

Engaging with Māori Art and Identity: A Conversation with Māori Artists in Otepoti.

Suzi Wereta

Abstract: Literature that addresses Māori artists has predominantly been situated within a Western framework that has marginalised Māori epistemology and artistic integrity. Cultural subjugation sought to eliminate the culture and initiated this through a comparative discourse to Classical European art forms and through classification as a primitive and immature categorisation. This research explores the experiences of Māori artists residing in Otepoti and identifies a contrast between the literature and what the artists are saying. Competing discourses is a constant theme throughout this research, however, what emerges is an assertion by the artists of their worldview evolving from a strong cultural history and tradition and developing into a contemporary assertion of Iwi identity.

Keywords: art, art as identity, Kai Tahu art, Māori artists, southern artists.

Background

Much of the literature relating to Māori artists can be read as falling into two discourses that are indicative of the ambiguities that can arise when competing worldviews attempt a written interpretation of an aspect of a particular culture. The certainty that as individuals we can never write from a neutral position, that as individuals we write or articulate from a particular context, influenced by our particular culture, history, identity, is important to remember when examining literature. I suggest this is as important to remember as if we fail to consider this, our response can be to retort from a reactive or antagonistic position that reduces our context to that of a subject. It is precisely because of this that our analysis and interpretation of texts, that purport to represent our culture, require a deliberate and reasoned response that is coherent with truth seeking, and not solely concerned with subjectifying those who have previously misrepresented our culture. We, as Indigenous writers, contribute to the master narrative of our culture when the design and intention of our kōrero is truth seeking and truth giving (Panoho, 1995).

The point of difference between the discourses relating to Māori artists is located with the narrator and the body of knowledge that informs their understanding of the subject and object. With two distinct discourses a tension of underlying assumptions can be distinguished as one narrative belongs to the coloniser, and one to the colonised, neither of which is free from their relationship with each other. The resulting narratives undoubtedly contain overt messages of authority or resistance and covert messages of superiority or reclamation, but can overlook the need to put forward substantive narratives for future directions without challenging the self-definition of the other (Loomba, 1993; Mithlo, 2004).

This project has as its central purpose an exploration of the experiences of five Māori artists in Otepoti and is situated within a contemporary context inclusive of culture, identity and representation, all of which cannot be isolated from each other, nor from the significance of colonial and 'neo-colonial' interactions. Culture and identity are not static ideals that individuals attach themselves to at a particular moment in time, they have histories that play a role in shaping our contemporary realities and they have futures that will play a role in developing the history we

are creating now (Hall, 1993; O'Reagan, 2001). If these histories and futures become representations that inform individuals and provide choices, in terms of their cultural identity, it is absolutely necessary to have access to knowledge that informs the representations that have been, and are created, from colonial and 'neo-colonial' interactions. With regard to this project, the relevance of the implications of representation are as important in an analysis of contemporary Māori artists, as the kōrero from the artists, because it is from within this inclusive context that the artists concerned position themselves and assert their art form. So, rather than solely be a chronological discussion on the history of Māori art within Aotearoa, this project addresses Māori art from what I term a 'neo-colonial' position, which in the context of this project makes reference to a colonial representation of relationships that navigates the discourses of difference and informs identity and culture.

As a note, the term Māori in this project is used in reference to Iwi Māori, Tangata Whenua, Indigenous people of Aotearoa, and while this is for ease of definition, it is not intended as an affront to distinct Iwi. Similarly, the term culture is used as reference to the customs, values, beliefs, knowledge systems of Māori, or Indigenous peoples where applicable.

Introduction

The concept of Māori art has within its centre of exploration a variety of meanings where influential reasoning encompassed Māori art within a Western paradigm. This position has foundations in the era of modernism where the exploration and 'discovery' of new lands introduced the epistemology of the West to the epistemology of Aotearoa. While theoretically this suggests itself as reciprocity, for example in terms of Māori art the introduction of new materials aided in the ease and development of new styles with whakairo, (Mataira, 1984), the underlying intention was not solely concerned with exploration and 'discovery', but was founded on the rationalisation of Imperialism and the acquisition and control of resources. Raw materials, essential to Imperialist expansion, facilitated economic stability as the precursor to political, social and intellectual subjugation. Imperialisms parallel with colonialism insisted on intellectual and political control for successful subjugation, Matahaere-Atariki, Betanees & Hoffman (2001) and Smith, (1999), in their discussion on colonial discourse, both refer to the imposition of scientific inquiry as a method for situating Indigenous knowledge as inferior, primitive and outside the realms of legitimate knowledge, advancing the authenticity of Western knowledge by reducing Māori knowledge to a comparative representation. Edward Said (1993) articulates this in his work on Orientalism by suggesting it (Orientalism) to be a practical and theoretical construction strongly influenced by Imperialist divisions of West and Other, dependent on the notion of resistance, and silence, "... yet we must not forget that the Orientalist's presence is enabled by the Orient's effective absence" (Said, 1993, p. 146). A Western paradigm then requires representations of other cultures to be measured in a comparative discourse aimed at instigating the concept of superior/inferior knowledge and cultures as justification for redefinition and appropriation, and the construction of new starting points for others.

Linking Indigenous peoples, and their cultures, through the classification systems of scientific inquiry determined a reality that reduced Indigenous truths to untruths and encouraged an internalisation of the superiority and domination of the Western paradigm. An effect of this was the paralysing of Māori within the primitive mode due to the space left available to the culture being redefined from an anthropological gaze, a gaze influenced by colonialism, which aligned the culture with an immature capacity (Hall, 1993). Immature in the sense that Immanuel Kant (1996), discussing Enlightenment, referred to when he suggested, "*Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another*" (p 51). The Western paradigm of intellectual

investigation was successful in advancing understanding past the previous confines of religious dogma and opening up new intellectual horizons, however, where this thinking became problematic was when the associated paternalism insisted on Indigenous knowledge and culture as being immature and primitive because it incorporated traditional concepts that Western science could not explain. As a purposeful methodology, the transformation of Māori culture became about oppression on the one hand, because it was necessary to assert domination, and emancipation on the other, because of the responsibility to teach the ability to reason (Matahaere-Atariki, Betanees & Hoffman, 2001).

The point is that the epistemology or knowledge systems at any particular time influence, not only academic circles, but the populace, and create the language that explains the world so that it becomes established as the normative ideology. Language embodies freedom and constraint as it is given meaning based on the reality it confronts, and the direction that the thinking of the day presents. Nancy Mithlo, who has researched Indigenous museum curation methods and representations of Native Americans in the arts and as artists, proposes that to communicate Indigenous knowledge we need to understand the narrator of worldviews that differ to our own, as this can distinguish the motivation of the language and ideology that names [Māori] representation (Mithlo, 2004). This becomes particularly relevant when the parameters of communication are Western and when common points of reference are not available. It is from within this environment that I address Māori art and artists and because the language used to communicate art, particularly early accounts of it, originate from a worldview that holds an alternative paradigm, the previous discussion contextualises the colonial discourse.

For colonialism to be effective it required compliance and, while Māori weren't passive recipients to colonialism, by challenging the fundamental ontology and epistemology of Māori, colonialism was able to encompass all aspects of the culture and establish difference, difference then being suggested as primitive (Matahaere-Atariki et al., 2001). Loomba (1993), while discussing text on colonial discourse theory, suggests that the colonial process of hegemony was effective in creating spaces of historical and nostalgic pasts where knowledge and culture could become other knowledge. Research into pre-contact Māori art by Glen Pownall (1972) offers an inquiring viewpoint on the authenticity of Māori art. He claims that through the process of colonialism the "artistic integrity" (p. 15) of Māori suffered a demise, as the influence of Western art was incorporated into design. He poses reservations as to the authenticity of contemporary Māori art by questioning whether its origins lie with the true traditional form, by which he means free from European contact and influence. While perhaps he asserts some truth when suggesting the incorporation of Western influence into Māori artistic design became more pronounced, I question his argument regarding the origins of contemporary Māori art as, although the pre-contact style is far removed from today, or 1972, his argument paralyses Māori art within the primitive mode and doesn't allow for a development past that state. He is, by his analysis, although it is probably not his intention, supporting the discourse of Māori art as primitive and limited through his reference to pre and post contact, because contact represented comparisons to Western art for integrity.

Further text describing Māori art was resonate of an anthropological gaze of sympathetic approval describing a primitive level of artistic ability that had some potential to develop, given the right pedagogical environment (Freeman & Geddes, 1959; Pound, 1994). The anthropological gaze directed the observation of what were typically practical objects of use to be analysed as art, analysed through a Western gaze as though it were an object created within a space specifically designated to creating art for arts sake. The intricacies of kete and tāniko for example, while holding much artistic beauty and technique, were for practical purposes. However, the application of a Western gaze of artistic intent reduced it to a rudimentary level of ability and described it as

more primitive than 'other' Indigenous cultures (Pownall, 1972). This is not to say that Māori art was not included in the way of life, moko, kowhaiwhai, waiata for example are highly artistic forms of art, but they weren't solely representative of an artistic notion, they encompassed a spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical relationship between cosmology, Atua, Tupuna, the land, those living and those to come.

Pound (1994) researches the use of Māori motif by Pākehā in New Zealand art, asserting that early 1900s Māori art was given toleration as the comparative positioning with Classical art of Europe situated it within surrealist theorising that reflected a belief of a primitivism in art, as with the culture. The prevailing attitudes of the time saw little value in investigating Māori or the culture, instead the association of Māori art with 'real' art would only be permitted if art were made of or about the primitive Māori artifact (Pound, 1994). Interestingly, the proponent that lifted the status of Māori art from tolerable primitive art to that of high art was the use of Māori 'motif' in 'ultra modern' art, which was established in Aotearoa in the late 1940s by Theo Schoon and Gordon Walters, two names synonymous with realising Māori art outside of its primitive mode. While Schoon and Walters can be criticised for misappropriating Māori art forms, they were instrumental in bringing Māori art to the attention of Pākehā New Zealand, and in attempting to give power to a Māori discourse. Māori rock art, which Schoon 'discovered', was at that time being criticised as scribbles and while Schoon and Walters gave legitimacy to a dialogue that went further than mere scribbles on walls, it was a representation about Māori art and can be suggested as initiating the appropriation of Māori art (Pound, 1994; Adsett, Whiting & Ihimaera, 1996).

In the literature addressed, the appropriation of Māori art highlighted three central purposes which served to advance colonialism through the representation of a Western paradigm as a position of authority and control, although Pound (1994) argues that due consideration needs to account for time and context as this can alter the narrative. First, using as Pound does the example of Māori rock art, and 'primitive' art forms, appropriation of Māori art was used as assimilation to New Zealand Nationalism. By incorporating Māori forms into a New Zealand art style, New Zealand Nationalism advocated the primitive beginnings of a new tradition, and a distinct production of New Zealand, while at the same time implying its authenticity through age-long traditions, there grew to be a New Zealand art (ibid). To apply Pound's consideration of time and context, I have already mentioned the prevailing attitudes holding no value in things Māori and by implication holding no conception of culture and identity, however, by referring back to the discussion on the knowledge systems of the time informing the normative ideology, appropriation in this context could be suggested as respect and appreciation of an artistic integrity, implicating the narrator as authority (Pound, 1994; Pownall, 1972). Second, appropriation produced representations of stereotypes as a method of propaganda by depicting Māori as symbolisms of demise. As an example, Panoho (1995) makes reference to the much celebrated artworks of C. F. Goldie and the portrayal of Hārata Rewiri in 'The Widow' (1903), as representative of the decline of Māori, both metaphorically and, as was forecast at the time, literally. The narrative of the symbolism stereotypes the beliefs, values, customs, language and knowledge systems of Māori as archaic and misplaced in a Western paradigm. Again, applying Pound's consideration of time and context, one discourse would assert this as a redefinition of Māori traditions that reduces a Māori identity to untruths, whereas the alternative discourse could suggest this as an inevitable consequence of a primitive culture that doesn't have the capacity to survive a modern world. Third, appropriation for self gain effected the manipulation of designs and forms inherent to the Māori culture. Schoon and Walters can be implicated here, however, there are numerous sources, including Pound and Panoho, who suggest their agenda as empowering because they gave something back to Māori and the art. Appropriation for self gain refers to Pākehā artists exploiting designs or forms and representing them out of context using the pretext of the

universalism of design and form as the justification for formal appropriation (Panoho, 1995). A generic example is the idea of Kiwiana and the plastic Tiki, the attention given it as an icon of New Zealandness dislocates the meaning and fails to acknowledge the tapu that *should* be represented in the form. Once more, Pound's consideration of time and context suggests that there is a talking past each other and variation in Māori and Pākehā perceptions of appropriation that acts in response to ignorance and fails to encapsulate the mauri and wairua in the art (Mithlo, 2004; Panoho, 1995).

Panoho (1995), who wrote an article on the appropriation of Māori art forms, has suggested that the competing discourses of Māori art are symptomatic of cross-cultural dialogue, where one listens and one talks, resulting in a monologue, a monologue that can reduce art to a space of domination. Domination requires a complete and permanent subjugation to be successful, most importantly cultural subjugation, and while the monologue that Panoho refers to suggests success, the reality that there are competing discourses suggests that cultural subjugation has not been fully realised. Amílcar Cabral (1993) discusses the influence of a strong cultural identity as being a factor of resistance to domination and that resistance itself encourages further reclamation of a cultural identity to both consolidate the cultural identity, and to negate the dominating cultures oppression. Adsett, Whiting & Ihimaera (1996) maintain that the reclamation of a Māori identity presented from the urbanisation period following the Second World War and the 1970s with a more liberal ideology permeating thinking. During this period, and, it must be noted, prior to this in 1926 when Sir Apirana Ngata establish the School of Māori Arts in Rotorua, significant events took place that altered the dominant discourse in art and advanced a Māori discourse that challenged the western construction of art and culture. Artists in the 1970s engaged in forums to support and voice their vision for Māori art, formally establishing the Māori Artists and Writers Society in 1973, which organised annual hui, exhibitions, workshops and performance of contemporary Māori arts. While other organisations have developed to continue in supporting Māori artists, the Māori Artists and Writers Society was exceptional because it formally initiated a reclamation of Māori art and pioneered new creative expression and direction that removed the paralysis of the primitive mode. A central feature in this reclamation is that the artists concerned resisted the accepted view of Māori art as traditional/primitive and developed new forms, used new materials and introduced new 'non-traditional' modes of creative expression, which still acknowledged the past but also moved into the future. Effectively, they liberated the Māori art discourse from a paralysis with the traditional to also incorporate artistic freedom to create and the opening of new intellectual horizons (Adsett et al., 1996; Mataira, 1984).

Further significant events that had a bearing on Māori art and artists intellectual reality were the 1984 Te Māori Exhibition, which took Māori art to the global stage, providing international recognition of Indigenous discourse, and the inclusion of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi into legislation extending Māori art into tertiary education. As mentioned these were significant events, although it has been argued that this merely replaced overt assimilation doctrine with the implicit assimilation of biculturalism, adding new challenges to the reclamation of the 1970s pioneers.(Adsett et al., 1996; Matahaere-Atariki et al., 2001; Panoho, 1995). Bicultural standards in New Zealand art has retained aspects of the colonial discourse of Māori art as primitive by obliging art students to look to Classical European Art for both inspiration and methodology, inferring more traditional forms and designs of Māori art to be simplistic and representative of immature ability. Additionally, curatorial and public gallery practice are inclined to show preference to New Zealand art by encouraging exhibitions that combine both Māori and Pākehā artists, and by showing partiality towards Māori artists who reflect a more conventional style (Adsett et al., 1996). While there are exceptions to this, the resulting representation can reflect a space of example and as mentioned earlier, it is from within this setting that the Māori artists of this project assert their art forms.

Methodology

I selected to use a qualitative approach that was informed by a Kaupapa Māori perspective as the research methodology that would allow the research to be undertaken within a context that was reflective of the mahi and mana of the participants as the holders of this Indigenous knowledge, while at the same time respecting the knowledge gained through the literature. What follows is a brief discussion on the rationale for selection of this methodology as a locale for the projects design, data collection and data analysis.

The space of research has predominantly been situated within a Western epistemological understanding of what constitutes knowledge. While this has contributed immensely to the bodies of knowledge that are available for perusal, for Indigenous communities the disengagement with Indigenous epistemologies has been influential in creating a 'sense of a lack of fit'. Indigenous knowledge has been represented as inauthentic and situated within a 'primitive' comparison to Western knowledge to enable the colonial process to be enacted and legitimised. The redefinition of Indigenous knowledge was endorsed because it failed to belong to any existing theory, however, this rejection has led to 'new' knowledge systems being integrated within the academic setting as a form of reclamation. While Indigenous epistemologies are still proscribed to the margins of academic knowledge the effect has not resulted in a silencing of Indigenous scholars, rather it has been influential in encouraging knowledge and research to be undertaken from an Indigenous perspective, informed by an Indigenous theoretical base. Kaupapa Māori, as both a theoretical and methodological approach to research, is an area that has developed within the context of Aotearoa and can be described as a way of reasserting Māori identity (Smith, 1999).

Eketone (2004, p. 67) asserts that authors of Kaupapa Māori theory provide little instruction on how to carry out Kaupapa Māori research, instead providing comprehensive accounts of the effects of this type of research. Incorporating a research design that encompasses Māori values, ways of knowing and lived realities as a framework of reciprocity and sincere respect allows the researcher and the 'researched' to work in a way that recognises the intrinsic value in mātauranga Māori. In this way, a constructivist theoretical inclusion in research serves to understand realities as being a construct of what we know, of understanding the world on our own terms and through what we understand via language constructs. Research then becomes about working together, it is about seeking and telling their truth (Bishop, 1998; Eketone, 2004; Kiro, 2000).

This project became about ensuring that the voice of the research participants was heard and allowing the artists to participate freely and unrestricted by constraints of academic rules. This same philosophical stance was applied to the analysis of literature, in the sense that it was read with both a critical inquiry, aimed at seeking the 'truths' in the kōrero and a systematic inquiry, aimed at seeking and extending the boundaries of that knowledge (Bishop, 1998; Smith, 1999).

Participants and Recruitment Process

The sample size of participants for this project consisted of 5 people, four were female and one was male. All participants identified as Māori and all of the participants resided in Otepoti, which were requirements for inclusion in the project. All of the participants were active in their art form, which although not stated implicitly, was an implied criteria of inclusion in the project.

The recruitment process was initiated by an application to the Ngāi Tahu Research Consultation Committee and also a letter to the three local Rūnanga seeking approval and support to commence with the research project. This was an integral element to initiating the process as without their approval and support the project would not have been considerate of the status of

the mana whenua of this rohe and of my own position as mataawaka within this rohe. All participants were informed of their rights, roles and responsibilities throughout the project and all were told that they would be kept fully informed of the project through to its conclusion. Interviews were scheduled and each participant was made aware of the interview process.

Ethical Considerations in the Recruitment Process

All of the participants were known to the researcher, however, at no time did the researcher hold a position of power or control over the participants and the researcher utilised the experience of her supervisor for mentorship and guidance throughout the duration of the project. At no time did the researcher feel that this position acted as a point of influence for the project.

Interview Procedure

The interviews were conducted individually kanohi ki te kanohi, and information pertaining to anonymity, if requested, was given and participants were fully informed of the interview process. Following clarity that the participants understood their role and position within this research project the interviews commenced with a list of predetermined questions (Table 1). The interviews followed the scripted questions as a format, however, the researcher utilised an open ended technique that was beneficial to the both the participants and the researcher. All of the participants were given as much time as they needed to respond and also provided the scope to return to questions if required.

Table. 1. Questions

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is your art form?2. When did you start in this field? and how long have you been doing this?3. How/Where did you learn your art form?4. What or who were your earliest influences, as well as who influences you now?5. What are you trying to express with your art, what story are you trying to tell?6. What challenges have you faced with your mahi?7. What challenges have you faced in establishing a career in this field of art?8. In what way has the history of Aotearoa influenced your mahi?9. In what ways does your identity as Kai Tahu shape your art?10. For lay people the terms traditional and contemporary are often used in relation to Māori art. What are your views on contemporary vs. traditional Māori art?11. Do you view your work as traditional or contemporary or blended?12. What sense of obligation do you feel to pass on your mātauranga?13. For commission pieces how do you preserve the taonga of your mahi?14. What has been and what would be the pinnacle of your career?15. What rewarding experiences have you encountered?16. Where do you see your art going?17. What drives or motivates you?18. Do you have anything further you would like to add? |
|---|

Transcription and Analysis Process

The interviews were transcribed by the researcher and a copy of the interviews forwarded by e-mail, as per their request, to the participants for review, comment and editing if required. Following the approval of the interviews being an accurate account of what transpired, the interviews were analysed for common and divergent themes. The final report was presented to the participants for approval before the project could be finalised.

Findings

Initially, researching for this project appeared to pose the problem of being limited in literature that was specific to Māori artists in Otepoti, however, using literature that was centred around Māori artists resulted in themes arising that were coherent with what the artists themselves were saying. The artists involved in this project are representative of the themes that have arisen as they are all involved in art forms that are both a resistance to 'paralysing Māori in the primitive mode', and, at the same time use as their frame of reference the traditions that have been retained and handed down by their tūpuna. They deserve recognition before commencing with the findings and were all supportive of identifying themselves.

Hine Forsyth is of Waitaha and Kai Tahu whakapapa. Hine uses painting as her medium of art and produces beautiful and distinct art forms. Hine also runs a Treaty Consultancy Agency and runs Treaty consultancy workshops.

James York is of Rakiura, Kai Tahu and Ngāpuhi whakapapa. His medium of art is mahi whakairo, which he was formally trained in through the Rotorua Arts Institute. He is currently carving the mahau for the Huirapa ki Puketeraki Marae, Karitāne.

Kelly Tikao is of Kai Tahu whakapapa and her medium of art is in the media. She has worked for Radio and Television in Auckland and has continued this craft in Otepoti while raising her tamariki.

Lisa Phillips is of Te Whānau a Apanui and Kai Tahu whakapapa and her medium is mahi raranga of which she has exceptional skill. Lisa acknowledges that she has stronger links with her Apanui whakapapa as this is where she was raised and taught her skills, however, she is currently learning about her Kai Tahu whakapapa in reference to mahi raranga.

Paulette Tāmāti-Elliffe is of Kai Tahu and Te Ātiawa whakapapa and acknowledges her stronger link with her Kai Tahu whakapapa as she resides here. Her medium of art is in waiata composition and singing and she is well known in Otepoti for her beautiful voice.

The major findings of this project are organised around four major themes:

- Competing discourses
- Resistance
- Reclamation
- Appropriation

Competing Discourses

The theme of competing discourses cannot be overlooked in this project as the literature has predominantly been addressed from a Western framework that encompasses an alternative understanding to that of the participants, however, what has been highlighted is the gap in the literature used for this project, as the participants speak from their worldview which is in contrast to what has been written. Each of the participants is very clear on their identity as Māori and as

Māori artists, and their starting point or their reality is as being Māori so that they don't compare themselves to Western discourses or Western art style, but instead assert their art form as its own kaupapa. The literature that was looked at for this project focused more on Māori art and the competing discourses of alternative worldviews in relation to Māori art, however, what has also been highlighted by the participants is being confronted by competing discourses that are a consequence of colonialism and that have indirectly and directly affected their mahi. Gender, conservation practices and the artist's kawa are areas that have been impacted by competing discourses and have caused limitations in the choices available to them or initiated a re-evaluation of their practice.

Gender discourses provided an interesting understanding of the pervasiveness of the domination of 'other' paradigms being applied to Aotearoa. Two of the participants made reference to gender as an area of contention, but what is worthy of note is the location of where it arose, which can be surmised as being symptomatic of attempted cultural subjugation and the insistence of assimilation to the dominant discourse. In making reference to the competing gender discourses, Hine talked of this as informing her choices in life:

“When I was really young I really wanted to do art as a career, and I remember, I was raised with my taua and when I was 14 she died and I was then sent to live with my parents. A neighbour saw my doodles and said to my father, ‘this girl, you should put her into art school’, and he said ‘no, she’s a girl; I have two boys to raise’. The attitude in the 60s was all girls get married by the time they are 19 or pregnant by the time they’re 16, so he wasn’t prepared to pay for my education past the age of 15, and that’s just the way it was.”

For Hine the competing discourses became a reality when her taua died and this is the time that she acknowledges as an initiator to the conflict that arose out of competing discourses, but also as a contributing factor to her identity as Waitaha:

“I had the first 14 years with my taua and she was the matriarch of the family as well as other very, very strong, powerful women. So I always saw, and was raised, being told that as Waitaha we were matriarch, or matrilineal. I knew that there was anti-female, or prejudice against females when I was growing up, you couldn’t do this, you couldn’t do that. But I was raised with women who disagreed with that, so I fought about it all my life.”

When asked to elaborate on her opinion of the attitudes that dictated this ideology, Hine responded:

“I think it comes straight from that colonising process, directly, because when you look at some of the information around pre 1840 within Te Ao Māori, the women had whakapapa rights. Then a culture came that stripped, the culture that arrived here, particularly that English, Irish, Scottish culture that came with Christianity was that women were evil, were naturally polluted. So you’ve got two cultures with diverse sort of practices and they brought some wonderful new inventions like steel, and the written word was very impressive, and I think we are just starting to come out of that, we are just starting as a people to challenge the way discourse can rule us.”

Kelly also spoke of gender discourse as impacting on the work environment in a way that was contradictory to her identity as wahine Māori, and while this had significant consequences for the women involved in her mahi, a positive consequence was that Māori women became role models who challenged her professionally, influenced her and supported her as a collective:

“Time and time again it was still very difficult sometimes within those environment as a Māori woman because to start you weren’t being listened to and the men didn’t even have any idea that you had a problem with it, and you’d go ‘hang on, how come all these wāhine are leaving this place’. And a number of Māori environment I worked in, can’t you see a pattern here, how come all these wāhine are saying to you ‘this is not a nice place to work, because you tāne are not making it that nice because you are patronising or whatever.”

In reference to Māori women playing a supportive and influential role in her mahi, Kelly viewed them as inspirational:

“The likes of Moana Jackson, Rhonda Kite, who was head of Kiwa Productions, for me, Libby Hakaraia. Various people who just went, ‘do you want an opportunity’ and then stuck it through and went ‘ok, here’s what you can do, give this a go.”

In the area of ‘conservation’ practices, two of the participants have alluded to conservation methods that are practiced today as being a result of competing discourses that are coherent with the colonial process of appropriating raw materials and the traditional Māori practice of only taking what was needed. The consequence of appropriating raw materials has resulted in the near depletion in Te Waipounamu of kiekie and pīngao, and the enacting of legislation that prohibits the cutting down and milling of native timber. In relation to this, when asked what challenges they faced with their mahi, Lisa responded:

“I think the main challenge though in this day is resources, accessing resources. Like for example, if you want to harvest kiekie or pīngao you’ve got to get a permit. Kiekie is not, you cannot harvest it on this side of the island, you’ve got to go over to the West Coast or to Blenheim or Nelson. It just doesn’t grow on this side of the island.”

James responded similarly:

“I think being in whakairo you can’t get away from the colonisation process. Just the availability of resources to be able to do your work and legislation in terms of getting wood. Any native tree, you’re not allowed to basically chop it down, you’re not allowed to mill it. So people can’t really do much with it. Down south here there’s a lot of it around but it’s actually the people who have it can’t really do anything with it.”

When asked what their views were of this as a conservation policy, Lisa didn’t reject it as a positive practice but held a conflicted opinion because of her style of mahi raranga being consistent with the traditional practice of harvesting only what is needed and ensuring the harvesting process protects te whānau o te harakeke.

“I can see and understand why they’re looking after them but when you hear that there’s dozens of birds sitting in the freezers in the museums that people have picked up and taken there. That the museum has completed their research on them and therefore have no other use for them, I can’t understand why we as weavers have to go through all the red tape to access these resources when they are wasting in freezers.”

James response was more obscure but similarly implied a tension in his understanding of it as a positive conservation policy:

“I’ve probably never in my career actually gone and chopped down a tree for a project, its always been a koha actually, or just people wanting to remove the logs from their property and they’ve had a bit of sense to actually know that it’s quite a special tree.”

The artist’s kawa is an area where competing discourses has resulted in negotiation and compromise in terms of upholding individual kawa. While it could be suggested that kawa provides a space for negotiation and compromise, particularly when applied to contemporary Aotearoa, it can also be suggested as a tool of assimilation and integration into a Western discourse that currently supports a bi-cultural system under the pretext of Treaty of Waitangi discourse. James spoke of having to negotiate his kawa when he was teaching in a mainstream education system, but acknowledged that this was something that was addressed in the formal setting of learning the craft:

“One thing that stuck out for me was my tutor saying to me, ‘ you know at the end of the day, you’ve got to decide what your tikanga is and if it’s stopping you from carving change your tikanga. Which stuck with me quite a lot because I’ve carved in some pretty scummy places just to be able to carve. Things like when you’re flattening, in your lounge or in the back washhouse or something, but it was a choice of whether, well I’ve got nowhere else to work, so I’m gonna stop or just carry on. So my choice was to carry on wherever I was really.”

In reference to negotiation in the field of education, James found that his position as a teacher necessitated negotiation, but that this was also profound timing because he was still informing his kawa:

“I’ve never actually worked in mixed groups, only through my choice to teaching really that I have worked with wāhine. And that was kind of forced on me by working in the Polytech where you couldn’t discriminate, and at that time I was kind of trying to decide for myself what my tikanga was there. So I have taught a few different wāhine and stuff, but I sort of drew the line at them carving on wood and taught them through different mediums, like stone and paint. I don’t think there was never wāhine carving, I just think that there was quite a different thing in terms of today’s view on it.”

Lisa also suggested that she negotiates her kawa in relation to Te Ao Māori and Te Waipounamu. Lisa acknowledges that she holds stronger links to her Te Whānau a Apanui whakapapa, and while she is residing within the Kai Tahu rohe, she accepts that there are certain kawa that she observes to respect the status of Kai Tahu as Mana Whenua. While this can be viewed as a competing discourse, it is from within Te Ao Māori that these kawa can differ and as such share a fundamental tikanga rationale.

“I was taught that you don’t go and cut from the harakeke bush when you have your mate, you can still however weave, but you are not allowed to go to the pu harakeke as you are tapu. And see where I’m from women aren’t allowed to carve wood, we’re allowed to carve stone, but not wood. But different areas you’re allowed to so it’s about respecting different kinds of traditions. And that’s just their different beliefs and what they’ve been taught, and so it’s about respecting that at the end of the day.”

Resistance

The theme of competing discourses demonstrates the artists passion for their mahi as, if required, they have chosen to negotiate the space from which they work to enable them to continue with their passion as Māori artists. This theme also leads naturally into the next theme of resistance, resistance to staying in the primitive mode and to the stereotypes that were acknowledged in the

literature review. Pownall (1972) argued that traditional Māori art cannot be viewed as such because of the influence of contact with the 'European' culture, which I suggested as a symptomatic of a colonial discourse that reframed authentic Māori art as maintaining a primitive mode. Kōrero from the artists reflects their understanding of their role as Māori artists, as they question, what is Māori art? and, how can a Pākehā inform us that our mahi is not real art?, who has the justification to question our art as authentic? The artists who participated in the project align themselves more to the pioneer artists of the 1970's, who served to move Māori artists from this paralysis. The main point of difference, however, is that the artists in this project sit in a more privileged position, in terms of needing to break down barriers and shift the predominant discourse, instead they have inherited the more covert neo-colonial practices that can generate negotiation or compromise, while still maintaining their artistic integrity. What has been highlighted from the artists is their passion to continue in their art form regardless of stereotypes and regardless of the primitive mode often placed on Māori artists, so that their continuation is a form of resistance.

Paulette commented on the stereotype that she has encountered regarding, what constitutes a 'real Māori':

"Another thing I get from crowds that don't know us is, they question my authenticity as a Māori because of my colour. I've heard, 'I've got really good reo for a Pākehā'. When we performed as the Kai Tahu Whānau group at the Town Hall and it was quite a big event and we opened with a haka pōwhiri and Edward did a kōrero and then we did a waiata afterwards. There were letters to the ODT (Otago Daily Times newspaper) talking about this white group, where are all the Māori. Personally it doesn't bother me, it doesn't make me angry. Yeah it doesn't really bother me too much."

Paulette also draws on the traditional side to Te Ao Māori as an expression of her art form, while at the same time producing a contemporary message that is inspired by today's lifestyles through the reo, a view that implies a rejection of Pownall's (ibid) argument:

"You can't be contemporary without drawing from traditional. Waiata, well the nature of the stuff, well we can write a song about a girl dancing in a nightclub, but that's not what we are about. So we draw on references to nature and try and view the world through a, like a Māori worldview. I think the more we learn, more depth to our reo, the more we can draw on those references to nature. We're trying to make the reo a language for communication."

James also offered a similar kōrero that suggests a rejection of Pownall's (ibid) kōrero:

"My view is what's contemporary to day, will be traditional tomorrow. Same all the way back really. Look at all, most of the examples that are in museums and stuff, probably in their day it was quite contemporary because a lot of it was carved by steel and they could develop their technique to a certain, different level."

"I use to think, probably three or four years into my practice, I was sort of thinking that traditional was the only was really, and I kind of still have strong feelings about that. I still think you cant beat a lot of that traditional stuff, it's a base, but all those things are templates for our artists today, it's a thing of evolving art really and our ancestors never stood still they evolved it all the way through. We're just utilising what's out there now."

In relation to whakairo and the limited examples of Kai Tahu styles, rather than viewing this as a level of resistance and a stereotyping of Kai Tahu as not holding knowledge in whakairo, James said the following:

“I don’t know why there’s not so many examples because, I suppose Kai Tahu are more known for their greenstone work. But my theory on that is, yes they were master greenstone workers and it was a source of pounamu for the chisels and they were master toolmakers as well, so to be a master tool maker you need to be able to use it, so I don’t really know what happened. There’s a few examples and they’re quite different.”

Hine incorporates her resistance to primitive notions and stereotypes into her paintings by painting what she knows as the ‘real’ representation:

“There is an image in Te Ao Pākehā that we all ran around with grass skirts and we were all good singers and that at the drop of the hat we will get up there and do the hoola, for god’s sake. So I wanted to, you know like that one there, she has still got her leggings on, and the ones with the fur, they have got the fur and they wove the fur into the leggings, the bottom one, that hood that she’s got is a seal skin hood. I don’t know, we wore clothes, it’s freezing in the forest. We wore shoes, we wore leggings, we wore hats and we wore sleeves. I wanted to get away from that whole image like the postcards from Polynesia type of thing.”

Hine has also had similar comments made to her regarding her painting as not being ‘real’ Māori art when she worked alongside Cliff Whiting in the design and decoration of Takahanga Marae, Kaikoura. Hine’s response was to reject the notion by not justifying herself through retort:

“I’ve had people come in here and say, ‘but this is not really Māori because it is not red, black and white, and I’d say, ‘hello?’”

Additionally, Hine has also encountered notions of authenticity in relation to the delivery style and practice of her mahi:

“I’ve always worked noa. I think what has happened to Maoridom is that they, we have almost been forced to be tapu people, a mystic people who, and there’s a whole world of noa that has to be created so that things of tapu sit safely, whereas people just want to learn about the tapu things and not about that precious world of noa. Which is just as tapu if you like, it has its own uniqueness.”

Kelly makes reference to her resistance to the covert neo-colonial practice of ignoring a Māori voice with her mahi in Otepoti:

“All the news events that happen, I’m either trying to find an interview within that, a Māori perspective of it. I mean that’s the main reason why I do a lot of, like I’m doing a live radio show now on the university, and that for me is for two reasons. To provide a Māori voice on campus and in the community, but also to, and to provide a Māori balance to some stories that are happening. All my work is inspired by what is happening in history because often because often I’m either trying to gather a kōrero about it or someone to interview about it, to get the Māori perspective out on it. Its tough going because there’s still a lack of Māori perspective on a lot of things in the media, but it’s slowly changing and that has been helped through Māori TV, more influential Māori within mainstream TV, more Māori reporters on mainstream news. I’m a great believer that the only way we can sometimes get empowerment is by helping those who are suppressing us to be empowered by our culture.”

Her context of resisting the representation of the primitive mode also establishes similar kōrero to other participants as rejecting the notion of tradition as being 'authentic' Māori art forms and ignores a justification to her position:

"I don't know if we can live in today's society and say we work in traditional art because the contemporary's of today are the traditions that have merged into this and will be the traditions of tomorrow with the next generation. We all use and are elements of our past, which can possibly be seen as traditions and we use mediums and tools that are more contemporary to tell those past stories. We are ourselves an art form and in ourselves we are our whakapapa, so for me it's a continuum thing, there's no differentiation now for me."

Lisa's kōrero differs slightly in that she promotes the skill of raranga as an inherent talent as opposed to solely a female talent, which is sometimes expressed as where raranga sits, however it is still implying a rejection of 'authentic' Māori art.

"My oldest son knows how to weave, not that he tells anyone. He'll do it when we're weaving because he spent a year with his Nanny in the North Island learning and weaving with her."

Lisa is a staunch supporter of the traditional methodology of raranga and resists, where convenience allows, the temptation of the 'easy' way, in terms of dyeing harakeke with bought dyes and creating tukutuku with panel boards.

"I would rather do the traditional side of things, however, a lot of influences today are more contemporary and using different media, all sorts of different media. So a lot of people tend to sway towards that, but my interest would be more in the traditional ways, but I still work with both, when I get time."

Reclamation

The theme of reclamation refers to the merging of the two previous themes to bring about an assertion of the artists forms and further development of them, while using art as a forum for cultural identity and the promotion of iwi identity, for most of the participants this has become about the promotion of Kai Tahu identity. While for Lisa her stronger identity as Te Whānau a Apanui because of growing up in her rohe, has been influential in her reclamation of her art form and its relationship to cultural identity.

Cabral (1993) made reference to a strong cultural identity as being the motivation that can limit the complete subjugation in colonial circumstances, and the artists in this project substantiate this with their unreserved assertion of their art form. Māori art has been described as primitive, naïve and immature, but this interpretation has been from a Western perspective, the artists in this project position themselves from a Māori perspective that doesn't consider this a reality. They reclaim the space of art as from a Māori worldview, an Iwi worldview that is rewarded with tradition and culture.

Lisa was strongly influenced by the tradition of taonga tuku iho and holds this as invaluable:

"My influences were my taua, nan and my mum. My mother basically influences me now, because my taua and nan have both passed on. I like the history of things pertaining to it and how clever our ancestors were years and years ago to go into the bush and find this one particular tree that would throw you a yellow dye."

When asked about her iwi identity influencing her mahi, Lisa replied:

“At this time I’m still learning a lot about Ngāi Tahu and their raranga and their weaving and their traditions, I guess mainly because I was brought up in the North Island, a lot of my influences of things came mainly from my Te Whānau a Apanui side. Comparing them, there’s a lot of differences so it’s quite interesting. There are differences within weaving that I’ve already picked up and also the terminology.”

In reference to her mahi as a medium for the transmission of cultural identity, Lisa saw it as a positive and rewarding experience:

“I guess for me passing it on to other people, the people, just seeing the light in their faces with their achievements. We had a workshop last year on traditional dyeing and by just watching and observing the taura, who were all full of questions when you’re directing them, ‘right, get that rock and put it over here and build your little fire’, ‘oh well what’s that for’, ‘never mind just do it and then you’ll see’. Once we completed the process and they saw it, their faces, it was like a light of amazement once the dye colour came and they put their harakeke strands into the dye and it changed colour, the way the Māori used to do it years ago.”

Historically, Kai Tahu identity has been through periods of redefinition that were influenced by a colonial discourse, as well as the imposition of Māori being represented by dark skin, fluency in te reo and tikanga and kawa associated with northern Iwi. Hana O’Reagan (2001) provides a comprehensive account of Kai Tahu tribal identity in her book, *Ko Tahu, Ko Au*, where she discusses Kai Tahu identity being challenged when it was situated within the context of encompassing what is Māori identity, as this brought with it attitudes of what an authentic Māori was by measuring it against northern Iwi Māori. Effectively, this led to a questioning of Kai Tahu identity, as a negative ideology represented Kai Tahu as inauthentic, plastic Māori and culturally inept. What has emerged from this lived reality is a revitalisation of Kai Tahu through te reo, tikanga and kawa that is being embraced and supported through initiatives of wānanga that advance these, and practically incorporate these into everyday life. The four artists who identify as Kai Tahu are resolute advocates for the promotion of Kai Tahu and this is evident in their kōrero.

Hine describes her paintings as reflecting her identity as Waitaha and Kai Tahu:

“All my paintings are Southern stories, all my artwork is to do with Southern Māori, so that’s the main theme. I’m not interested in looking at what Northern artists do, or what anybody else does actually.”

In terms of using her painting to strengthen and assert cultural identity, Hine refers to her collaborative work with Cliff Whiting at Takahanga marae, Kaikoura, where inclusion supported Waitaha whakapapa of matrilineal lineage and sharing knowledge with all:

“I like him because he works noa, so he will allow women and children to work on his projects and the reason that I have chosen him as my mentor is because he is inclusive of people. What I like about Kaikoura is that when the children would come home from school, the children from the marae, I would get them to put their hand on it, it made them own it.”

Paulette hold similar comparisons in asserting her Kai Tahu tangata when she talks about what she is trying to express with her Waiata:

“It’s mainly about whānau and just about our Kai Tahu tangata as well. So really, it’s about making a statement about using our Kai Tahu dialect and revitalising our reo. We’ve written songs for the kids and about them feeling good about their identity, songs about revitalising the reo.”

“I think looking at the status of reo, I mean the status of our people is an inspiration in itself to want to put out better messages for our people. That’s basically what we sing about, is retaining our Maoritanga, our Kai Tahu tangata, and growing.”

Paulette refers to a pinnacle of her mahi as supporting young ones in embracing their Kai Tahu tangata:

“We spent some time at Taikawa’s school teaching the boys a haka and I wrote a waiata ā-ringā for the girls, for everyone in the group, and at the end of it, just the whole term going in and teaching them and watching them blossom. Through those stages of whakamā, right through to the end and being proud at the end of it, seeing the transformation in the kids. Seeing what I thought were Pākehā kids and they’re all Kai Tahu. Taikawa had never known that these kids had any whakapapa at all because we’re so proactively Māori.”

Kelly also discusses the primacy of her Kai Tahu tangata as being integral in her mahi:

“I am staunchly proud about being Kai Tahu and staunchly a strong advocate for promoting Kai Tahu people and the iwi, so it’s sort of integrated into everything I do. Whānau life, my career, and the radio and TV industry, that’s my difference.”

“I’ve worked for the last two series on Te Kete Aronui, which is a Māori art series which is currently playing everyday, 7 o’clock on Māori TV. That’s profiling Māori artists for half an hour, and that was mainly doing all the Southern artists, Kai Tahu based obviously, but I have done a few others that are not Kai Tahu.”

She also reflects on this as a motivation that drives her in her mahi:

“Like most Māori probably say, my whakapapa, my Maoritanga, my Kai Tahu tangata, my hoā tāne, my tamariki, my te reo, or the lack of it and wanting to learn more of it, that drives me.”

Kelly also refers to her Maoritanga as a way of promoting and asserting cultural identity:

“Then I started getting asked to do work for Māori TV. I started doing ‘Te Tae Hono’ which was a series about whakapapa, about people who knew a little bit about they were Māori but didn’t know anything else. So what we’d do is we’d research, help them research their whakapapa basically and then visually film them going back to their marae and meeting up with their people and the process they took to do that.”

James supports his Kai Tahu whakapapa through his mahi by interpreting the Kai Tahu stories into his whakairo and developing his style. When asked how his identity as Kai Tahu influences his mahi, he responded:

“I think it’s cause basically I’ve spent a lot of my career down in Kai Tahu and a lot of the projects have been around Kai Tahu kaupapa and stories, so I’ve had to kind of interpret those stories. I think another thing with Kai Tahu is that there’s not really a lot of examples of Kai Tahu wood carving, so it kind of leaves it open to develop a bit of your own style here.”

He also talks of a pinnacle in his career being a Kai Tahu carving that was placed on the Waitangi grounds:

“One carving for me that was pivotal was being asked to do a carving for the Waitangi waka shed, and having, representing Te Waipounamu and taking it up and unveiling it, so a piece in the Waitangi grounds, that was quite cool.”

James also, like Kelly, refers to carving as an assertion of cultural identity and wants to see Māori artwork up in the public arena as a promotion of things Māori:

“There’s not many actual Kai Tahu carvers, active carvers, you can probably count them on one hand that are prominent carvers I’m talking about. But they are starting to emerge and I think that they will start teaching their own, because I mean that was our whole purpose as a carver. One of the things that was put on us at the school in Rotorua was that it’s not really ours to keep, it’s for us to hand on and really the schools purpose was to train carvers from all Iwi and then take it back to where they’re from and revive it because the school was established to save carving from disappearing, it was about preserving the art.”

Appropriation

This was a consistent theme with all of the artists that still holds similarities to the appropriation that was discussed in the literature review. Appropriation through assimilation to a New Zealand Nationalism is still apparent as Pākehā artists incorporate Māori design into their artwork, or recreate items of Māori culture, and appropriation for self gain is an area where the artists hold reservations. The artists attempt to counter this by limiting the mauri of their art in certain circumstances, or by not engaging in mainstream marketing as a resistance to it, or by developing their knowledge to control the circumstance and end result of their mahi. The artists were all asked, *‘How do you maintain the taonga of your mahi, or preserve the integrity of your mahi when it’s taken out of your hands?’* From that some of the artists gave examples of instances of appropriation and the emotion that this drew in the artists.

Kelly responded to the question by saying:

“Well that’s a current issue for me because one way to overcome that is to actually do the editing and that’s another skill that I want to do, is learn how to edit, so I take the story from beginning to end. So I suppose I’m in the process of trying to control that a bit more. So yes it is an issue for me and I’m working on it and what I’ve come to the conclusion is that I have to learn a new skill to actually ensure that it stays in that form or the themes that I want to get through come to fruition in the end.”

In relation to issues of appropriation Kelly responded:

“I get particularly upset about it because it’s their kōrero but it’s my craftsmanship that’s been let down. Its sort of like, how I’ve structured it has been not worked and so I’ve felt that it didn’t do them justice, like I didn’t honour them enough if it hasn’t been finished properly. I hand over the taua or poua to be interviewed and I research about them, but then how

they've done it on the day if I'm not there field directing is where sometimes there can be miscommunication."

James response to the question reflected more of his value base in his response but also suggested limiting the mauri of his mahi if necessary.

"I think it goes back to your concept and a lot of it's the positioning of your piece, like that installation, I don't think it will ever move really. But I think it's probably more, at the end of the day you're handing it over to somebody and then it's up to them to look after it, so it's making that piece a quality piece that people will look at and go, 'man, that sort of deserves to be looked after. I've said no to people because they were unrealistic in terms of time lines, I think if I knew their āhua wasn't right, I'd do it, but the job might not be of standard."

Hine held similar views to James of resistance to appropriation:

"You put the mauri in somehow or rather when you finish it and you just have to believe that its ok, and at the end of the day if you work noa, it is a Warehouse canvas and its Resene paint and you're the one that's got it inside you. If you think your work is so precious that it won't be then you make sure it goes somewhere that you want it to go."

"I know where all my paintings have gone, at the moment I'm quite happy to share what they mean, I don't think I would be if they were to go into a shop, I don't know. If I thought they were just going to buy a painting it would have a little story, but I don't think I would go into any depth of what it meant."

Lisa also responded in a similar way but also commented on what she views as forms of appropriation.

"I think at the end of the day its trust, because once someone's copied it, well you know it's quite hopeless actually. So you've got to have this copyright thing and the right way about going about it."

"It's like how you go into the craft shops here in town and there's the Asian kete, I mean I've got nothing against Asian kete but I have got something against it when they've got, especially the word kete on it because that's a Māori name and they've, or they've just added a piece of pāua onto it so it looks like a Māori kete."

Paulette discussed her resistance to marketing her mahi in the mainstream setting as a response to appropriation and also her value base that is attached to her mahi.

"People ask if they can use some of our waiata, and we ask 'what is it for?'. I think because our waiata have a specific kaupapa then it's easy to align to things. You sort of lose control once you put a piece out there, it's just, like intellectual property right."

"Marketing is one thing I've been reluctant to do, I've always felt it would take away something. So I've always used it as a, it's a way of expressing yourself, but if I did it full time it would maybe suck that energy out. I think our motivation is different, my motivation isn't about money and marketing, it's more about the reo and Kai Tahutaka."

Conclusion

There has been a lot written about Māori and Māori art, yet one of the difficult aspects of this research project has been the perspective of the narrator in the literature, as well as the limitation of finding literature that relates specifically to Māori artists in Otepoti. What the project has highlighted is the gap between the literature and the realities of the participants as Māori artists residing in Otepoti. While this has informed the representation of competing discourses, it has also emphasised the need to develop literature that is more up to date and reflective of the situation of contemporary Māori artists, as it is not as dire as the majority of the literature would suggest.

The literature addresses Māori art from a Western paradigm where the dominant discourse situated Māori art as primitive and viewed the culture as holding little relevance to the modern world. What was suggested was the Māori culture and Māori art had a limited capacity and when compared to the Classical art of Europe accentuated its immaturity. The dominance of this Western paradigm maintained currency in Aotearoa until the initiation of the revival of Māori art, led by Apirana Ngata in 1929, established a revitalisation of Māori culture within Te Ao Māori. The participants in this project assert that their point of reference is situated within a Māori paradigm and comparisons to Western art aren't in their framework of practice. The contrast between the literature and what the participants say suggests that the discourse has shifted and now is concerned with neo colonial representations that take on a different format. The neo colonial representation are more covert and take on the shape of control in media, and appropriation to other cultural representations. The themes that emerged reflect this shift as the artist's rationale for their position isn't caught in a paralysing mode of primitivism, but is instead focused on their art form as an assertion of their identity as Māori and their identity to their Iwi and is accepted as a medium for transmission of cultural identity, acting as a form of rejection to neo colonial representations.

The project also highlights the notion that cultural subjugation was ineffective in reducing Māori knowledge and Māori culture to a state of eradication as the artists uphold and incorporate the traditions of the past into their mahi in contemporary Aotearoa. The artists utilise the taonga tuku iho as a means to communicate iwi identity and further revitalisation of cultural identity through their different mediums of art. Rather than viewing the past traditions as primitive and immature, the artists use this knowledge as their base point of reference, extending their personal style from this point, but never dismissing it as irrelevant. In passing on their knowledge to future generations and Māori tauira, the participants acknowledge that this is consistent with traditional methods of teaching and assert it as the transmission of iwi and cultural identity, which has been referred to as an important component in their mahi.

The limitations that the artists face is aligned to the notions of appropriation that was discussed in the literature review, however, the artists resist appropriation by negotiating and altering their kawa to limit its effect and the denigration of their art form. What has been most interesting in this project is the competing discourses that reflect two worldviews and the reality that is attached to the two worldviews. Māori art is a strong and vibrant medium for cultural identity and iwi resurgence and cannot be written out of the history that it is creating today. What needs to occur now is further development of literature that acknowledges the strength and achievements of Māori artists, specifically Māori artists in Otepoti, so that these and other artists are recognised at a Local, National and International level for their role in strengthening iwi identity and mātauranga. Sandy Adsett et al. (1996) have contributed to the literature with *Mataora* which acknowledges a journey of Māori art in Aotearoa and tells the story of various Māori artist, as has Katerina Mataira (1984) in her book titled *Māori Artists of the South Pacific* and Darcy Nichols

(1986) with Seven Māori Artists. These contributions are amazing and chronologically provide insight into the development of Māori artists, however, what has been established is that there is limited literature available. Therefore, this gap in the literature needs to be addressed as it reflects the location of Māori artists as insignificant and proscribed to the margins, and from discussions with the participants this is clearly a competing discourse.

References

- Adsett, S., Whiting, C., & Ihimaera, I. (Eds). (1996). *Mataora The Living Face Contemporary Māori Art*. Auckland: David Bateman Ltd.
- Bishop, R.. (1998). Freeing ourselves from neo-colonial domination in research: a Māori approach to creating knowledge. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*. 1998, 11(2), 199-219. Taylor and Francis.
- Cabral, A. (1993). National Liberation and Culture. In Williams, P; Chrisman, L (Eds). *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall/Harvester Wheatsheaf. (pp. 53-65).
- Eketone, A. (1994). *Tapuwae*. A Thesis submitted for the degree of Masters of Consumer and Applied Sciences. Dunedin: University of Otago. December 2004.
- Freeman, J.D., & Geddes, W,R. (1959). *Anthropology in the South Seas*, (Eds), New Plymouth: Thomas Avery & Sons Limited.
- Hall, S. (1993). Cultural Identity and Diaspora. In Williams, P; Chrisman, L (Eds). *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall/Harvester Wheatsheaf. (pp. 392-403).
- Hopkins, B.S. (2002). Māori Art – the culture of identity. *NZ Art Monthly*, Retrieved August 2002 from: <http://www.nzartmonthly.co.nz/hopkins-002.html>
- Kant, I. (1996). An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment? In Cahoon, L. (Ed). from *Modernism to Postmodernism: An Anthology*. Blackwell Publishers Ltd, Oxford. (pp. 51-57).
- Kiro, C. (2000). Māori Research and the Social Services – Te Puāwaitanga o te Tohu. *Te Komako, Social Work Review*, Summer 2000. (pp. 26-32).
- Loomba, A. (1993). Overworlding the ‘Third World’. In Williams, P; Chrisman, L (Eds). *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall/Harvester Wheatsheaf. (pp. 35-323).
- Matahaere-Atariki, D.C., Betanees, C., & Hoffman, L. (2001). Anti-oppressive Practices in a Colonial Context. In Connolly, M. (Ed), *New Zealand Social Work, Contexts and Practice*. Auckland: Oxford University Press. (pp. 122-132).
- Mataira, K. (1984). *Māori Artists of the South Pacific*. New Zealand Māori Artists & Writers Soc. Inc., Raglan.

- Mead, H, Māori; Grove, N. (2001). *Ngā Pepeha a ngā Tipuna*. Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Mithlo, N.M. (2004). We Have All Been Colonized: Subordination and Resistance on artists Global Arts Stage. *Visual Anthropology*, 17(3, 4). Jan 2004. Taylor & Francis, Inc. (pp. 229-245).
- O'Reagan, Hana. (2001). *Kōrero Tahu, Korero Au. Kai Tahu Tribal Identity*. Christchurch: Horomaka Publishing.
- Panoho, R. (1995). The harakeke – No place for the bellbird to sing: *Western colonization of Māori art in Aotearoa*. *Cultural Studies*, 9(1), 11-25. 1995, Routledge.
- Pound, F. (1994). *The Space Between: Pākehā Use of Māori Motifs in Modernist New Zealand Art*. Workshop Press, Auckland.
- Pownall, G. (1972). *Primitive Art of the New Zealand Māori*. Wellington: Seven Seas Publishing Pty Limited.
- Said, E. (1993). Orientalism. In Williams, P; Chrisman, L (Eds). *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall/Harvester Wheatsheaf. (pp. 132-149).
- Smith, L. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies*. Dunedin: University of Otago Press.

Author Notes

The author acknowledges the support and contributions of: Hine Forsyth, Lisa Phillips, Kelly Tikao, Paulette Tāmami-Elliffe, James York, Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka, Te Rūnanga O Otakou Inc, Te Rūnaka Mark Brunton, Anita Gibbs, Ānaru Eketone, Dr Carol Bond, Pip Pehi, Jane Rangiwhia, Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, Nancy Mithlo, Vanessa Poihipi, Pearl Barron.

Suzi Wereta (Ngā Rauru, Ngāti Ruanui) is a student at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

E-mail: suzi-w@hotmail.com