the ‘rich archive of korero’ that Te Manawanui Pauro left behind, and a stated that ‘it is that korero that we must cling to now, as we mourn the loss of such a distinctive and distinguished kuia’ (‘Turia Pays Tribute to Nanny Nui’, *Scoop*, 8 September 2010).⁴⁸

The importance of historic *korero* and knowledge of relationships to the land has been established as having key relevance to Maori identity. In further constructing community archives of knowledge from Maori Land Courts evidence, Maori ways of knowing will be enabled in the future from sources as much the product of their particular social context as

⁴⁸ <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA1009/S00110/turia-pays-tribute-to-nanny-nui.htm>

the archives being excavated today. Community identity in Whanganui will continue to be asserted in creative ways, and in the future, may come to be embodied by a collection like the Smith *taonga* after political engagements are settled and heritage endeavors become re-ordered based on new governance beyond the Waitangi Tribunals and policies of biculturalism. Renewed claims to identity are part of the adaptable strategy of cultural survival where the use of markers of heritage transcends political engagements while grounding them in connections to the past.

GLOSSARY

(Definitions are taken from descriptions within texts consulted, local explanations, or *Te Aka Maori-English, English-Maori Dictionary and Index*.)

Aroha- love, affection
Atua- spirits, gods
Awheto hotete- mummified caterpillars
Hapu- sub-tribal grouping of families
Hei tiki- human form carved pendant of greenstone, either a memorial to an ancestor, or the goddess of childbirth
Hinaki- eel traps
Hongi- pressing of noses to exchange the breath of life
Hui- important ritual events
Iwi- tribe
Kai- n. food, v. to eat
Kaitiaiki- guardian
Kaitikaitanga- guardianship
Kanohe kitea- a face seen
Kapa haka- cultural performances
Karakia- prayers, incantations
Karanga- call onto the marae
Kaumatua- Maori elders
Kaumatuaship- community recognized elder in leadership role
Kaupapa- collective vision
Kaupapa Maori- combination of values both spiritual and social as applied to modes of learning, education, research, and ethics- relates to research and education
Kawanatanga- governorship
Kia ora- greetings
Kiekie- native vine with long leaves used for weaving
Koha- presents
Kohanga reo- language nest, preschool education
Koiwi tangata- human remains
Korero- n. narratives, v. to speak, tell a story
Korowai- cloak
Kuia- term for older women/grandmother
Kura kaupapa Maori- Maori-medium primary and secondary schools
Maihi- barge boards
Mana- group's status and prestige, also connected to ancestors
Maoridom- the interconnected general Maori population
Marae- community gathering place
Maramatanga- spiritual movement
Mata tuhua- obsidian flake
matauranga Maori- Maori knowledge
Mere- a short flat weapon
Mihi whakatau- ritual greeting, in place of the powhiri that takes place on the marae
Moko- tattoo)
Nga mihi- acknowledgements
Pa- fortified structure, may be inhabited permanently or used in battles as refuge
Paepae- speaker's bench/ area on the marae

Pakeha- Europeans
 Pakurukuru- prow piece for a fishing canoe
 Pare- lintel, carved slab over the door of a house
 Pingao- a native plant with golden-orange leaves
 Poi- performance art using balls attached to flax string
 Pounamu- greenstone
 Pounamu mere- a short flat weapon of greenstone
 Poupou- meetinghouse post
 Pohwiri- welcoming ceremony onto the marae gathering forum, before entering the meetinghouse
 Rangatira- leader
 Rangatiratangata- authority
 Rohe- territory
 Taha- vessels where pigeons were preserved
 Taiaha- warrior's staff
 Tangata whenua- people of the land
 Tangi/ tangihanga- ceremonial mourning, funeral rites
 Taniko- border of cloaks with woven design
 Taniwha- spirit, guardian, monster
 Tapu- sacred, prohibited, restricted, set apart ; spiritual protection
 Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi- tribal affiliation of hapu along the Whanganui River
 Tekoteko- carved figure at the apex of the meetinghouse
 Tete- waka tete, fishing canoe
 Tiheru- canoe bailer, in Whanganui dialect
 Tika- correct way
 Tikanga Maori- ideals of a correct way of feeling, understanding, and being empowered by accumulated *mana* through the generations
 Tino rangatiratanga- self-determination and empowerment
 Toanga- concept encompassing many important aspects of Maori cultural heritage such as knowledge, lands, museum objects, indigenous medicine, etc.
 Taonga Maori- treasured objects
 Tohunga- skilled and knowledgeable priest
 Toi moko- preserved, tattooed heads
 Tuakiri tangata- Maori identity
 Tukana-teina- big brother-little brother
 Tupuna- ancestral, ancestors
 Uri- descendants
 Urupa- burial site
 Waiata- songs sung on ritual occasions or to augment a speech given, but carrying historical/genealogical content
 Waka- canoe
 Wananga- n. tertiary institutions similar to university level; traditional knowledge repository; a formal or informal gathering to share knowledge
 Wananga- v. the action of sharing knowledge
 Wero- challenge in a powhiri
 Whaikorero- formal speech connecting iwi to the land, and using ritual language
 Whanau- extended families
 Whanaungatanga- familial obligations
 Whangai- adopt, adopted
 Whakapapa n. genealogically ordered narratives, v. to recite genealogies
 Where wananga- traditional sacred house of knowledge

Wharepuni- meetinghouse
Whariki- woven mat

APPENDIX 1- Charles Smith Collection, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford

Objects requested by Nga Paerangi representatives

Accession Number	Object Description	Related Documents Files Information	Acquisition Date
1) 1923.87.1	Warrior's taiaha (staff or club), with decoratively carved tip, beneath this is decorated with small feathers and tufts of white dog hair	Given by Titokowaru (Titoko blind, waru name of an ancestor) to Hori kingi; by him to Rangikowhinui, & by him to his cousin Takarangi, at whose death it was given to Mr. Charles Smith.	1860 - 1869?
2) 1923.87.3	Tewha-tewha, Long-handled club with axe-like head	Presumably this weapon came from the father of Te Oti Takarangi, chief of Kaiwhaiki Pa, Whanganui (Wanganui). However, it is possible that it came from the Te Oti Takarangi himself as he is the father of Tamati Takarangi who became the chief after his father and is elsewhere also referred to as simply 'Takarangi'	1860 - 1869?
3) 1923.87.5	Hoeroa, Club made from sperm whale jaw	The Hoeroa came through the possession of the lineage of the Waikato chiefs, who become Te Kingitanga - King movement, Te Wherowhero alias Potatau, & Tawhiao (his son) were the first & second Maori kings" (RDF).	1860 - 1869?
4) 1923.87.7	Kakauroa, Axe with trade iron axe blade		1860 - 1869?
5) 1923.87.8	Patuki, Spatula shaped club		1860 - 1869?
6) 1923.87.9	Onewa, Stone club		1860 - 1869?
7) 1923.87.12	Tete 'Tunuhaere', Canoe figurehead	Carved figure-head of a large river canoe which belonged to Ranjिताुरा of KANIPHIHI. The canoe came down the river with a war-party of Taupo warriors under Te Herekiele, Hare & Takuira, to wipe out a quarrel with the Kaiwaiki natives (see letters appended). After amicable settlement of the dispute at TUNUHAERE, the figure-head was given to chief Takarangi by Ranjिताुरा. The canoe was name "Wainui" ('Big-water') & the figure-head was given the name of 'Tunuhaere'.	1860 - 1869?
8) 1923.87.14	Tata	This belonged to the large war-canoe 'Taringamotu' & was given to Mr. Smith by Ropeha (Ropiha), 30 Nov1886. The canoe lay at PAKAKARIKI (RDF)	30 November 1886
9) 1923.87.27	Hoe or Hirau, canoe paddle		1860 - 1869?
10) 1923.87.30	Patiti, adze	Native name, patiti, found at URENUI.	1860 - 1869?

11) 1923.87.43	Unknown, adze		1860 - 1869?
12) 1923.87.46	Mata tuhua, Large, irregular flake of black obsidian,	This formerly belonged to Te Maremara, brother of Karanaina Pukeroa of KAIWAIKI. Picked up at his old kainga at TOUTAWAI. (Te Maremara was killed at MOMIMOMI; his head was preserved & his body eaten).	1860 - 1869?
13) 1923.87.65	Maramakaia, Nephrite cut into a slab	Slab of cut nephrite, maramakaia. Maramara from TUTAWA (the man Tutaua?)	1860 - 1869?
14) 1923.87.67	Pounamu, nephrite		1860 - 1869?
15) 1923.87.74	Pounamu, nephrite	[1 of] 7 pieces of nephrite showing modern cutting [see .69-75].	1860 - 1869?
16) 1923.87.75	Pounamu, nephrite	[1 of] 7 pieces of nephrite showing modern cutting [see .69-75].	1860 - 1869?
17) 1923.87.76	Pounamu, Cut nephrite, one surface is highly polished		1860 - 1869?
18) 1923.87.77	Paoi, Pounder for fern root	Patu, pounder of grey stone of elongate rounded form, used for pounding fern-root (roi or aruhe) on a flat stone for food. This belonged originally to Moetahora, then to his son [insert] Te [end insert] Kiri Tuatua, whose son [insert] Tutaua [end insert], when quite old, sold it for 10/- to Mr. Smith on 24 May 1889. Also called paoi.	24 May 1889
19) 1923.87.79.1	Fire sticks, [.1] is rectangular with a groove in the centre of one surface,	2 Fire Sticks. Large - Te Hika. Small - Te Kauroti [sic - Kaunoti?] made of Pukatea wood	1860 - 1869?
20) 1923.87.81.2	Fire sticks, [.2] is more cylindrical with a pointed end	2 Fire Sticks. Large - Te Hika. Small - Te Kauroti [sic - Kaunoti?] made of Pukatea wood	1860 - 1869?
21) 1923.87.84 1	Eel trap, wined trap for catching lampreys and eels. These traps were often used with weirs		1860 - 1869?
22) 1923.87.87	Kiekie basket		1860 - 1869?
23) 1923.87.94	Fish hook, wooden shank overlaid with halotis shell. Barbed point of human bone and feather hackle bound on at one end; length of	[1 of] Two fish hooks. The darker one faced with Paua shell, the hook of human bone - very old..."	1860 - 1869?

	plant fibre fishing line (?New Zealand flax) tied to the other		
24) 1923.87.121	Te Pa o Hinematiore, Fish hook [pa kahawai]	Was taken from a wife of Te Kooti (the notorious chief in L. TAUPO district) to whom it belonged. The wife was a prisoner during the war of 1860-. This fish-hook was named 'Te Pa o Hinematiore', from the name of the wife of the ancestor who was the great chief of the tribe. It was taken from the woman by Takarangi, a chief at KAIWAIKI [sic - Kaiwhaiki], who gave it to Mr. Smith.	1860 - 1869?
25) 1923.87.122	Fish hook, wooden shank overlaid with haliotis shell. Barbed point of human bone and feather hackle bound on at one end; length of plant fibre fishing line (New Zealand flax) tied to the other		1860 - 1869?
26) 1923.87.138	Kumu kotare kai kauri or matai, arved top for a calabash vessel, for storing food	Given to Mr. Smith by Te Ote [sic - Oti] Takarangi, chief at KAIWAIKI, whose grandfather formerly owned it.	1860 - 1869?
27) 1923.87.152	Whariki, floor mat		1860 - 1869?
28) 1923.87.158	Kakahu, cloak, dress-mat of finely dressed 'flax' (phormium or harakeke), with narrow taniko border. Unfinished example.		1860 - 1869?
29) 1923.87.159	Korowai, cloak with twisted black pendant strings and borders decorated with feathers	Gifted by the daughter of chief Wi Patene	1860 - 1869?
30) 1923.87.160	Korowai, cloak with black pendant strings & borders of wool tufts in green, yellow, red & white (imitating a feather border).		1860 - 1869?
31) 1923.87.162	Korowai, cloak with two narrow taniko borders & one broad one		1860 - 1869?

32) 1923.87.171	Kete, Bag of flax covered with various feathers incorporated into the twining. Twisted handles of brown and natural phormium		1860 - 1869?
33) 1923.87.166	Kinikini skirt, Skirt made of rolled & combed harakeke leaf strips attached to a narrow foundation of tied phormium fibre		1860 - 1869?
34) 1923.87.175	Kete, Bag, unfinished, of white dressed flax-fibre, tied & with criss-cross fibre pattern		1860 - 1869?
35) 1923.87.185	Patu parawai, wooden pounder		1860 - 1869?
36) 1923.87.188	Perepere, Carved doorway, Weathered carved doorway from a storehouse representing a grotesque human figure with protruded tongue & with three fingers on the right and four on the left	Entrance doorway (<i>perepere</i> or <i>kopani</i>) for a semi-subterranean storehouse (<i>rua tahuhu</i>) representing the ancestor Taikapoia. (Note how the name has been inscribed in mirror writing on the figure's stomach.) Such constructions were used for storing <i>kumara</i> (sweet potato). The representation of an important local ancestor on the doorway may have marked the storehouse as especially <i>tapu</i> (or sacred). Carved circa 1820-1840. Collected by Charles Smith circa 1860 and purchased from him in 1923. (1923.87.188)	1860 - 1869?
37) 1923.87.190	Ball of tattooing pigment		1860 - 1869?
38) 1923.87.205	Kauri resin, plant		1860 - 1869?
39) 1923.87.209	Aweto hotete [sic – awheto hotete] or weri, aterpillar specimen used for making tattoo pigment		1860 - 1869?
40) 1923.87.230	Greenstone ear-pendant, oval in shape and perforated at one end.	"...A green stone ear ornament of the kind of pounamu called "Tangiwai"..."	1860 - 1869?
41) 1923.87.242	Greenstone ear-pendant, Greenstone	Pendants of greenstone, drop-shaped, made by European method	1860 - 1869?

	pendant, copied from Maori form		
42) 1923.87.243	Hook-shaped nephrite pendant with incised gold mount, copied from Maori kapehu form.		1860 - 1869?
43) 1923.87.244	Heart-shaped nephrite pendant		1860 - 1869?
45) 1951.4.3	Fish-hook shell with wood backing		1860 - 1869?

APPENDIX 2 - Charles Smith Collection Whanganui Regional Museum

Accession No	TE.938
Name Title	POUCH
Brief Description	Betel pouch; made from plaited rush leaves woven in a criss-cross diamond pattern; colour has faded out almost entirely but this pouch is probably the same as pouch TE.939; pouch is rectangular in shape with a plain band at the top and base of the pouch.
Current Location	WRM/S4/Bay 5/Shelf 1/Box 6
Primary Prod Place	Sri Lanka
Acquisition Method	Unknown
Acquisition Date	Unknown
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	TE.939
Name Title	POUCH
Brief Description	Betel pouch; made from plaited rush leaves woven in a criss-cross diamond pattern; with a pattern of red diamond shapes with small, cream centers and red, yellow and black criss-cross lines; plain red band at top of pocuh and plain banded of faded red at bottom of pouch; pouch is rectangular in shape.
Current Location	WRM/S4/Bay 5/Shelf 1/Box 6
Primary Prod Place	Sri Lanka
Acquisition Method	Unknown
Acquisition Date	Unknown
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	TH.5202
Name Title	TOKI: ADZE BLADE
Brief Description	Greywacke toki, adze, type 2A. Probably from the Whanganui River.
Other Id	W85
Current Location	WRM/S2/Bay 23/Drawer 30
Signature Marks Date	Inscribed, pen and white ink "W...(illeg.)ANUI RIV...(illeg.)/...(illeg.) SMITH/ 1895" and "Chas...(illeg.)/ ... (illeg.)m...(illeg.)h/ 1896"
Primary Prod Place	New Zealand
Acquisition Method	Unknown
Acquisition Date	1895
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

NB: There is no donation record by Smith found to date to link with this adze.

Accession No	1895.2
Name Title	PLAQUE
Brief Description	"French plaque in linie deposited - meeting Louis XI & Chas the Bold".
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	France
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	18 Feb 1895

Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1895.7.1
Name Title	WHIP
Brief Description	Lacebark whip (one-piece).
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	West Indies
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	May 1895
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1895.7.2
Name Title	CAP
Brief Description	Lacebark cap.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	West Indies
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	May 1895
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1895.7.3
Name Title	STROP, RAZOR
Brief Description	Pith razor strop.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	West Indies
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	May 1895
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1895.19.1
Name Title	STATUE
Brief Description	One bronze
Current Location	
Acquisition Method	Loan
Acquisition Date	11 May 1895
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1895.19.2
Name Title	LITHOGRAPH
Brief Description	A lithograph picture by Major Heaphy of early Wellington.
Current Location	
Acquisition Method	Loan
Acquisition Date	11 May 1895
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1898.10.1
Name Title	MICROSCOPE SLIDE
Brief Description	Microscope slide, "Lords Prayer" 1/19,000th of an inch engraved on glass with a diamond.
Current Location	
Acquisition Method	Gift

Acquisition Date	13 Jul 1895
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1898.10.2
Name Title	MICROSCOPE SLIDE
Brief Description	Microscope slide, "second Chapter St John" 1/2000th of an
Current Location	inch engraved on glass with a diamond.
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	13 Jul 1895
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1898.42
Name Title	FOSSIL SHELL
Brief Description	PINNA novaeseelandiae fossil
Current Location	
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	4 Sep 1898
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1898.56.1
Name Title	EGG
Brief Description	An egg of a land rail.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	New Zealand
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	14 Sep 1898
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1898.56.2
Name Title	EGG
Brief Description	An egg of a land rail.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	New Zealand
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	14 Sep 1898
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1898.56.3
Name Title	EGG
Brief Description	An egg of a land rail.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	New Zealand
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	14 Sep 1898
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1898.56.4
Name Title	EGG
Brief Description	An egg of a land rail.
Current Location	

Primary Prod Place	New Zealand
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	14 Sep 1898
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1898.57.1
Name Title	EGG, WOOD HEN
Brief Description	A wood hen egg.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	New Zealand
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	14 Sep 1898
Acquisition Source	Anonymous
Acquisition Depositor	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1898.57.2
Name Title	EGG, WOOD HEN
Brief Description	A wood hen egg.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	New Zealand
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	14 Sep 1898
Acquisition Source	Anonymous
Acquisition Depositor	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1898.146
Name Title	EGGS, FANTAIL
Brief Description	Fantail nest eggs.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	New Zealand
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	31 Dec 1898
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1899.7
Name Title	WALKING STICK
Brief Description	Carved whalebone stick from Tonga Island.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	Tonga
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	12 Jan 1899
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1901.21
Name Title	KIWI
Brief Description	A live kiwi.
Current Location	Unknown
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1901
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1902.2
Name Title	KO: DIGGING STICK
Brief Description	Maori spade (He Koo).
Current Location	
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1902
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1902.5
Name Title	FEATHERS
Brief Description	Tail feathers of Reeves pheasant 5 feet.
Current Location	
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1902
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1903.4.1
Name Title	CRAB, COCONUT
Brief Description	A coconut crab.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	Pacific
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1903.4.2
Name Title	EGG
Brief Description	Egg of boatswain bird.
Current Location	
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1903.13.1
Name Title	ADZE
Brief Description	Peace axe from Mangaia.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	Mangaia/Cook Islands
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

NB: Possibly TE.414 or TE.415.

Accession No	1903.13.2
Name Title	CANDLE NUTS
Brief Description	Candle nuts from Mangaia.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	Mangaia/Cook Islands
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903

Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1903.13.3
Name Title	PESTLE
Brief Description	Food crusher (He Tuki) from Mangaia.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	Mangaia/Cook Islands
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

NB: Likely TE.172

Description *Cook Islands, Mangaia pestle, reru or penu; stone food pounder; made from calcite (stalactite); head is a lateral expansion from the neck to form a transverse grip; neck is narrowest part, gradually expanding into the cone shaped body; the grip is concave; the pounding surface is minimally convex; grinding marks from manufacture evident over entire surface of the pounder; remnant of a blue label gummed to pounding surface. From old Wanganui Public Museum exhibition label "Pounder from Aitutaki", however the pounder is inscribed "Mangaia" and stalactite is only found on Mangaia, not Aitutaki, however it was traded (Refer to Buck, 1927, The Material Culture of the Cook Islands). Likely 1903.13.3*

Current Location *WRM/S12/Bay 5/Shelf 3/Box 4*

Accession No	1903.13.4
Name Title	SHELL
Brief Description	Pearl shell from Mauki.
Current Location	
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1903.13.5
Name Title	BOWL, FOOD
Brief Description	Food bowl from Atiu, native name Komiti.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	Atiu Island/Cook Islands
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

NB: Possibly TE.045

Accession No	1903.13.6
Name Title	SHELL, PEARL
Brief Description	Pearl shell from Penrhyn.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	Penhryn Atoll/Cook Islands
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1903.13.7
Name Title	SHELL, PEARL
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	Gambiers Islands
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1903.13.8
Name Title	ADZE BLADE
Brief Description	Stone axe from Mitiora.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	Mitiaro Island/Cook Islands
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1903.13.9
Name Title	ADZE BLADE
Brief Description	Stone axe from Mauke.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	Mauke Island/Cook Islands
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1903.13.10
Name Title	ADZE BLADE
Brief Description	Stone axe from Rarotonga.
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	Rarotonga/Cook Islands
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1903.13.11
Name Title	FEATHERS
Brief Description	Tail feathers of Boatwain bird from Manuwai.
Current Location	
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1903.13.12
Name Title	PARAERAE: SANDALS
Brief Description	Maori sandals paraerae of the sort called Pakitake. (Either 51.722, 51.723, 51.724.)
Current Location	
Primary Prod Place	New Zealand
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903

Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1903.13.13
Name Title	WHALE SKULL; ZIPHIUS CAVIROSTRIS
Brief Description	Skull of goose beaked whale.
Current Location	
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1903.13.14
Name Title	SPECIMEN, CORAL
Brief Description	Specimen of white coral attached to a mother of pearl shell.
Current Location	
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1903.44.6
Name Title	TROLLING LURE
Brief Description	Fish hook, trolling lure, shell, fibre; lure made of pearl shell, point dark shell, possibly turtle, tied together with plaited fibre.
Other Id	T1646
Current Location	WRM/S12/Bay 6/Drawer 5
Signature Marks Date	Printed in black pen and ink at proximal end of lure on outside "MANIHIKI". Written in red ink on side at proximal end of lure "MATA...(illeg.)...'au / Nitaituke".
Primary Prod Place	Manihiki Island/Cook Islands
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	02 Dec 1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1903.44.10
Name Title	KITCHEN SPADE
Brief Description	Kitchen spade, turtle bone; triangular in shape with slight concave curve; widest edge has been sharpened for use; single perforation through scoop at narrow end. Identified by donor as scoop made from whale bone for scooping copra out of shell, Mangaia, Cook Islands. However, appears similar to Fijian iSuvisuvi or kitchen spade and too wide for use as a copra scraper - MH.
Other Id	61.146, T1752
Current Location	WRM/S12/Bay 6/Drawer 3
Signature Marks Date	Inscribed on back of scoop, pen & white ink "61.146".
Primary Prod Place	Mangaia/Cook Islands
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	02 Dec 1903
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr
Accession No	1907.1.1
Name Title	CHESS PIECES
Brief Description	Set of thirty-two chessmen (a to af); no chess board; the chessmen are carved from ivory, with sixteen a natural white colour and the other sixteen

died or coloured red; the chessmen include: (a) Red King, (b) Red Queen, (c) & (d) Red elephant Castles, (e) Red male Bishop, (f) Red female Bishop, (g) & (h) two Red Knights, (i) to (p) eight Red Pawns, (q) & (r) two White elephant Castles, (s) White King, (t) White Queen, (u) White male Bishop, (v) White female Bishop, (w) & (x) two White Knights and (y) to (af) eight White Pawns.

Current Location	WRM/S2/Cabinet 21
Primary Prod Place	China
Acquisition Method	Gift
Acquisition Date	1907
Acquisition Source	Chas Smith; Mr

Accession No	1995.50
Name Title	PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM; Alfred Henry (Cocky) Caines Album
Brief Description	Photograph album compiled by Alfred Henry (Cocky) Caines. Black and white photographs of Whanganui River and district, particularly [54] b&w photo, caption "First up-river picnic per S.S. Wanganui on C. Smith's farm. Party are playing kiss the ring. Bush at Kaiwhaiki. 1870." The photo here does not match the caption - the image shows the river where trees have been extensively cleared from the riverbank and surrounding hills. There is also a small farmhouse in the foreground.
Other Id	085
Current Location	WRM/S3/Unit P/Bay 1/Shelf 2
Primary Maker	A H Caines
Primary Prod Place	Wanganui N.Z.
Acquisition Method	Loan
Acquisition Date	15 Sep 1995
Acquisition Source	A H Caines; Mr

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