

CHAPTER FOUR

KAUPAPA MĀORI THEORY

*Maori society has its own distinctive knowledge base. This knowledge base has its origins in the metaphysical realm and emanates as a **Kaupapa Maori** 'body of knowledge' accumulated by experiences through history, of the **Maori** people. This **Kaupapa Maori** knowledge is the systematic organisation of beliefs, experiences, understandings and interpretations of the interactions of **Maori** people upon **Maori** people, and **Maori** people upon their world.¹*

Introduction

There is a growing literature about **Kaupapa Māori** theory. For many **Māori** people who have actively sought out theoretical explanations for our experiences, **Kaupapa Māori** theory provides a culturally defined theoretical space. There is resistance from many sectors of the university and from some educationalists. However, in spite of these things, **Kaupapa Māori** theory continues to thrive. **Kaupapa Māori** theory is a field that can no longer be denied or ignored within academia. The origins of the term **Kaupapa Māori** theory is worthwhile exploring in that it recognises the historical developments that have contributed to its current usage. It also serves to recognise those writers, who in the initial voicing and struggle over the theoretical domain, were key protagonists in the recognition of **Kaupapa Māori** theory in both the academy and wider societal institutions. The need to convince **Māori** of the existence of such a paradigm was a part of the development that did not require the same intensive political lobbying. That is not to assume a heterogenous response, nor to assume that all **Māori** have equal access to **mātauranga Māori**, **Māori** knowledge². The point is that for many **Māori** acting to bring about positive, creative and innovative changes that would move from the dominant deficit based paradigms, the recognition within **Kaupapa Māori** theory that there does exist particular **Māori** cultural ways of operating serves to affirm their own beliefs. This Chapter focuses on some key discussion in regard to **Kaupapa Māori** theory, beginning with a discussion of '**Kaupapa Māori**' and '**theory**' as two notions that are aligned in the expression of **Kaupapa Māori** theory.

Kaupapa Māori

Kaupapa Māori is not new. What is relatively 'new' is the academic terminology of **Kaupapa Māori** research and theory. It is the development of a framework as a means of informing our

¹ Nepe, Tukana Mate, 1991 *E hao nei e tenei reanga: Te Toi Huarewa Tupuna*, Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, University of Auckland, Auckland: 4

² The term 'knowledge' refers not to singular knowledge forms but to many forms. The multiple knowledge(s) that derive from **whānau**, **hapū**, **iwi** and our experiences of colonisation must in my mind be emphasised as if they are not then we are all too easily lulled into simplistic, universalist explanations.

practice that has been articulated clearly in the struggles of the past twenty years. **Kaupapa Māori** is itself extremely old, ancient in fact. It predates any and all of us in living years and is embedded in our cultural being. **Mereana Taki** expresses this with her comment in regard to **Kaupapa Māori** theory

Kaupapa Maori theorising is not a new phenomenon. Configured within the living ancestry of **Iwi, hapu** and **whanaungatanga**, the dynamic foundation concepts of **Kaupapa** and **Tikanga** continue to inform the reproduction and transformations of **nga Tikanga me nga Ritenga** as **Iwi** laws today.³

Within **te reo Māori** there are indicators of cultural philosophies and ways in which meanings can be gauged. For example the word '**kaupapa**' is defined as philosophies or ways of thinking about issues. It can be further read in its specific parts, those being **ka u papa**. **Mereana** looks at the ways in which these relate to each other. '**Ka u**' can be defined in a range of ways, the term '**ka**' can represent tense and in particular present tense. '**U**' can be seen as a woman's breast, a process of holding firm, to arrive, to reach a limit, bite. In the context of the word **kaupapa** I view '**ka u**' as a process of holding firmly and connecting to the foundation of our existence, to **Papatūānuku**. **Mereana** writes that the term '**kau**' also relates to the notions of seeing for the first time or disclosure.⁴ The term '**Papa**' also has a range of possibilities, including reference to **Papatūānuku**, the earth, and to layers or foundations. Henry Williams gives a range of definitions in regard to **kaupapa**, including; level surface, floor, stage, platform, layer, plan, scheme, proposal.⁵ **Te Taura Whiri**, the **Māori** Language Commission, extend on this and provide additional definitions to relate to further contemporary usage of the term such as; policy, scheme, subject, theme.⁶ Each of these definitions connects to the notion of **kaupapa** as philosophy and foundation. The term **kaupapa** can be seen as a process of holding firmly to ones fundamental foundations.

Tuakana Nepe⁷ emphasises that **Kaupapa Māori** knowledge is distinctive to **Māori** society and has its origins in the metaphysical. **Kaupapa Māori** she states is a '*body of knowledge*' accumulated by the experiences through history, of the **Māori** people.⁸ For her, this knowledge form is distinctive to **Māori** in that it derives fundamentally from **Māori** epistemologies that include complex relationships and ways of organising society. She argues that this distinctive nature of **Kaupapa Māori** is seen in the ways in which **Māori** conceptualise relationships:

³ **Taki, Mereana** 1996 *Kaupapa Māori and Contemporary Iwi Resistance*, Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, University of Auckland, Auckland:17

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ Williams, H.W. 1985 *A Dictionary of the Māori Language*, GP Books, Wellington: 107

⁶ **Māori** Language Commission, **Te Taura Whiri** 1996 *Te Matatiki: Contemporary Māori Words*, Oxford University Press, Auckland: 175

⁷ **Nepe, Tukana Mate** 1991 *op.cit.*

⁸ *ibid*:4

the concept of the relationship between the living and the dead; life and death; the **Maori** concept of time, history and development; the relationships between male and female; individual and group; and the implication of such relationships for social power relations. These knowledge types and their functions are the content and product of the interconnection of the purely **Maori** metaphysical base and **Maori** societal relationships.⁹

Tracing further the origins of **Kaupapa Māori** knowledge **Tuakana** places its origins in **Rangiātea** which she stated makes it exclusively **Māori**. **Rangiātea** is the first known **Whare Wānanga** located in **Te Toi-o-ngā-Rangi**, the home of **Io-Matua-Kore**, the creator.¹⁰ **Tuakana** writes that from **Io-Matua-Kore** comes the gift of **mātauranga Māori**¹¹ brought by **Tāne** to the earthly realms in three **kete**, **Te Kete Tuauri**, **Te Kete Tuatea**, **Te Kete Aronui** alongside two **kōhatu**¹² **Hukatai** and **Rehutai**. Within these **kete** was held knowledge of both the celestial and earthly realms and that knowledge provided for the teaching within **Whare Wānanga**.¹³ Through various **Whare Wānanga** knowledge and culture was transmitted. Numerous **Whare Wānanga**, each connected to particular knowledge, are known to have made a complex educational system through which knowledge was retained, maintained, developed and transmitted.

To explore in depth the complex systems of **Whare Wānanga** is beyond this thesis. However it is necessary to recognise and acknowledge that our people have always maintained structures and systems of knowledge development and transmission. Some **Whare Wānanga** identified are; **whare-wānanga**, **whare-kura**, **whare-maire**, **whare-puni**, **whare-takiura**, **whare-tatai**, **whare-pora**, **whare-mata**, **whare-takaha** and **whare-porukuruku**¹⁴ In the **Whare wānanga** two teaching divisions were located

- (i) **kauwae runga** - restricted to celestial knowledge, this included cosmogonic genealogies, rituals, **waiata**, narratives and exceedingly difficult, cryptic and elliptical **karakia**¹⁵
- (ii) **kauwae raro** - concerned with terrestrial knowledge.

Relating to the origins of '**te ira tangata ki te Ao marama**', that is, from the conception of life within the mother's womb into the World of Light; through the genealogical descent, '**mai i Rangi Tuhaha ki a Papatuanuku, ki a Hine-hau-one**'¹⁶, from the twelve heavens to **Papatuanuku** the Earth Mother, then to **Hine-hau-one** the first woman.¹⁷

Knowledge has always had a central place within **Māori** society and the complexities of knowledge

⁹ *ibid*:5

¹⁰ **Te Toi-o-ngā-Rangi** refers to the uppermost domain of the 12 domains that exist in the spiritual realm.

¹¹ **Mātauranga Māori** refers to **Māori** knowledge and ways of knowing.

¹² **Kōhatu** are stones

¹³ **Whare Wānanga** are house of higher learning.

¹⁴ These are different types of **wānanga** named by **Tuakana Nepe** *op.cit*:18

¹⁵ *ibid*.:18

¹⁶ **Hinehauone** is another name used for **Hineahuone**

and knowledge transmission recognised in the structures of the **Whare Wānanga**. **Kaupapa Māori** is, **Tuakana** argues, the conceptualisation of **Māori** knowledge transmitted through **te reo Māori**.¹⁸

Mereana Taki argues that **Kaupapa Māori** derives from a networking of **iwi** knowledge frameworks.¹⁹ This identifies the diversities that are a part of **Kaupapa Māori** and which must be maintained if we are to ensure the recognition of **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi** complexities, which I argue are essential to **Kaupapa Māori** theory. The bringing together of **Iwi** knowledge in **Kaupapa Māori** is further premised on a world view that is grounded in notions of **te ira Atua**, **te ira Whenua** and **te ira Tangata**. **Mereana** states that **Kaupapa Māori** bodies of knowledge, provide both a historical context and a cultural orientation that is founded upon a three dimensional framework of human existence based in **te ira Atua**, **te ira Whenua** and **te ira Tangata**.²⁰ **Mereana** identifies these notions as follows;

Ira atua is defined here as the seed descent of **Iwi Maori** creation from the Creator Gods. The usage of the term Gods is restricted to this range of indigenous knowledges and the meanings imputed to them exclusively by **Iwi Maori** nations and their descendants.

Ira whenua is defined here as the seed descent of the planet and its siblings environs. **Ira whenua** is often associated explicitly with the primal power of **Papatuanuku** the Earth Parent of all **Iwi Maori** nations.

Ira tangata is defined here as the seed descent of human life according to **Iwi Maori** nations belief systems. This is a gender neutral concept.²¹

Where **Mereana** speaks of **atua**, **whenua** and **tāngata** in relation to the notion of 'seed descent' that is **ira**. Others talk of these elements in relation to **mana**, that being **mana atua**, **mana whenua** and **mana tangata**.²² **Māori** Marsden regards **mana** as a form of divine authority.²³ In this respect there is a direct relationship of **mana** to all things. **Te Kawehau** Hoskins writes that **mana ātua** is identification with **tūpuna** and **atua** from creation, all things are accorded a relationship particular **ātua**. **Mana ātua** connects us to celestial realms. **Mana whenua** is the relationship of all things to the land. **Te Kawehau** notes that it is often said **mana whenua** relates to peoples authority over territory, however she argues that it is the land that bestows **mana** on the people. **Mana whenua** is often a term utilised to related to the people of a particular place, therefore there is a recognition that we are of that land. **Mana tangata**, is our relationship as people to each other, it is **Te Kawehau**

¹⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ **Taki**, M. 1996:16

²⁰ *Ibid*:8

²¹ **Taki**, M, 1996:8

²² Hoskins, T.K. 2000 *op.cit.*

²³ Marsden, **Māori** 1988 *The Natural World and Natural Resources: Māori Value Systems and Perspectives*, in *Resource Management Law Reform*, Vol. 29A. Ministry for the Environment, Wellington. **Mana** is defined more fully in Chapter nine in relation to **Mana Wahine**.

writes our collective relationship, and is power derived from working in relation to each other and to **tūpuna** and **atua**.²⁴ **Mana tangata** can be seen as our fundamental humanity, our human-ness and in this context our **tāngata whenua** state. Annette Sykes also indicates the importance of the matrix of **Mana Atua, Mana Tangata, Mana Whenua**, noting,

The hierarchy of this matrix must also be respected so that it is the intrinsic values and principles (**Mana Atua**) which will drive the political organisational frameworks of our peoples (**Mana Tangata**) and which will then seek appropriate economic models to sustain us (**Mana Whenua**).²⁵

In regard to **Kaupapa Māori** within the **Māori** Education sector this is defined by the **Māori** Education Commission as distinct in that its basis is within **mātauranga Māori** and the philosophical underpinnings are **Māori**.²⁶ Taking this further, Graham **Hingangaroa** Smith has identified six elements that are evident in **Kaupapa Māori** education; **tino rangatiratanga, taonga tuku iho; ako Māori; kia piki ake i ngā raruraru i te kainga; whānau; kaupapa**.²⁷ Graham argues that these elements provide a solid basis for **Kaupapa Māori** theory.²⁸

Where these elements require further explanation I have located that discussion in chapter five as they have provide a solid foundation for the development of **Kaupapa Māori** theory. Furthermore, he states that **Kaupapa Māori** initiatives are held together by collective commitment, philosophies and visions. The vision, which Graham relates to Habermas's notion of the 'utopian vision' may have within it elements such as conscientisation, resistance and praxis. I use the term 'may' deliberately here as not all expressions of **kaupapa** embrace a politicising element explicitly. On many occasions I have heard the statements 'this is not political' or 'leave politics out of this', the belief inherent in such statement is that **Kaupapa Māori** is not in itself inherently political. In political terms 'being on the **kaupapa**' is an indication of a political philosophy being inherent in someones thinking. **Kaupapa** in these terms is very much about wider aspirations that are cultural and political. However, given the hegemony of colonisation many **Māori** people now reduce the political or deny its existence. We need to be clear, everything that is about struggling for the position of **Māori** is political. As a **whanaunga**,²⁹ **Mahinekura** Reinfelds, so eloquently retorted to a statement that politics were not welcome "*For some Māori people to get up in the morning is a political act!*".³⁰

Kaupapa Māori is a transformative power. To think and act in terms of **Kaupapa Māori** whilst

²⁴ *ibid*

²⁵ Sykes, Annette (n/d) *Agents For Change*, Unpublished Paper, Rotorua:10

²⁶ **Māori** Education Commission 1998 *Report to the Ministers of Māori Affairs, Report 2, Wellington*

²⁷ These elements are discussed in depth in Chapter five.

²⁸ Smith, G.H. 1997 *op.cit.*:pp466-473

²⁹ **Whanaunga** refers here to a tribal relation

experiencing colonisation is to resist dominance. This is not something that **Māori** alone are engaging. It is the experience of vast numbers of Indigenous Peoples across the world. Native woman writer Rayna Green, reflecting on Indian notions of leadership in their communities writes,

In Indian country, maybe the most radical change we will ever have is a return to tradition.³¹

What is clear in discussions regarding **Kaupapa Māori** is that **Kaupapa Māori** can not be understood without an understanding of **mātauranga Māori** and the ways in which we as **Māori** engage knowledge and forms of knowing. As noted in the brief discussion on **Kaupapa Māori** research in Chapter Two, **Te Ahukaramū** Charles Royal outlines **mātauranga Māori** as theory and **whakapapa** as research methodology. In posing a number of possibilities in what he refers to as theory in 'embryonic' form, **Te Ahukaramū** gives the following working definition;

He mea hanga te mātauranga Māori nā te Māori. E hāngaia ana tēnei mātauranga i roto i te whare o Te Ao Mārama, i runga anō hoki i ngā whakaatūranga o te whakapapa kia mārama ai te tangata ki tōna Ao.

Mātauranga Māori is created by **Māori** humans according to a worldview entitled '**Te Ao Mārama**' and by the employment of methodologies derived from this worldview to explain the **Māori** experience of the world.³²

Mātauranga Māori is created by the use of **whakapapa**. **Whakapapa** is regarded an analytical tool that has been employed by our people as a means by which to understand our world and relationships. In such a framework it appears that **whakapapa** is both vehicle and expression of **mātauranga Māori**. The assertion through **whakapapa** of the origins of **mātauranga Māori** returns us to **Papatūānuku** and **Ranginui**.³³ **Rapata Wiri** also locates **mātauranga Māori** as essential to the construction of what refers to as a **Mana Māori** model. **Mātauranga Māori** provides a distinct **Māori** epistemology and ways of knowing and draws upon a range of both verbal and non-verbal forms for its expression. **Rapata** highlights the complexity of definitions of **mātauranga Māori** and its multiple elements as follows;

Māori epistemology; the **Māori** way; the **Māori** worldview; the **Māori** style of thought; **Māori** ideology; **Māori** knowledge base; **Māori** perspective; to understand or to be acquainted with the **Māori** world; to be knowledgeable in things **Māori**; to be a graduate of the **Māori** schools of learning; **Māori** tradition and history; **Māori** experience of history; **Māori** enlightenment; **Māori** scholarship; **Māori** intellectual tradition.³⁴

In identifying non-verbal forms of **mātauranga Māori** **Rapata** highlights some examples as;

³⁰ Reinfelds, M. 2000 personal communication

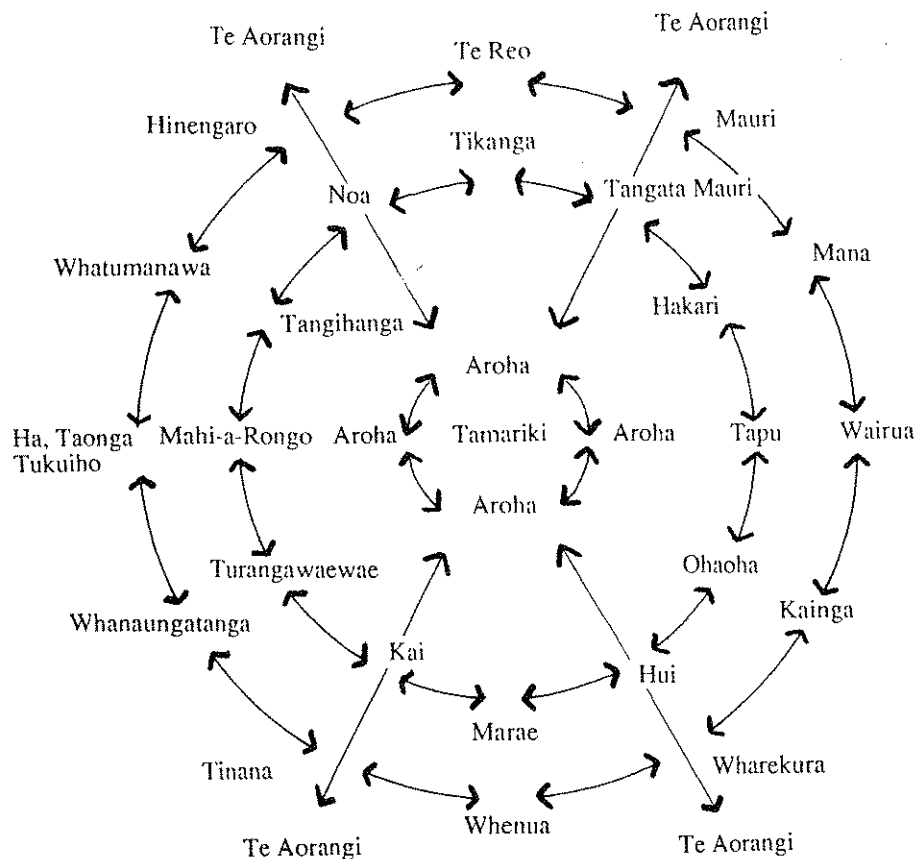
³¹ Green, Rayna 1990 'American Indian Women: Diverse Leadership For Social Change' in Albrecht, L. & Brewer, R.M. (eds) *Bridges of Power: Womens Multicultural Alliances*, New Society Publishers in cooperation with the National Womens Studies Association, Philadelphia

³² Royal, T.C. op.cit.:83

³³ ibid.

³⁴ **Wiri**, R. 2001 *The Prophecies Of The Great Canyon Of Toi: A History Of Te Whāiti-nui-a-Toi In The Western Urewera Mountains Of New Zealand*, Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy thesis, University of Auckland, Auckland: 25

whakairo, raranga, hangarau, hanga whare, and verbal forms as; whakapapa, kōrero, whakataukī, waiata, kupu whakaari.³⁵ Each of these forms and others contribute to the immense knowledge that is mātauranga Māori. Rangimarie Rose Pere discusses the necessity of seeing the interrelationship between forms of mātauranga Māori.³⁶ In the following model for Māori education she presents us with a clear example of the many interacting forms that contribute to mātauranga Māori.



³⁵ Rapata defines these as whakairo - carving, raranga - weaving, hangarau - technology, hanga whare - house building, and verbal forms as; whakapapa - genealogy, kōrero - oral narratives, whakataukī - proverbs, waiata - song, kupu whakaari - proverbial sayings. I would add that the term whakairo in its wider sense relates to the process of making shape.

³⁶ Pere, Rangimarie 1991 *Te Wheke: A Celebration of Infinite Wisdom*, Gisborne, Ao Ako Global Learning New Zealand

According to Rangimarie, in a Māori educational framework each institution merges together. This can also be said of mātauranga Māori and Kaupapa Māori where the many elements that are explored are continually in relationship and do not sit in isolation.³⁷

Defining 'theory' and its place in the thesis

The appending of the term theory to Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine may for some be literally a contradiction in terms. Both Kaupapa Māori and Mana Wahine are conceptually based within Māori cultural and philosophical traditions. Theory, however, may be said to be conceptually based within European philosophical traditions. To query this relationship is not unfamiliar to Māori. Theory, like other academic traditions, has rarely been 'Māori friendly'. In fact theory often provided the justification for the ongoing perpetuation of violence on Māori. Theories of racial inferiority, deficiencies and cultural disadvantage have been key in the denial of Māori people access to our land, language and culture.³⁸ It is clear that theories can be used both for and against Māori. Graham maintains that Māori, as a subordinate group, must critically engage theory as a site of struggle.³⁹ As a tool theory is not inherently oppressive just as it is not inherently transformative. As African-American intellectual bell hooks writes

Theory is not inherently healing, liberatory or revolutionary. It fulfils this function only when we ask that it do so and direct our theorizing towards this end.⁴⁰

All theories are socially constructed and therefore the worldviews and philosophies of those who participate in their construction inform all theories. In terms of Kaupapa Māori theory, Graham Smith argues that the deliberate cooption of the term 'theory' has been an attempt to challenge dominant Pākehā notions of theory and provide "*counter-hegemonic practice and understandings*" in terms of how theory is constructed, defined, selected, interpreted and applied.⁴¹ Thomas J. Ward in his article 'Definitions of Theory in Sociology' gives an extensive overview of the use of the term 'theory' by a range of sociologists. Utilising a content analysis, Ward draws on the writings of 27 sociologists as a basis for determining key concepts used in regard to defining theory.⁴² What is

³⁷ *ibid.* Also for further discussion of concepts in the model refer to Pere Rangimarie, 1982 *Ako: Concepts and Learning in the Maori Tradition*, Hamilton, Department of Sociology, University of Waikato, Reprinted 1994, Te Kōhanga Reo Trust, Wellington

³⁸ Mead, Linda Tuhiwai Te Rina (1996) *Ngā Aho o te Kāhahu Mātauranga: The Multiple Layers of Struggle by Māori in Education*, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Auckland, 1996

³⁹ Smith, G.H. 1997 *op.cit.*:132

⁴⁰ hooks, bell 1994 *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, Routledge New York, pg 61

⁴¹ Smith, G.H. 1997 *op.cit.*:455

⁴² Ward, T.J., 1974 'Definitions of Theory in Sociology' in Denisoff, R.S., Callahan, O., Levine, M.H. (eds) *Theories and Paradigms in Contemporary Sociology*, F.E. Peacock Publishers Inc., Illinois. Ward's process of analysis included (i) identification of conceptual categories through a "*tentative compilation of categorical referents*" (*ibid.*:33); (ii) examination of each category in some depth; (iii) count of number of entries in each

evident in Ward's analysis is that sociologists may use a variety of terms for similar concepts dependent upon the context and the perceived formality of the context. For example, Ward notes that in more formal contexts statements regarding theory may distinguish between a range of concepts, such as "*axioms, postulates, premises, and theorems*", whereas in less formal statements these concepts may be located under a more general rubric of proposition. The complexities of attempting to provide a definition of theory is highlighted most significantly in Ward's attempt to answer the question, What is theory?

Using language that reflects at least some areas of consensus, a theory is a logical deductive-inductive system of concepts, more selected aspects of phenomena and from which testable hypotheses can be derived. Theories in sociology are intended to be descriptive, explanatory, and predictive of phenomena of interest to the discipline and to its individual practitioners.⁴³

Abbott and Wallace⁴⁴ note that given that all people engage in acts of thinking and having ideas then we are all theorists. We are all able to theorise and analyse what is happening around us, in fact we all participate in common-sense notions that are a part of our engaging with processes of theorising. There is, however, a need to distinguish between common-sense notions and sociological theorising. Drawing on the work of Stuart Hall they identify that in the social sciences theories are expected to be open-ended, open to new evidence, capable of modification and improvement, and clear about the way its concepts are formed.⁴⁵

Social theories are expected to be more systematic in their explanations and ideas, try to take account of the 'facts' presented and be coherent in its explanations, and be open to refutation. These expectations make social theories quite distinct from common-sense assumptions. Taking the discussion of theories a step further, Abbott and Wallace then explore elements that constitute a 'theoretical perspective'. The following five points are identified as necessary in a theoretical perspective:

1. provides us with concepts to use in our analysis and accounts
2. suggests what questions to ask and informs our direction to certain aspects
3. provides ways of answering questions through orienting certain assumptions
4. informs how we interpret and our perceptions
5. involves judgements about the use and application of knowledge.⁴⁶

Where theories seek to explain, organise and summarise what is happening around us, theoretical perspectives then acknowledge how we position ourselves with particular theoretical frameworks.

category as both frequency and percentage distribution.

⁴³ *ibid.*:39

⁴⁴ Abbott, P. and Wallace, C., 1997 *Introduction to Sociology - Feminist Perspectives*, Routledge, London

⁴⁵ *Stuart Hall cited in Abbott and Wallace, ibid.*:25

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

This is a recognition that 'theory' is not singular and that by locating ourselves within a certain theoretical perspective we are naming where we are and the types of analysis that we are bringing to our discussions. It may be that in light of such a contention that the juxtaposition of '**Kaupapa Māori**' to 'theory' is appropriate in that such process overtly identifies the theoretical perspective within which analysis is located. This is affirmed by the process of identifying our position 'up front' so to speak. To position ourselves clearly as **Kaupapa Māori** theorists is to identify ourselves, to place before others where we are coming from so that there is no guise of neutrality or assumed objectivity.⁴⁷

The possibilities of theory are multiple. Theories are not solely descriptive or explanatory or predictive, but can be all of these simultaneously. Focusing on the explanatory nature of theory Coxon et.al⁴⁸ note that theories may be viewed fundamentally as collections of general principles that provide explanations for events and experiences. Theories can provide ways of explaining the world through the use of given understandings. Given the diversity of world views, of cultural ways of seeing, understanding and therefore explaining the world it is expected that a range of theories may exist simultaneously for any given event or to explain experiences. Theories are, and must be, more.

Having looked at some of the literature here that presents theory as prescription, description, explanation and analysis it is clear to me that theory can not only be about these things but must be rooted in practice. To use a term from the work of Paulo Friere, theory and practice must exist in 'dialectical unity'.⁴⁹ Dialectical unity, as a term, acknowledges the interdependence of theory to practice and vice versa. One cannot act fully without the other but that there is a process of constant reflection and reshaping as each part of the unity informs the other. Theory and practice are not closed entities, they are open to each other and therefore we, in our practice and our theorising, need to be open to the possibilities that come with such a process of reflection.

The shifting of a definition of theory from the descriptive mode, within which it is positioned by Ward, to one that is related explicably to practice and therefore is informed by the politics and social realities within which the practice is located, makes theory worthwhile for **Māori**. Without the unity of theory with practice, theory has little to offer. The idea of theory as a means of describing and explaining what is happening around, and more often than not 'to' us, and its relationship to transformative practice, is explored in some depth by bell hooks in her piece 'Theory as Liberatory

⁴⁷ Smith, L.T.2000 op.cit.

⁴⁸ Coxon, E., Jenkins, K., Marshall, J., Massey, L., (eds), (1994) *The Politics of Learning and Teaching in Aotearoa - New Zealand*, Dunmore Press Ltd, Palmerston North

⁴⁹ Freire, P., 1985 *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation*, Bergin and Garvey Publishers Inc.,

Practice'. Coming to theory was for hooks

because I was hurting - the pain within me was so intense that I could not go on living. I came to theory desperate, wanting to comprehend-to grasp what was happening around and within me.⁵⁰

bell hooks' exploration of theory as liberatory practice is helpful in that her discussion engages with some issues that are central for African-Americans, of which many also have direct relevance for **Māori**. Where theory has on the whole been imposed upon **Māori** experiences and events, there has emerged an often deep resentment and dismissal of the idea that theory could be at all transformative. Reflecting on similar responses within her own community, hooks identifies the difficulties that such responses pose for the black intellectual, in particular the ways that dismissal of intellectuals and theory can silence the black academic. The silencing noted by hooks can equally be felt by **Māori** academics in this country. It is a process that I have felt and seen on many occasions. The dismissal of **Māori** academics and any notion of theory, through utilising anti-theory discourses, has become a means of silencing or of capturing ground within a debate.

Barbara Christian, an African-American woman literary critic, offers much to this discussion. Christian gives an articulate and powerful critique of the developments in literary theory.⁵¹ A key point of concern is what she considers the 'race for theory' and the ways in which new literary criticism is being constructed. Whilst it is important to engage and develop theory, she states, it must be grounded in experiences and practice, without which theory becomes "*prescriptive, exclusive, elitist*".⁵² Further, she challenges the notion that new theoretical developments will make change for black women writers, she writes;

These writers did announce their dissatisfaction with some of the cornerstone ideas of their own tradition, a dissatisfaction with which I was born. But in their attempt to change the orientation of Western scholarship, they, as usual, concentrated on themselves and were not in the slightest interested in the worlds they ignored or controlled.⁵³

For theory to be invented in ways that have little or no relevance to people's lives because of its

Massachusetts

⁵⁰ hooks, b., 1994 'Theory as Liberatory Practice' in *Teaching to Transgress*, Routledge: London:59

This article is one that I use in a Graduate course I teach, as it promotes discussion about the possibilities of theory. It has become increasingly obvious to me that many **Māori** hold a deep distrust for anything that is called 'theory'. That distrust has been well earned. As Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith relates in regard to research, **Māori** have been at the receiving end of being 'researched on' and 'researched by' the coloniser⁵⁰. As **Māori**, our experience of theory, like our experiences of research have been as the object who is studied, and theorised about. Our lives, our **whānau**, our culture, our language, our entire being has been theorised by **Pākehā** academics and researchers over the past 200 years. Our world has been theorised through paradigms that bear no resemblance to the ways in which we would explain and understand ourselves.

⁵¹ Christian, Barbara 1990 'The Race For Theory' in Moraga, C. & Anzuldúa, G.(eds), 1983 *This Bridge Called My Back*, Kitchen Table Women of Colour Press, New York, pp335-345

⁵² *ibid.*

⁵³ *ibid*:339

prescriptive, exclusive and elitist foundations is of no use to **Māori**. Any theoretical framework must be located within our experiences and practices. Equally, I would argue a strong **Kaupapa Māori** theoretical framework must be cognisant of our historical and cultural realities, in all their complexities.

Struggling with and over the notion of theory is a part of **Kaupapa Māori** theory. We need to both recognise and critique those theories that have reconstructed our experiences as a means of maintaining the colonisers dominance. Equally we need to acknowledge that if theory is about providing explanations about the world that are derived from certain sets of principles then it is clear that our tupuna did engage in theory as a part of our own knowledge constructions and ways of understanding our experiences. In this light we can see the possibilities for theory, as bell hooks names it as 'liberatory' practice.

However, just as not all theory is oppressive, not all theory is liberatory. Theory is constructed by groups of people through their own cultural and political understandings. Theory is as with other social constructions, both socially and culturally bound. Liberatory theory can only develop from a political positioning that acknowledges that injustices and oppression exist. Without that acknowledgement the need for liberatory theory would not be evident. It seems to me that bell hooks is calling for the recognition of the potential for theory to be liberatory, and that such recognition is realised through active critical reflection that is located in an understanding of oppression, of pain, of struggle. Theories that develop from these concrete and known experiences bring possibilities for transformation. The relationship of these ideas to the development of 'new' feminist theorising is explained by hooks;

Personal testimony, personal experience, is such fertile ground for the production of liberatory feminist theory because it usually forms the base of our theory making. While we work to resolve those issues that are most pressing in daily life... we engage in a critical process of theorizing that enables and empowers.⁵⁴

A further source of rejection of theory is related to accessibility. Many theoretical frameworks that espouse a focus on transformation are themselves inaccessible. If theory is inaccessible because of the language chosen by academics then the potential for that theory to transform the lived realities of oppressed groups becomes limited. A common complaint by **Māori** students is regarding the inaccessibility of some theoretical discussions. bell hooks expresses her amazement at the limited number of feminist theoretical texts that actually 'speak' to women, men and children about transforming our lives. By 'speak', she is referring to the meanings and theories being accessible. The academy does little to support the development of accessible texts.

As **Māori** academics we are often caught in the bind between our communities and the academy. **Māori** thesis students often voice the position that their thesis must be able to be read by their **whānau** and the wider **Māori** community, if it can't then it's potential for offering information and knowledge is, in their minds, diminished.⁵⁵ This can create a dilemma for **Māori** students in that the expectations of the university, and what constitutes a thesis and theory, can differ significantly from the expectations of the **Māori** student and their priority audience.

As in other areas of our existence in the academy, as both teachers and students, the use of theory, and how we use theory are sites of contestation. There are ways to present theory in understandable language and this is something that many **Māori** academics seek in their own writings. This is especially relevant to **Kaupapa Māori** theory as its sustainability is dependent on its reproduction by **Māori** for **Māori**. To write in ways that deny access to the majority of **Māori** people is in my opinion bringing closure rather than ensuring ongoing debate and evolution. I agree with Graham **Hingangaroa** Smith's contention that theory is a central problematic in the development of liberatory processes which Smith refers to as "*transformative action in the interests of subordinated groups*".⁵⁶ For Graham, theory is a definite site of struggle between interest groups and the struggle for theoretical space, to support **Māori** to critically analyse our experiences, is a worthwhile struggle. This struggle is about contesting theoretical space. As with all forms of contestation the underpinning power relations require challenge. This is a threat to those who argue the dominance of Western theories. It is also about **Māori** constituting theory within our own terms. Sheilagh Walker argues that **Māori** academics engage in theory because of our engagement in the struggle for **Kaupapa Māori**. In her terms "*our struggle becomes our Theory*".⁵⁷ Furthermore, she suggests that **Kaupapa Māori** theory is not defined within Western philosophical traditions but through **Kaupapa Māori** praxis. It is worth outlining this argument more fully by referring directly to a statement made in her Masters thesis.

I conclude that **Kaupapa Maori** is not a Theory in the Western sense; it does not subsume itself within European philosophical endeavours which construct and privilege one Theory over another Theory, one rationality over another rationality, one philosophical paradigm over another paradigm, one knowledge over another knowledge, one World view over another World view of the Other. **Kaupapa Maori** Theory is rather **Kaupapa Maori** Praxis. My problematic continues. I de-construct the title further; what remains is simply **KAUPAPA**

⁵⁴ *ibid*:70

⁵⁵ Taki, Mereana 1996 *op.cit.*; Pahiri, Dallas 1997 *Me Whakatupu Ki Te Hua O Te Rengarenga, Me Whakapakari Ki Te Hua O Te Kawariki Reclaiming and Contesting Culture: Popular Culture and Māori Youth*, Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, University of Auckland, Auckland

⁵⁶ Smith, G.H. 1997 *op.cit.*:131

⁵⁷ Walker, S. *op.cit.*:119

This raises again the necessity or otherwise of appending the word ‘theory’ to **Kaupapa Māori** and **Mana Wahine**. The problematic being in the dominant conceptualisation of theory in Western terms. I would argue that the use of the term theory in resistance terms is one that validates more directly the underpinning intentions of **Kaupapa Māori** and **Mana Wahine** theories, but as with any concept that derives from a Western base the issues raised by Sheilagh Walker must be continually present and be central to our ongoing reflection on the terms that we choose to use.

Locating Kaupapa Māori theory in the thesis

This chapter focuses on **Kaupapa Māori** theory. **Kaupapa Māori** theory is the fundamental framework of this thesis. There is no other theoretical framework that can ensure a cultural integrity is maintained. It provides both tools of analysis and a means by which to context the various discourses that the thesis engages with. **Kaupapa Māori** theory is the critical theory alongside which all other theories will be located. Current expressions of **Kaupapa Māori** theory are expanded upon through an assertion of **Mana Wahine** as a **Kaupapa Māori** theoretical framework and methodology. This research is about knowledge and analysis as related to **Māori** women. It seeks to provide analysis and critique that will raise frameworks for analysis of critical issues for **Māori** women. In order to undertake such a task a strong theoretical foundation is necessary. That theoretical foundation must, in my view, be built from here, from **Papatūānuku**, not from the building blocks of imported theories. **Kaupapa Māori** theory provides such a foundation.

In an analogy of a **wharenuī**,⁵⁹ **Kaupapa Māori** theory is the **poutokomanawa** for this research.⁶⁰ Margie **Kahukura Hohepa** draws upon the **wharenuī** as a means of highlighting the inter-relationships that occur within **Māori** Education.⁶¹ The **wharenuī** is an appropriate symbol for discussing **Māori** Education and **Kaupapa Māori** theory as it is the embodiment of our being. The **wharenuī** as a representation of selected **tūpuna**, both female and male, is itself a storehouse of knowledge. The **wharenuī** also serves as shelter and protection, whilst holding within the space generations of stories and images that remind us of our place in the world. A number of writers position the **wharenuī** as a form of understanding particular forms of **Kaupapa Māori** theory or

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ The **wharenuī** is the large meeting house that provides as a collective gathering place for our people. As a metaphor the whare embodies and personifies our ancestral connections and provides a cultural space that authors such as **Ranginui** Walker have referred to as one of the few bastions where **Māori** can ‘be’ **Māori**.

⁶⁰ The **poutokomanawa** is the central post within a **wharenuī**, as such the **manawa** or the heart of the **wharenuī** is supported by this very central post.

⁶¹ **Hohepa**, M., 2001 personal communication

Kaupapa Māori research. Hirini Melbourne draws on the **whare whakairo** as a means of contextualising **Māori** world views.⁶² Takirangi Smith notes the **whare** provides a whole representation of **Māori** worldviews and stands as a symbol of our validity in the world.⁶³ Frances Goulton discusses the **wharenuī** as a form for depicting key concepts in their Teacher Education programme. In her discussion the **tāhuhu**⁶⁴ represents **wairua**, the **papa** is **whānau**, and four **pou** represent **ako**, **tikanga**, **Kaupapa Māori** and **te reo**.⁶⁵

Kaupapa Māori theory is not the 'only' theory that will appear in this thesis, others that allow a critical analysis and reflection are included. I have no intention of adhering to an academic addiction that promotes ongoing injections of work from 'dead white men'. This is not to undermine the contributions of many who fit this category, but is a response to the constant deluge of 'important' theorists that I am told I 'should' read. The majority of those 'important' theorists have absolutely no understanding of how **Māori** experience the world, or the complex cultural relationships that are a part of our experiences. Sheilagh Walker also highlights this as an issue when she writes;

the majority of 'Dead White Males' who have created and perpetuated European philosophical discourse, have done so, for the benefit of other White Males.⁶⁶

Those 'other' theories that appear in this thesis do so for three key reasons (i) they provide an analysis that is affirming of the wider theoretical drive of the thesis; (ii) they require a **Kaupapa Māori** critique; or (iii) they provide a **Pākehā** or European analysis of a **Pākehā** or European ideology⁶⁷. I write more fully about this in Chapter four which discusses the role of Western theories alongside **Kaupapa Māori** theory, but it is necessary to state at this point that I do not intend throwing out all Western theories solely because of their cultural origins. As both bell hooks⁶⁸ and Lee Maracle⁶⁹

⁶² Melbourne, Hirini 1991 'Whare Whakairo: Māori Literary Traditions' in McGregor, C. (ed) *Dirty Science: Aspects of Language and Literature in New Zealand*, Oxford University Press, Auckland

⁶³ Smith, Takirangi 1999 'Doing Research From Home: Tangata Whenua Issues and Māori Research' in Te Pūmanawa Hauora, 1999, *Proceedings of Te Oru Rangahau: Māori Research and Development Conference*, School of Māori Studies, Massey University, Palmerston North, pp 246-248

⁶⁴ Tāhuhu refers to the ridgepole of the **whare**, that is seen as the backbone of the ancestor that the **whare** represents.

⁶⁵ Goulton, Frances, 1999 'He Huarahi Ako: Pathways to Learning : The Academic and Cultural Self-efficacy of Māori Student Teachers' in Te Pūmanawa Hauora, 1999, *Proceedings of Te Oru Rangahau: Māori Research and Development Conference*, School of Māori Studies, Massey University, Palmerston North

⁶⁶ Walker, Sheilagh 1996 *Kia Tau Te Rangimarie: Kaupapa Māori Theory as a Resistance against the Construction of Māori as the Other*, Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, University of Auckland:26

⁶⁷ Here I am identifying that there are both **Pākehā** and European ideologies in existence in **Aotearoa**. I am not inferring an interchangeability between the two terms as I don't believe that they are in fact interchangeable. When I refer to **Pākehā** I am meaning those of some form of European background who have settled in **Aotearoa**, this can be from first generation migrants through to those who have lived here for a number of generations. European however refers to those who are of European background and still choose to see their home as elsewhere, not **Aotearoa**.

⁶⁸ hooks, b., 1994 op.cit.

⁶⁹ Maracle, L., 1996 op.cit.

would say that would be absurd, as it would deny that there are theories of Western origin that can be of use for oppressed groups. This position is clearly taken by **Māori** academics such as Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith, Graham **Hingangaroa** Smith, Margie **Kahukura Hohepa**, Patricia **Maringi** Johnston and **Kuni** Jenkins in their recently completed doctoral theses.⁷⁰ **Māori** women theorists such as **Ngahuia Te Awekotuku**, Kathie Irwin, **Mereana Taki** and Cherryl Smith, have also been highly influential in my own theoretical development and have encouraged the utilisation of theoretical frameworks that will support **Māori** aspirations.⁷¹ A range of **Māori** organisations and **Māori** women in 'the movement' have also been influential in shaping ideas and analysis.⁷² Given that I have a tendency to critique certain theoretical frameworks with some vigour, I have a need to continually remind myself not to blatantly deny that there may be things that are useful in such theories. My position however, remains that the foundation for analysis will be **Māori**. In considering **Kaupapa Māori** theory I am working toward an articulation of **Mana Wahine** as a means of theoretical analysis. My proposal is that for insights into **Māori** experiences there must be explicit statements for and by **Māori** women; this, in my argument, is critical if we are to ensure that **Kaupapa Māori** theory does not become yet another 'malestream' theoretical framework.⁷³ This point constitutes a major section of my theoretical positioning and therefore informs the research analysis significantly.

It is necessary to acknowledge that **Kaupapa Māori** theory is not a theoretical framework that provides answers by following a set recipe. Where there are recognisable elements within **Kaupapa Māori** theory, as is presently being defined, these are not seen to be deterministic or exclusive. This is not an attempt to close or define the parameters of **Kaupapa Māori** theory in such a way that would prevent those who draw upon **Kaupapa Māori** theory the ability to be flexible and in fact adaptable to the ever changing contexts of **Māori** collectively and **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi** as distinct units. To promote closure would in my mind be the antithesis of what is proposed within **Kaupapa**

⁷⁰ Mead, L.T.R. 1996 op.cit.; Smith, G.H., 1997 op.cit.; Johnston, P.M., 1998 *He Aro Rereke: Education Policy and Māori Underachievement: Mechanisms of Power and Difference*, Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy thesis, University of Auckland, Auckland; **Hohepa**, M.K., 1999 op.cit.; Jenkins, K., 2000 op.cit.

⁷¹ Irwin, K. 1988, 1992 op.cit.; **Te Awekotuku**, N., 1991, 1992 op.cit., **Taki**, **Mereana** 1996 op.cit.; Smith, C.W., 1994; Smith, C.W. & **Taki**, M., 1994 'Hoihoi Wahine Pākehā' in *Te Pua 2, Te Puawaitanga*, Auckland pp.38-42

⁷² **Wāhine mō ngā wāhine o te Moana nui a Kiwa**, a support group for **Māori** and Pacific Women Lesbians was particularly influential in terms of issues and analysis. The Hawke **whānau** of **Ngāti Whaātua ki Orakei** have been nurturing of many **Māori** women in terms of coming to understand issues of **mana whenua** and land struggles in **Tāmaki Makaurau**. **Te Rapunga o Poutama** work and education trust operated from a **whānau** base from its inception in 1986 and continues to provide programmes for **rangatahi** in inner city Auckland. There are a multitude of **Māori** individuals, and some **Pākehā** although to a lesser degree, who contribute to my understandings of the world, and they know who they are.

⁷³ The term 'malestream' is used by Pamela Abbott and Wallace Claire 1997 op.cit. They coin this term as a recognition that historically male theorists have been privileged within sociology with little if any recognition of

Māori Theory. The term theory itself is multiple in the definitions associated with it and some exploration of that provides some understanding of the need to ensure against a closure of **Kaupapa Māori** theory.

Much of the strength of **Kaupapa Māori** theory comes in the ability of many **Māori** to 'see' the relevance of such theoretical engagement, and to recognise much of what is said in their own practices. What is also important is the recognition that **Kaupapa Māori** theory is not set in concrete, in fact it is very much a fluid and evolving theoretical framework.⁷⁴ The complexities of what this means is evident in my own struggle to find 'a' word that does not in itself express a reductionist view. I have chosen to use the term 'framework' in that it provides a notion of environment and setting as opposed to terms such as 'model' or 'paradigm', which for me, imply notions of patterns that are set in place. In a wider sense this is a part of a realisation that it is dominance that seeks to set cultures in concrete, to hold us in a construction that is static and unchanging and which is often relentless in its denial of growth and change. We can't afford for this to be the case.

In developing, drawing upon and refining **Kaupapa Māori** theory we need to be a part of a process that is accessible and fluid, not something that is controlled by a few or static and unchanging. The evolving of **Kaupapa Māori** theory is long-term and requires intense reflection. The process itself is as important, if not more so, as the outcome. It is through the process that we are able to engage more deeply with **Māori** knowledge, with **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**, in ways that can reveal culturally based frameworks and structures which will provide a foundation of **Māori** Indigenous analyses.

In identifying the evolving nature of **Kaupapa Māori** theory it is also important to acknowledge those who have been instrumental in its articulation. Much is owed to the foundational work done by Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith and Graham **Hingangaroa** Smith in providing key elements for exploration in terms of what **Kaupapa Māori** theory might look like.⁷⁵ This is also indicated in the area of research where **Kaupapa Māori** research has been carefully developed alongside **Kaupapa Māori** theory.⁷⁶ What is most impressive in the works of both these writers is their desire to be a part of collective and open development of **Kaupapa Māori** theory with other **Māori** academics such as myself. More recent works by Margie **Kahukura Hohepa**, Patricia **Maringi** Johnston, **Kuni** Jenkins, **Tuakana Nepe**, Fiona Cram, Cherryl **Waerea-i-te-rangi** Smith, **Mereana Taki**, Kathie Irwin, **Huia** Jahnke,

women.

⁷⁴ Smith, G.H. op.cit: 97

⁷⁵ op.cit

⁷⁶ Smith, L.T. 1999 *Decolonising Methodologies : Research and Indigenous Peoples*, Zed Books Ltd. London

Taina Pohatu, Hine Waitere-Ang and Russell Bishop show the expansiveness that is **Kaupapa Māori** theory.⁷⁷ It also highlights **Kaupapa Māori** theory as evolving.

Kaupapa Māori Theory As Evolving Theory

As a theoretical framework **Kaupapa Māori** theory is still developing. However, we can be assured that development comes from a philosophical tradition that is as longstanding as any Western philosophical tradition. The idea that **Kaupapa Māori** theory is still growing is an important aspect to consider as it would be easy to stay with what has been written and not build on, critique and reshape **Kaupapa Māori** theory. To ensure the diversities of **Māori** experiences and an inclusion of **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi** knowledge **Kaupapa Māori** theory must be reflective, and we as its proponents open to an evolving process. In one of the most depth discussions of **Kaupapa Māori** theory, Graham Hingangaroa Smith establishes **Kaupapa Māori** theory as an evolving theory of transformation that can be understood through an analysis of **Kaupapa Māori** intervention initiatives.⁷⁸ Graham locates the genesis of **Kaupapa Māori** theory very securely within the political initiatives driven by **Māori**. More recently we established the phrasing of the term '**Kaupapa Māori** theory' was a collective event, having been articulated through theoretical discussions that took place in a **Māori** Education graduate paper in 1990.⁷⁹ I recall the kinds of discussions that took part in that group and the strength of debate surrounding the 'usefulness' or otherwise of the focus on the Frankfurt School Critical Theory. A question that was constantly raised was 'where are our theoretical terms?' This remains a crucial question for **Māori**. It is important to note at this point that the term **Kaupapa Māori** theory was phrased in line with existing developments of **Te Kōhanga Reo** and **Kura Kaupapa Māori**, and with the idea that we can and should develop our own theoretical frameworks based within **te reo me ōna tikanga**. **Kaupapa Māori** theory was not, as appears to be the belief of some, based upon Critical Theory.⁸⁰

Kaupapa Māori theory may be viewed as a theoretical movement that has its foundation in **Māori** community developments. These developments are epitomised in the **Māori** education initiatives **Te**

⁷⁷ Many of the people referred to here are referenced at footnotes 45 & 46. The remainder are: Nepe T., 1991 op.cit.; Pohatu, Taina 1996 *I Tiipu Ai Taatou I Ngaa Turi O O Tatatau Maatua Tiipuna: Transmission and Acquisition Processes Within Kaawai Whakapapa*. Unpublished Master of Education thesis, University of Auckland, Auckland; Waikere-Ang, Hine 1999 *Te Kete, The Briefcase, Te Tuara: The Balancing Act - Māori Women in the Primary Sector*, Unpublished Master of Educational Administration thesis, Massey University, Palmerston North; Bishop, R., 1996 op.cit.

⁷⁸ Smith, G.H. 1997 op.cit:457

⁷⁹ Graham Smith personal communication

⁸⁰ Rapata Wiri argues that **Kaupapa Māori** theory is based on Critical Theory and is a 'bicultural' approach. The relationship to critical theory is discussed in this chapter however it is necessary to restate that **Kaupapa Māori** theory is based upon **Kaupapa Māori**. In these terms **Kaupapa Māori** theory is more akin to what Rapata terms **Mana Māori**. Refer Wiri, R., 2001 op.cit.

Kōhanga Reo⁸¹ and **Kura Kaupapa Māori**. Both **Te Kōhanga Reo** and **Kura Kaupapa Māori** are initiatives that originated from **Māori** communities. They were, and are, driven primarily by the motivation of **Māori** for initiatives through which **te reo Māori** could be regenerated for our people and which would intervene in the crisis of **Māori** educational underachievement that had been the experience of generations of **Māori** children and **whānau**. The development of these initiatives brought a need for **Māori** people to reflect on and draw upon our own cultural knowledge. **Te Kōhanga Reo**, the first of the **Māori** Education initiatives to develop, is a prime example. The history of the development of **Te Kōhanga Reo** has been well documented by **Māori** people involved in the movement. **Māori** women such as Margie **Kahukura Hohepa**, **Arapera** Royal-Tangaere, Tania Ka'ai and Mere White have documented **Te Kōhanga Reo** and identified key elements that contribute to the success in terms of language revitalisation.⁸²

What is key to this discussion is that **Te Kōhanga Reo** was an initiative through which to explore **Māori** knowledge in a concrete and focused manner in terms of education. Moreover, it meant that we needed to clearly articulate the types of values, understandings, beliefs and norms that we wanted for our **tamariki** and to bring forward **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga** so that those aspirations could be reached. I don't intend romanticising **Te Kōhanga Reo**, as there are struggles that are inherent in processes of reclamation for **Māori**, but it is important to note that the development of **Te Kōhanga Reo** has had a profound affect on **Māori** Education more generally and on the growth of **Kaupapa Māori** theory.⁸³

My own relationship with the term **Kaupapa Māori** theory has also been one of constant reflection for precisely the reasons that have been raised. I am keenly aware of the coining of such phrases by **Māori** as a process of opening space. There is no doubt that the coining of the term **Kaupapa Māori**

⁸¹ In 1979 a gather of elders at the **Wānanga kaumatua** affirmed **te reo Māori** "*Ko te reo te mauri o te mana Māori*" the language is the life principle of **Māori** mana. This was followed in 1981 with a resolution from another **hui**, **Waananga Whakatauirā** for the development of bilingual education at pre-school level. These were taken further to a proposal for immersion pre-school programmes. In April 1982 the first **Te Kohanga Reo** opened at **Pukeatua Kokiri** Centre **Wainuiomata**. The overriding goal being the fluency of **te reo Māori** which would address the priority concern for the revitalisation of **te reo**. Refer **Hohepa**, M.K 1990 *Te Kohanga Reo Hei Tikanga Ako I Te Reo Māori*, Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, University of Auckland. pp 7-18

⁸² I would urge any reader who is interested in **Te Kōhanga Reo** to refer to the following works: **Hohepa**, M.K.:ibid.; Irwin, Kathie 'The Politics of **Kōhanga Reo**' in Middleton, S., Codd, J., Jones, A., 1990 *New Zealand Education Policy Today*, Allen and Unwin, Wellington pp 110-120; **Royal-Tangaere**, **Arapera** 1992 *Te Puawaitanga O Te Reo Ka Hua Te Haa O Te Potiki I Roto I Te Whānau Ko Tenei Te Tahuhu O Te Kōhanga Reo: Transference From Te Kōhanga Reo To Home, The Roles Of The Child And The Family*, Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, University of Auckland; Ka'ai, Tania 1990 *Te Hiringa Taketake: Mai i te Kohanga Reo: Māori Pedagogy, Te Kōhanga Reo and the transition to school*, Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, University of Auckland; White, Mere Ngāutauta Skerrett 1995 *Te Wero - Te Uru Whakatupu Ake Te Uru o Matawhaura: Language Scaffolding in a Kōhanga Reo*, Unpublished Master of Philosophy in Education thesis, University of Auckland.

theory has been precisely that, a process of engaging the academic community in a way that will create cultural and theoretical space for **Māori** within the university. This has also meant a reclaiming of the possibilities of theory, as I have discussed earlier in chapter two, where theory is not constrained to those dualistic oppositions and contests that Sheilagh Walker has alerted us to.⁸³ This is critical, as **Kaupapa Māori** theory is not constructed in the competitive, hierarchical nature that is often the case in the assertion of Western theories. **Kaupapa Māori** theory, as explored in this thesis, is not dualistic or constructed within simplistic binaries. It is not about asserting the superiority of one set of knowledge over another or one worldview over another. It is not about denying the rights of any peoples to their philosophical traditions, culture or language. It is an assertion of the right for **Māori** to be **Māori** on our own terms and to draw from our own base to provide understandings and explanations of the world.

Asserting a right to argue **Kaupapa Māori** theory has been an ongoing struggle. In universities across the country **Māori** academics are drawing upon the growing body of **Māori** literature that is engaging **Kaupapa Māori** theory. The historical dominance of Western theorising is being challenged at a very fundamental level, that is at the level of relevance to the Indigenous people of this land. For many **Pākehā** academics this challenge is viewed as a threat. The possibility of **Māori** taking control of our own theoretical frameworks is a threat to the survival of many of those **Pākehā** academics who have spent the best part of their academic lives theorising ‘about’ and ‘on’ **Māori**. **Māori** students across the country have been told that it is not sufficient to reference **Kaupapa Māori** theory as their theoretical framework, or to rely solely on the writings of **Māori** academics when discussing issues regarding **Māori** Education. It is clear that those **Pākehā** academics, some of which are supervising **Māori** students at Graduate level, are unable to accept that **Kaupapa Māori** theory is a valid theoretical framework or that **Māori** are able to develop theoretical frameworks that have origins in **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**. This is a particularly ethnocentric notion, yet it continues to pervade the academy in ways that can seriously disadvantage **Māori** staff and students.

In spite of the resistances to the assertion of **Kaupapa Māori** theory, we continue seeking ways to claim ground in the framing of our own theories. We do this with the knowledge that theory is not in itself transformative, that it is a site of struggle, and that it must be located in direct relationship with practice. Theory is a term that has a tenuous relationship to **Māori**. It is my hope that **Kaupapa Māori** theory will bring to the fore the possibility that we no longer have to adhere to an idea that theory belongs only to the coloniser, but rather that we can as Indigenous people once again

⁸³ This is explored further in the following section on the organic development of **Kaupapa Māori** theory.

⁸⁴ Walker, S. 1996, op.cit.

acknowledge that we have always theorised about our world and that our theories, that are grounded historically on this land, are valid. **Kaupapa Māori** theory is I believe a theoretical framework that is organically **Māori**.

Organic Development of Kaupapa Māori theory

The organic development and nature of **Kaupapa Māori** theory is perhaps one of its strongest aspects. Having already noted that the coining of the phrase came within a university context it is vital that we do not then assume that **Kaupapa Māori** theory is only about academia, as that is not the case. **Kaupapa Māori** theory has in very real terms developed from **Māori**. Given that **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga** is central to **Kaupapa Māori** theory we have an established foundation that can be described as nothing other than organic.

Kaupapa Māori theory is a part on a wider resurgence for **Māori**, it is a part of what is often termed the **Māori** Renaissance. That renaissance is an outcome of the struggles by many **Māori** to regain the fundamental rights guaranteed under **Te Tiriti o Waitangi**. The struggles of groups such as **Ngā Tamatoa** and **Te reo Māori Association**⁸⁵ were instrumental in the maintenance of **Māori** struggles for **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**. The **Wai 11** case to the **Waitangi** Tribunal has provided an ongoing thrust for **Māori** who are active in the struggle for the revival and retention of **te reo Māori**. From these struggles have emerged the **Māori** Educational initiatives of **Te Kōhanga Reo**, **Kura Kaupapa Māori**, **Whare Kura** and **Whare Wānanga**. The political and historical development of these initiatives has been recorded by those involved directly with these initiatives.⁸⁶ It may be stated in more general terms that the development of these initiatives has come about from a basis of the need for **Māori** to take control of our own educational processes and in doing so of our own destinies. Fundamental to this is the revival, maintenance and development of **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga** for present and future generations of **Māori**. Discussion surrounding the context within which **Te Kōhanga Reo** emerged highlights these general intentions.

⁸⁵ **Ngā Tamatoa** and the **Te Reo Māori** Association were radical **Māori** groups that were instrumental in the assertion of **Māori** rights to **Māori** language and culture.

⁸⁶ Refer **Hohepa**, M.K. 1990 op.cit.; **Nepe**, T. 1991 op.cit.; **Smith**, L.T., 1990 **Māori** Education: A Reassertion in in *Puna Wairere: Essays By Māori*, 1990 New Zealand Planning Council, Wellington pp 62-70; **Smith** G.H. 1989 **Kura Kaupapa Māori**: Innovation and Policy Development in *Access* Vol.8, Journal of the Policy Studies Group, Education Department, University of Auckland, Auckland pp26-28; **Smith**, G.H. 1997 op.cit.; for a bibliography refer **Hohepa**, M & **Ratapu**, R., 1992 *He Kete kupu korero : a bibliography of readings on Te Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori* Research Unit for **Māori** Education, University of Auckland, Auckland; **Jenkins**, K. with **Ka'ai**, T., 'Māori Education: A Cultural Experience and Dilemma for the State - A New Direction for **Māori** Society' in **Coxon**, E., et.al. 1994 *The Politics of Learning and Teaching in Aotearoa - New Zealand*, , The Dunmore Press: Palmerston North pp 148-179; **Mead**, H.M., 1998 *The Development of Wānanga: Politics and Vision* [sound recording], University in the 21st century Winter Lecture Series, University of Auckland, Auckland

Margie **Hohepa**⁸⁷ describes the development of **Te Kōhanga Reo** as having developed as a part of wider concerns in regard to **te reo Māori**. The concern for the potential loss of **te reo Māori** has been located with various movements and petitions of the 1970s. Perhaps one of the most understated events in the revival of **te reo Māori** as been that of the work done by **Hana Te Hemara** in her instigation of the **te reo Māori** petition in 1970. In the publication '**Mana Wahine**', **Hana** speaks of her life and the inspiration to take on the development of the **Māori** Language petition. Having been raised in a **whānau** where her mother had been beaten for speaking **Māori**, **Hana**'s own experience was one of hearing **te reo Māori** but not being able to speak **Māori**. Gaining a political understanding of this was essential and the move toward the petition was further influenced by hearing others speak of the position of **te reo Māori** in education.⁸⁸ Furthermore, **Hana** states her involvement with **Ngā Tamatoa** was because of their commitment also to **te reo Māori**. The petition was presented to parliament on September 14, 1972 and consisted of 44,000 signatures.⁸⁹

Where the early 1970's is undoubtedly the time where there was a growing radical assertion that intervention must take place, **Hana** also notes that it is necessary to recognise that there were concerns expressed much earlier in regard to the positioning of **te reo Māori** within **Aotearoa**. She stated;

Many **Māori** people pushed for the retention of our language and I want to acknowledge stalwart people like **Lou Tawhai** from **Te Arawa**, who left here broken-hearted because of insufficient support in the fifties and sixties. We were just one of many groups like the **Māori Women's Welfare League**, who since 1952 had passed remits at their annual conferences to retain the **Māori** language. It was really an idea whose time had arrived.⁹⁰

Linda **Tuhiwai** Smith also identifies the significance of the 1970's period in the revitalisation of **te reo Māori**. It was a time when significant actions were being undertaken in regard to land issues including actions such as the 1975 Land March, the reoccupation of Bastion Point by **Ngāti Whaataua**,⁹¹ the occupation of the Raglan Golf course by Eva Rickard and her **whānau**, the establishment of the **Waitangi** Tribunal. **Māori** movements of the time were not removed from wider international movements. **Ngahuia Te Awekotuku** places the American Civil Rights movement of

⁸⁷ **Hohepa**, M., 1999 op.cit.

⁸⁸ Brown, A. & Carlin, J. (eds) 1994 '**Hana Te Hemara**' in *Mana Wahine: Women who show the way*, Reed Publishing (NZ) Ltd., Auckland pg 51

⁸⁹ *ibid.*:52

⁹⁰ *ibid.*:52

⁹¹ For reflections on Bastion Point refer to Hawke, S. (ed), *Takaparawhau : the people's story : 1998 Bastion Point 20 year Commemoration Book*, **Ngāti Whaataua ki Orakei & Moko** Productions Ltd., Auckland ;for discussion of the occupation at **Whaingaroa** refer to Greensill, A., Sykes, A., & **Pihama**, L. (eds), *Tauīwa Hautai Kereopa Rickard: 1925-1997: Ngā Puna Roimata*, **Tuāiwa Hautai Kereopa Whānau & Moko** Productions Ltd., Independent State of **Whaingaroa**

the 1960's as a key influence in **Māori** politics at the time. Equally the American Indian Movement (AIM) was also gathering momentum struggling for Indigenous rights in their lands.⁹²

What is clear from documentation in regard to the struggle for and establishment of **Te Kōhanga Reo** is its organic nature. **Māori** people instigated **Te Kōhanga Reo**. **Māori** people defined the need for **Te Kōhanga Reo**. It is **Māori** people that are ultimately responsible for the nurturing and maintenance of **Te Kōhanga Reo**. This can also be said for those things that have grown out of **Te Kōhanga Reo**, such as **Kura Kaupapa Māori** and **Whare Kura**. The movement into **Kura Kaupapa Māori** was a necessity in terms of maintaining the foundations that were put in place in **Te Kōhanga Reo**. In research regarding the transition of **Te Kōhanga Reo** children into existing state schools, Tania Ka'ai observed that **Te Kōhanga Reo** children who went in to mainstream English-speaking or bilingual classes experienced a rapid loss of fluency of **te reo Māori**.⁹³ There is little doubt that within education, and particularly in the formal context of schooling, **Te Kōhanga Reo** and **Kura Kaupapa Māori** have been key initiatives in the revival and retention of **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**, and that from these initiatives has emerged a growing body of literature as to what may be considered success factors for **Māori** in education. These factors are equally viewed as key factors in terms of **Kaupapa Māori** theory. Graham Hingangaroa Smith has noted that these initiatives in **Māori** education are themselves **Kaupapa Māori** praxis.⁹⁴ Graham's research in **Te Kōhanga Reo** and **Kura Kaupapa Māori** brought to the fore the ways in which **Māori** activate **tikanga** within a formalised setting of schooling.

At this point it is important to note that we need to be careful not to assume that **Te Kōhanga Reo** and **Kura Kaupapa Māori** are the only sites where **Kaupapa Māori** is articulated. There are numerous sites through which **Māori** people are actively engaged with **Kaupapa Māori**. These sites are often distinctly **Māori**, such as the many **marae** around the country, but can also include the development of **Kaupapa Māori** initiatives within a whole range of sites including mainstream institutions.⁹⁵ Both **Te Kōhanga Reo** and **Kura Kaupapa Māori** are now firmly entrenched under

⁹² Mead, L.T.R. 1996 op.cit.

⁹³ Ka'ai, T., 1990 op.cit.

⁹⁴ Smith G.H. 1997 op.cit.

⁹⁵ There are many examples of **Māori** seeking to implement **Kaupapa Māori** initiatives within the mainstream institutions that they work in. The **Māori** Education department, of which I am a member, is one example. Within the University of Auckland we have sought to provide space, both physical and theoretical, for **Māori** staff and students to engage more fully in **Kaupapa Māori** pursuits. This is no easy task and is fraught with institutional difficulties, however the outcome has been that **Māori** students have been provided with a much wider selection of choice across the curriculum and have been able to be **Māori** within that site. The following references give more depth discussion on the need for, and processes of, creating space for **Māori** in **Pākehā** settings. Moko Productions & Research Unit for **Māori** Education 1993 *Te Aratitia: Māori and Postgraduate Study* (Video), University of Auckland, Auckland; Smith, G.H. & Hohepa, M. (eds) *Creating Space in*

the state and therefore are expected to undergo the evaluation processes, and other requirements, as defined by the Ministry of Education. This means that certain criteria must be met in order to maintain state funding. This may also be said for **Whare Kura** and **Whare Wānanga**, who also are required to fulfil criteria as determined by the state. It has not been all clear sailing for these initiatives. Some have argued that the subjection of **Te Kōhanga Reo** and **Kura Kaupapa Māori** to state requirements is an indication of the attempt by the state to appropriate **Māori** initiatives in order to undermine their radical potential. For example, Patricia **Maringi** Johnston argues that the structure of **Te Kōhanga Reo** changed considerably once incorporated into the state apparatus. She notes that the unique characteristics of **Te Kōhanga Reo** are being re-defined by the state, through policy, legislation and practices. Patricia states that **Te Kōhanga Reo** has been captured by the state through those processes. An example of the impact of the state on **Te Kōhanga Reo** is that of the role of the **Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust**.

Its key role was to protect and nurture **te reo Māori**. However, in taking on the role of administering Government funding, the Trust's role has changed, and a report commissioned by the Minister of **Māori** Affairs (written by Rose **Pere** and **Kara Puketapu** in 1990) titled 'The **Te Kōhanga Reo** National Trust, Review of Trust Operations' outlined some of those changes. A major problem related to the fact that the Trust was not set up to administer Government funding but had become responsible for that task... This also means that the original **kaupapa** of the Trust – to care for and nurture the **kaupapa** of the **Te Kōhanga Reo** movement – has become subverted.⁹⁶

Issues of cooption and capture are a part of what Graham **Hingangaroa** Smith defines as a 'war of position' that is waged by the state with **Māori** interests. That war of position has multiple strategies which include such things as; importing selected experts; capturing theoretical discourse; renaming; cooption; control of curriculum and definitions of knowledge; rewriting of history; underfunding and manipulation of funding; divide and rule tactics.⁹⁷ These are critical issues that face **Māori** education more generally and the **Kaupapa Māori** initiatives specifically. Having said that we should not be deterred. The fundamental assertion of **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga** within these initiatives means there remains the real potential for bringing about change for **Māori** in education and beyond. What we need to ensure is that the resistance and struggles that led to the development of these initiatives remains as a key element of **Kaupapa Māori** in order that both the cultural and structural issues are engaged with. It is also essential that such developments are located within wider social, economic and political contexts that both acknowledge and engage power relationships.

Institutional Settings for Māori, Monograph No. 15, Research Unit for **Māori** Education, University of Auckland, Auckland; Morrison, Andrea 1999 *Space for Māori in Tertiary Institutions: Exploring two sites at the University of Auckland*, Unpublished Master of Education Thesis, University of Auckland, Auckland.

⁹⁶ Johnston, P.M 1998 op.cit.:318. The reference for the Trust review discussed here is: **Pere**, R and **Puketapu**, K 1990 *The Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust, Review of the Trust Operations*, Report commissioned by Minister of **Māori** Affairs

⁹⁷ For depth discussion of each of these strategies refer to Smith, G.H. 1997 op.cit:478-481

Kaupapa Māori theory as having derived from organic community processes, such as **Te Kōhanga Reo** and **Kura Kaupapa Māori**, provides us with a theoretical process that ensures those struggles, and the inherent power relationships within those struggles, are a conscious part of our analysis. Given the unequal power relations that exist, between **Māori** and the State, the recognition that the organic developments are the outcome of **Māori** aspirations and a subsequent struggle for the realisation of those aspirations means that there is a clearly articulated political agenda that sits alongside cultural aspirations for **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**. The organic nature of **Kaupapa Māori** theory also means that there are many ways in which **Kaupapa Māori** theory can and is articulated. **Kaupapa Māori** theory is, by nature of its development, multiple.

Kaupapa Māori theory: Multiple Expressions

Kaupapa Māori theory is not singular. There is no set formula that we can use to say 'here this is what it looks like'. **Kaupapa Māori** theory is undeniably linked to **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**, and these are not expressed in a singular form amongst **Māori**. What has highlighted, most recently, for me the possibilities in **Kaupapa Māori** theory has been the thought of moving back to my own **iwi** area, **Taranaki**. There is something about being home. Home as in **tūrangawaewae**.⁹⁸ Having a place to stand and to know that it is a place you belong and that the people there, irrespective of the many differences, are a part of you and you are a part of them. That is how I feel in **Taranaki**. I know that I am of that **whenua** and that while I am away from it there is a detachment that is deep inside myself and my **tamariki**. There are those that leave home and there are those that stay. Those of us who leave have at least some time in our lives that we consider if we 'should go back', those who stay keep that possibility alive for people like me. For without those who keep the **ahi kaa**⁹⁹ I would have no where to return to. From a distance I hear and see what our people refer to as '**ngā piki me ngā heke**', the ups and downs. To be home is to take on what that means through active involvement. It means to be a part of the **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi** dynamics that exist. To put oneself amongst that is to know that the place of **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi** in **Kaupapa Māori** theory is not only in the ways that relationships are explored conceptually. These groupings can, and do, derive multiple ways that **Kaupapa Māori** theory can be discussed.

Taina Pohatu directs his theoretical discussions in relation to his own **whakapapa** grouping, his **kāwai whakapapa**.¹⁰⁰ **Taina** writes that there are particular cultural signposts that must be read from

⁹⁸ **Tūrangawaewae** relates to a standing place, where we come from.

⁹⁹ **Ahi kaa** refers to the home fires and is a figurative term that recognises land occupation.

¹⁰⁰ **Pohatu**, T.W., 1996, op.cit.

a position of cultural knowledge. Furthermore, **Taina** notes that there are particular developments that occur as a result of being a part of a specific **whakapapa** grouping. This relates to the point made earlier in regard to specific **whānau**, **hapū** and **iwi** possibilities within **Kaupapa Māori** theory. **Taina** explains that it is necessary for him to express his ideas through knowledge that begins from within **kāwai whakapapa**. That in turn gives him a location from which to articulate his ideas and views on the **Māori** worldview. This also has wider implications, as **Taina** writes;

I am constantly returned to my cultural upbringing, my cultural experiences, my internalised reality. As I give more time and energy to this image, I go through a process of recreating the place, the people, the time, the parameters of my cultural world as a **whakapapa** person return to a position that uniquely belongs to my **kawai whakapapa**, am moved to a site where I am able to address issues, from within a grouping that I am responsible and accountable to.¹⁰¹

Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal in his discussion of **Kaupapa Māori** Research also locates the importance of **whakapapa** and of definitions being developed organically within **hapū** and **iwi**. His discussion relates specifically to work being done in **Te Wānanga o Raukawa** in developing theories of **mātauranga Māori**.¹⁰² **Mereana Taki** positions herself as an **iwi** woman and argues for **whakapapa** as a theoretical framework, again linking **iwi** knowledge as an important aspect of her theorising.¹⁰³

There are many possible forms for **Kaupapa Māori** theory, just as there are many possible forms of **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**. Being from **Taranaki** constantly reminds me of the range and diversity of being **Māori**. I have no doubt that this is the case for many **Māori**. The **iwi** dialects within **te reo Māori** example the diversity. The ways that **tikanga** are framed highlight the diversity. Many **Māori** know this and are able to move in and with a range of **tikanga** and **kawa**. Equally many are able to recognise both the similarities and the differences. As we move around **marae** throughout the country we see these. It is not only the diversity of **whānau**, **hapū**, **iwi**, **Māori** expressions of **te reo**, **tikanga** and **kawa** that illustrate the many potentialities of **Kaupapa Māori** theory, but also the many varied concepts within **te reo Māori me ōna tikanga**. A vast array of **Māori** concepts and notions of how to be in the world, are theories in themselves.¹⁰⁴ The form of **Kaupapa Māori** analysis that can be undertaken is varied. This is, in my opinion, an exciting potential in **Kaupapa Māori** theory. The notions of multiplicity and diversity are not new, and therefore the idea that there can be many expressions of **Kaupapa Māori** theory seems appropriate.

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*:50

¹⁰² **Royal, Te Ahukaramū** Charles 1998 'Te Ao Marama – A Research Paradigm' in *Te Oru Rangahau: Māori Research and Development Conference 7-9 July 1998*, **Te Pūtahi-ā-Toi**, School of **Māori** Studies, Massey University, Palmerston North pp78-86

¹⁰³ **Taki, M.**, 1996 *op.cit.*

¹⁰⁴ The range of **Māori** writings referenced in this Chapter provide many examples of the ways in which particular concepts provide explanations and understandings of the world and our experiences.

Something that I have become increasingly aware of is the potential of **Kaupapa Māori** theory in contributing to much wider theoretical discussions, whilst also holding firmly to the notion that **Kaupapa Māori** theory is itself highly contextualised. In a society that prioritises binary relationships these are often viewed as conflicting agendas however it is in my opinion necessary that these agendas are a part of **Kaupapa Māori** theory. They are neither conflicting nor contradictory. They are recognition of the cultural place of such a theory for **Māori** and in terms of wider Indigenous communities. **Kaupapa Māori** theory is simultaneously local and international. Local, in that it is necessarily defined by **Māori** for **Māori**, drawing on fundamental **Māori** values, experiences and worldviews. International, in that there are many connections that can be made through a process of sharing Indigenous Peoples theories.¹⁰⁵ The multiple expressions of **Kaupapa Māori** theory are important to recognise so that the theoretical frameworks that develop are not universalised in ways that ignore the complexities of our experiences. The differences that exist within **Māori** communities are marked and that in turn requires theoretical analysis that can engage the various influences that impact on our lives, whilst simultaneously providing tools to reflect and act as **Māori**. It also requires that there be an exploration of key elements that are seen to be critical to **Kaupapa Māori** theory.

bell hooks reminds us that theory can be liberatory if we seek to use theory in that way¹⁰⁶. Transformation is one of the driving elements of **Kaupapa Māori**. How that transformation is defined and brought is determined by how the issues are understood, theorised and engaged. Therefore it is necessary, whilst avoiding a formulaic development, to indicate what may be considered some specific elements that are inherent within **Kaupapa Māori** theory and ways in which a range of **Māori** people are articulating methods of analysis. The transformation or emancipatory intent of **Kaupapa Māori** theory may be viewed as a decolonisation process, however it is not solely about the theorising for transformation but is also directly related to the development of practical interventions. Again **Te Kōhanga Reo** and **Kura Kaupapa Māori** are clear examples of the emancipatory intent of **Kaupapa Māori** theory. Graham **Hingangaroa** Smith takes this aspect of **Kaupapa Māori** theory a step forward in drawing upon the theorising of Jurgen Habermas.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ A clear indication of this came recently on a trip to Samoa. There I met with Maria Kerslake the Head of Department, Sociology, at the National University of Samoa. The Indigenous Pacific connections are evident. As **Māori** we have ancient links with Samoa. In our discussion about the development of Indigenous theories we were able to recognise the similarities and differences in our theorising and our context. For example, the state of the Indigenous languages and our experiences of colonisation are considerably different and therefore the centrality of **te reo Māori** as located within **Kaupapa Māori** theory is not necessarily the priority focus of theoretical developments that Maria is involved in. The process of conceptualisation of theory from a cultural base is however a clear meeting place and is one that we need to engage more fully with in terms of what is happening in the Pacific and with other Indigenous Peoples.

¹⁰⁶ hooks, bell 1994 op.cit.

¹⁰⁷ Smith, G.H. 1997 op.cit.

Graham argues for a need to include a utopian vision within the development of **Kaupapa Māori** theory, which serves to highlight the transformative potential of **Kaupapa Māori** theory.

Kaupapa Māori theory and Critical theory

Graham **Hingangaroa** Smith argues that **Kaupapa Māori** theory is a localised Critical Theory.¹⁰⁸ More recently **Kuni** Jenkins has questioned the centrality of Critical Theory within **Kaupapa Māori** theoretical discussions and asserts that where Critical Theory is useful, it does not form a basis for **Kaupapa Māori** theory. Both these discussions promote a need to assess the relationship between **Kaupapa Māori** theory and Critical Theory, which in turn raises the wider issue of the role of Western theory in theorising **Māori** experiences. My approach to this dialogue is to view Critical Theory and **Kaupapa Māori** theory as two quite separate entities. **Kaupapa Māori** theory does not depend on Critical Theory for its existence just as Critical Theory does not depend on **Kaupapa Māori** theory for its existence. **Kaupapa Māori** theory is founded in this land, **Aotearoa**. Critical Theory is founded in Europe. **Kaupapa Māori** theory is driven by **whānau**, **hapū**, **iwi**, **Māori** understandings. Critical Theory is driven by European sourced philosophies and understandings. They are without doubt distinct theoretical forms. However, they are able to inform and support each other, and this has clearly been the case. In taking a middle ground I would argue that that any Western analysis drawn upon alongside **Kaupapa Māori** theory needs to be located in a role of what **Taina Pohatu** refers to as ‘**hoa mahi**’, that is a friend that works alongside¹⁰⁹ and that the defining parameters of that relationship are negotiated from a **Kaupapa Māori** framework.

My argument for a **hoa mahi** relationship with Western theory is based upon the idea that radical Western theories can be drawn upon by Indigenous Peoples to engage colonialism. This is seen in the fact that forms of Critical Theory has heavily influenced a range of radical **Māori** critiques of the oppression of **Māori** people.¹¹⁰ Marxism for example provides a critique of capitalism and modes of production and has established a foundation for many forms of sociology to build upon. The centre of Marxist analysis may be identified as issues of class struggle and in particular control of the mode of production and the implications for the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the ruling classes and the working classes. From this centre Marxist analysis is then expanded, reinterpreted, ‘neo’-ised (that is becomes various forms of ‘neo-marxist’ analysis), or certain aspects of Marx’s work is coopted into other frameworks that may include other issues at their centre. One powerful example of this can be

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ **Pohatu**, T. 1996 *op.cit.*

¹¹⁰ An overview of the use of Critical Theory is provided in Smith, G.H. 1997 *op.cit.*

seen in the work of Angela Davis.¹¹¹ As a Black woman, activist Angela Davis advocates analysis that is expansive, that has no boundaries in terms of challenging oppression. She calls for analysis that engages capitalism, patriarchy, racism, homophobia, ageism, and notes that we must challenge all forms of oppressive structures.

However, as it has been argued in Chapter two we need to be both aware of and wary of the potential of Western theories as yet another form of oppression. It is not enough to locate analysis of **Māori** issues within a Western framework, as Western frameworks are not able to engage **Kaupapa Māori** and **mātauranga Māori**. For example, **Kuni** Jenkins in her call for a construction of history whereby **Māori** are active participants rather than passive receivers of oppression, argues that Marxist analyses continue to cast **Māori** as victims and **Pākehā** as actors.¹¹² **Kuni** posits that such approaches nullify **Māori** voices and that the possibilities for **Māori** become defined by dominant sociological explanations. This is very much the case in education. **Māori** experiences of the education system have, on the whole, been located within dominant theoretical frameworks. **Māori** voices have been marginalised as policy developments are constructed upon other peoples understandings of our experiences and needs.¹¹³

The inadequacy of some academics and researchers to provide more full explanations for issues related to **Māori** Education, has led to calls for theorising that is more complex and which includes both a structuralist and a culturalist element.¹¹⁴ Graham **Hingangaroa** Smith asserts a need for **Māori** analysis to include both structuralist explanations, that is an analysis of social and economic structures and their role in the production and reproduction of social conditions and social relations, and culturalist explanations, including the everyday lived reality of people and how they engage and make sense of the social arrangements within which they are located.¹¹⁵ Critical theory can provide both structuralist and culturalist explanations. As with other theories there is not one Critical theory that could be said to be used in a wholesale way, rather various explanations are drawn from a range of theorists who locate themselves under the umbrella of Critical theory. Perhaps this is what has drawn **Māori** educationalists to use Critical theory, or more appropriately Critical theories, in their work. Critical Theory is intrinsically global and historical looking to the big picture in particular

¹¹¹ Davis, Angela Y., 1984 *Women Culture and Politics*, The Women's Press Ltd. London

¹¹² Jenkins, K. 2001 op.cit.

¹¹³ refer Jenkins, K. with Ka'ai, T. 1994 op.cit.; **Pihama**, L., 1993 op.cit.; Johnston, P. 1998 op.cit.; Jenkins K. and Jones, A. 2000 **Maori** Education Policy: A State Promise in Marshall, J. et. al. *Politics, Policy, Pedagogy: Education in Aotearoa/New Zealand*, Dunmore Press, Palmerston North pp **Te Whaiti**, P., McCarthy, M., Durie, A., 1997 *Mai I Rangiatea: Māori Wellbeing and Development*, Auckland University Press/Bridget Williams Books, Auckland; Tooley, C., 2000 *Māori Education Policy in the New Millennium: Political Rationality & Government Mechanisms*, Unpublished Master of Arts, University of Auckland, Auckland

¹¹⁴ The most recent example of this appears in the work of Chapple, S. et.al 1997 op.cit.

constructions of capitalism and potential transformation to socialism, however its proponents have avoided economic reductionism by seeking to link economic structures with politics, culture, psychic and an idea of relative autonomy of the superstructure.¹¹⁶ The link between these areas is the basis of the notion of 'mediated totality', which Kellner explains as

a theory... which described various relations between spheres of reality, rather than reducing all society to the dynamics of the economy.¹¹⁷

As a **Māori** woman academic I have drawn upon Critical Theory alongside **Kaupapa Māori** theorising. What has become evident through the process of this thesis is that like **Kaupapa Māori** theory, Critical Theory is grounded within particular cultural, social and political foundations. The literature outlining the history of the Frankfurt School highlights a range of political engagement by its members, it also highlights the point that exponents of Critical Theory do so from a base of their own worldviews, understandings and cultural, social and political context.¹¹⁸ Members of the Frankfurt School draw upon a range of both historical and contemporary Western philosophers as the basis for arguing their theoretical positions, which indicates the importance of cultural context in the development of theoretical frameworks. This is an important point in the recognition of theory as culturally and socially produced. Kellner identifies this as a strength of Critical Theory, in that the preoccupation with theory then necessarily brings a need for critical reflection on the role social theories, as social practices, in the reproduction of dominance.¹¹⁹ Furthermore, he argues that where traditional theory that is not aware of its origins in social practice that can reproduce dominance, Critical Theory is conscious of that potential and therefore strives toward transformation.

There is an idea that theory/ies are a part of the way in which we interact with the world. This idea arose from a belief that theory and practice are inseparable. That the interactions that we have within society are each informed by theory. Practices is informed by and informs theory. Paulo Freire articulates this relationship as being one of 'dialectical unity'.¹²⁰ Dialectical Unity, in Freirean terms, asserts both a relationship and a distance between theory and practice. When looking at the relationship between theory and peoples lived realities the idea that theory and practice are indivisible and must be viewed in a dialectical relationship is useful for **Māori**. It is seen as both necessary and

¹¹⁵ Smith, G.H., 1997 op.cit.:pp127-128

¹¹⁶ Kellner, D., 1989 Critical theory, Marxism, and modernity, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK:48

¹¹⁷ ibid. 48

¹¹⁸ Gibson, R., 1986 *Critical Theory and Education*, Hodder & Stoughton: London; Giroux Henry 1983 *Theory and Resistance in Education: A Pedagogy for the Opposition*, Bergin & Garvey Publishers Inc., Massachusetts; Jay Martin *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research 1923-1950*, Heinemann Educational Books, London; Wiggershaus, Rolf 1994 *The Frankfurt School: Its History, Theories and Political Significance*, Translated by Michael Robertson, Polity Press, Cambridge

¹¹⁹ Kellner 1989:45

¹²⁰ Freire, P. 1985 op.cit.

critical to creating change. **Māori** do not have, and never have had, the luxury of theorising for the sake of theorising. The impact of colonisation has meant that by necessity theory and practice must be continually informing each other. Recently Andrew Vercoe has reminded us that **Māori** academics do not have the privilege of spending our time in an ivory tower mentality but that we must be actively involved in the developments within our communities.¹²¹

Critical Theory positions theory and practice as being in relationship. What this does is that it places theory up front and therefore challenges the idea the practice alone is neutral. To challenge a common-sense notion that we merely 'do' because that's 'what we do' and to acknowledge the role of theory in shaping our actions means that dominant group actions can not be located as merely the 'way that it's done' but that they are grounded in certain theoretical world views. Henry Giroux argues that central to the work of the Frankfurt School is to examine the degree to which domination extends in everyday life. He notes that what Critical theory offers educational theorists is both method of critique and a language of opposition.¹²² As Henri Giroux has commented:

Theory must be celebrated for its truth content, not for the methodological refinements it employs ... theory is informed by practice; but its real value lies in its ability to provide the reflexivity needed to interpret the concrete experience.¹²³

In the introduction to Theodor Adorno's 'The Jargon of Authenticity' Trent Schroyer¹²⁴ privileges the focus of Critical Theory in revealing those actions that have been reified within society to the extent that unequal power relationships are hidden in the misrepresentation of social relations. Furthermore, locating Critical Theory within the paradigm of the class struggle appropriately identifies the neo-marxist origins of Critical Theory. However, in their move beyond an economic determinism the Frankfurt School provide in the theoretical framework possibilities for use that extend further.¹²⁵ The call to reconcile people with their historical possibilities is inherently a call for emancipatory outcomes, an aspect that is key in Critical Theory. This is further supported by Henry Giroux who identifies Critical Theory as the theoretical legacy of the Frankfurt School, and notes that whilst there is no one singular universal theory, all examine capitalism and domination, and seek to highlight notion of human emancipation.¹²⁶ Critical Theory, moves beyond being purely a theoretical paradigm, as Giroux notes Critical Theory is both

a school of thought and a process of critique.¹²⁷

¹²¹ Vercoe, **Anaru Eruera** *Educating Jake: Pathways To Empowerment*, HarperCollins Publishers, New Zealand

¹²² Giroux, H., 1983 op.cit.

¹²³ ibid: 99

¹²⁴ Schroyer, Trent in Adorno, Theodor W. (1973) *The Jargon of Authenticity*, Translated by Knut Tarnowski and Frederick Will, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London

¹²⁵ Bronner, S., 1994. *Of Critical Theory and Its Theorists*, Oxford, UK ; Cambridge, Mass., USA

¹²⁶ Giroux 1983 op.cit.

¹²⁷ ibid:8

Henry Giroux views Critical Theory as referring to the theoretical legacy of the Frankfurt School, noting also that where there is no one singular universal theory, all look at growth of capitalism and domination, and seek to reconstruct the notion of human emancipation.¹²⁸ Kellner¹²⁹ writes that in part the term Critical Theory was used as a means of masking the Marxist underpinnings of their work given an often hostile response to Marxism (as associated with socialism and the Soviet Union) in America. Critical Theory he argues involves a set of ways for looking at theory that involve investigative, research, textual and political practices. As such it provides a comprehensive theoretical development and a methodology for relating social research and theory to radical politics. As Henri Giroux has stated, one of the central values of Critical Theory is;

a commitment to penetrate the world of objective appearances and to expose the underlying social relationships they often conceal. In other words, penetrating such appearances meant exposing through critical analysis social relationships that took on the status of things or objects.¹³⁰

Kellner locates Critical Theory as ‘supradisciplinary’ challenging the notion of interdisciplinarity. He argues that the Critical Theory project included the working together of individuals from a range of disciplines to develop social theories. According to Kellner this process differs from one of interdisciplinary work which is described by Leo Lowenthal as maintaining existing disciplines whilst fostering an ‘acquaintance’ between them without any challenge to the fundamental boundaries that claim a self-sufficiency between disciplines.¹³¹ A supradisciplinary approach attacks the notion of separate disciplines and provides a critique of the divisions constructed between disciplines that prevent an integration of a range of disciplines.¹³² This is helpful for **Kaupapa Māori** theory in that it recognises the inter-relationship between disciplines in a way that affirms an approach that is not limited by disciplinary boundaries. Perhaps the clearest way to sum this up is through Martin Jay’s assertion that Critical Theory is essentially open-ended, probing and unfinished. An open-ended nature of analysis was important in that the changing historical context and social realities meant there was a need for the development of analyses that were different from earlier forms of traditional philosophies and which moved beyond the

tendency of vulgar Marxists to elevate materialism to a theory of knowledge which claimed absolute certainty the way idealism had in the past.¹³³

It seems to me that what draws **Māori** academics to Critical Theory are the values, assumptions and

¹²⁸ *ibid.*

¹²⁹ Kellner, D., 1989 *op.cit.*

¹³⁰ Giroux, H., 1983 *op.cit.*:8

¹³¹ Lowenthal cited in Kellner, D., 1989:7 *op.cit.*

¹³² *ibid.*

¹³³ Jay, M. *op.cit.* 1973:53

characteristics which underpin the work. Henry Giroux highlights that one of the central values of Critical Theory is the commitment to

penetrate the world of objective appearances and to expose the underlying social relationships they often conceal.¹³⁴

This value is one that is imperative to a process of revealing ways in which social relationships are constructed. It assumes that in such construction there are subjective processes that are hidden by notions of objectivity. It is precisely these subjective processes that when revealed enable us to engage more fully with the social relationships that exist. For Māori people who are working to both reveal the injustices, both of the past and the present, in this country and to bring about change the value of Critical Theory is most evident in Giroux's statement.

Rex Gibson¹³⁵ highlights that where there are a number of major concepts that underpin the development of critical theory, key elements in the assertion of Critical Theory are the notions of emancipation and transformation. These notions assert an expectation of those who utilise Critical Theory, that they will be moved to action, to the development of some intervention or practice that is emancipatory and interrupts the structures of oppression. This indicates it is not enough to merely be a student of Critical Theory but that we must engage in practice in ways that challenge the inequalities and injustices that we theorise about. The participation of Critical theorists in acts of social changes does however vary. There is an assumption that because Critical Theory is a politicising theoretical framework then those who provided the foundations for Critical Theory must equally have been politically active. Where such a belief is understandable it is also idealistic. For example in Wiggershaus's discussion of the institute Horkheimer is presented as having a depth analysis of the exploitation and oppression of the working classes, however he did not necessarily bring together the notions of theory and practice in terms of transformative action.¹³⁶

Furthermore, Kellner writes that Critical Theory is motivated by a need to construct theories that confront social and political issues, and therefore is informed by a critique of domination and also by theories of liberation.¹³⁷ However, he writes that in regard to the Frankfurt School although they

¹³⁴ Giroux, H. op.cit.:8

¹³⁵ Gibson, R., 1986 op.cit.

¹³⁶ Wiggershaus, R. 1994 op.cit.:134 noted *The constant policy of the Institute under Horkheimer's direction continued to be abstinence, not only from every activity which was even remotely political, but also from any collected or organized effort to publicize the situation in Germany or to support émigrés. In the 1970s Jürgen Habermas asked Herbert Marcuse, 'Did the Institute ever, let us say, take up a position in relation to the more strongly politically organized groups among the émigrés?' Marcuse replied, 'That was strictly forbidden. Horkheimer insisted from the start that we were the guests of Columbia University, philosophers and academics. Also in reference to Karl Wittfogel, one of those active in political movements, Martin Jay 1973 op.cit.:16 notes; His activism they found somewhat of an embarrassment: he was no less scornful of their political neutrality.*

¹³⁷ Kellner 1989 op.cit.

called for a revolutionary transformation of society, they themselves became increasingly distanced from political struggles.¹³⁸ Both Gibson¹³⁹ and Coxon et al.¹⁴⁰ stress the importance of emancipation noting that Critical Theory seeks not simply to describe or explain problems but provides tools for resolving them by enabling people to gain more control over their lives.

It is my view that a role of the **Māori** theorist is to support the movements for change in society, change that seeks to intervene in the growing 'underachievement' levels of **Māori** children and young people in both compulsory and non-compulsory sectors of education. Theory for **Māori** must ultimately provide frameworks for change, just as the idea of emancipation or transformation has a central role in critical theory. Critical Theory is then a framework that can work theoretically for **Māori**, given that it is located within the experiences and knowledge of **Māori**. Critical Theory is not in itself transformative for **Māori**, what provides the transformative potential is when **Māori** ourselves utilise Critical Theory as a tool for alongside our own tools. For **Kaupapa Māori** theory there is a potential for liaisons or collaborations with radical theories that engage the complexities of the impact of colonial imperialism, however those relationships need to be defined from a clear **Māori** theoretical base. Where Critical Theory provides values and intentions that are beneficial for **Māori** analysis, it is not in **Kaupapa Māori** terms able to engage our values and understandings for the specific reason that Critical Theory is itself grounded within its own cultural and political arrangements.

Just as Critical Theory exists in its own rights so too does **Kaupapa Māori** theory. **Kaupapa Māori** theory can and does exist without Critical Theory. That does not mean that **Kaupapa Māori** theory is not radical and political in its expression as it is. **Kaupapa Māori** theory must be about challenging injustice, revealing inequalities, seeking transformation. These are all aspects expressed within Critical Theory. They are also elements that have been expressed by our **tūpuna** throughout the struggle for our land, through the assertion of **tino rangatiratanga**, through the generations who have fought the Crown against continued colonial injustice, by those who have been visionary in the reclamation of our language and culture, and of all who continue to hold to the teachings of our **tūpuna** in spite of colonial oppression. These are acts that exist in our history, in our stories, in our struggles. They are acts that highlight **Kaupapa Māori** praxis, from which current expressions of **Kaupapa Māori** theory draw inspiration and definition. Given the ownership of the term 'Critical Theory' by predominantly Western theorists and theorising perhaps it is more apt to refer to **Kaupapa Māori** theory not as a localised Critical Theory but as a theoretical expression of our aspirations as

¹³⁸ *ibid.*

¹³⁹ Gibson, R., 1986 *op.cit.*

Māori. Just as earlier in this chapter I argued that the term 'theory' has been useful in creating theoretical space for **Māori**, so too has Critical Theory had a role in opening theoretical grounds for more radical thinking, that has without doubt supported the articulation of both **Kaupapa Māori** theory and **Kaupapa Māori** research within the academy and beyond.

Summary

This Chapter has opened the discussion in regard to **Kaupapa Māori** theory. The key intention was to outline some of the broader philosophical context within which **Kaupapa Māori** theory needs, in my view, to be considered. What is important in this chapter is the understanding that **Kaupapa Māori** theory is founded within knowledge that derives from the learnings, experiences, understandings, worldviews, values and beliefs that are ancient. Those forms have been handed down through generations, and although disrupted and disregarded through colonial impositions they have survived to continue to inform how we are in the world. **Kaupapa Māori** theory is developed from a foundation of **Kaupapa Māori** and **mātauranga Māori**. Its base is firmly entrenched on this land, on **Papatūānuku** and that holds **Kaupapa Māori** theory as a distinctive framework. Theory is considered to hold possibilities from liberation however there is a wariness that remains in **Māori** communities as a result of the imposition of theories that have historically worked against how interests.

Within the academy Western theories have been privileged. Indigenous Peoples theoretical voices have been rarely heard let alone engaged with the same status as those of the West. This is not a surprise to **Māori** academics given the ongoing marginalisation of **Māori** knowledge. **Māori** knowledge has been under attack since the arrival of colonial settlers to our lands. Within the colonial education system **Māori** knowledge has been through processes that have denied the validity of our own knowledge and worldviews. **Kaupapa Māori** theory it is argued provides us with the potential to continue a tradition of thinking about, explaining and understanding our world that is not the domain of the colonising forces, but has been a part of Indigenous Peoples worlds since creation. **Kaupapa Māori** theory is a theoretical framework that is evolving. It is evolving from a base of being **Māori**, from **whānau**, **hapū**, **iwi** and from collective **Māori** movements. As a theoretical framework **Kaupapa Māori** theory is engaged in a site of struggle within the Academy. It struggles for the recognition, the validation and affirmation of our cultural worldviews as **Māori**. It asserts that we have always been researchers, have always engaged in theorising our lives, our experiences, our context. The organic and multiple nature of **Kaupapa Māori** theory is a powerful force in the future

¹⁴⁰ Coxon et. al., 1992 op.cit.

creation of a range of **Kaupapa Māori** theoretical expression. Theory itself is multiple, whether that be **Māori** theory or Western theory. Critical Theory is one expression of a radical change theory that has developed in the West. It too, however, is shown to be culturally bound and therefore the argument for **Kaupapa Māori** theory as a culturally defined and driven theory is not new.

Critical Theory is often utilised alongside **Kaupapa Māori** theory. It is a theoretical framework that engages injustice and seeks transformation through the interrelationship of theory and practice. The praxis orientation of Critical Theory is central to its use by **Māori** academics. **Kaupapa Māori** theory is however not dependent upon Critical Theory for its existence. Critical Theory has supported the creation of radical space within the Academy and in doing so has supported the growth of **Kaupapa Māori** theory. Where some argue for **Kaupapa Māori** theory as a localised Critical Theory while others argue that **Kaupapa Māori** theory can not and should not be seen as grounded in any Western framework, critical or otherwise. Whatever position is taken by **Māori** academics the role of Critical Theory in supporting the further prising open of theoretical space can not be disregarded, hence the inclusion of a discussion of Critical Theory in this chapter. This chapter has laid the broader foundation for an exploration of key elements that are expressed within current articulations of **Kaupapa Māori** theory that are outlined in the following chapter.