Chapter Seven: Te Kete Whiri

... Whereas one hundred years ago the main problem facing Maori was one of biological survival, the challenge today is to survive as Maori, to retain a Maori identity, while still being able to participate fully in society, and in the communities of the world. Although the 1996 census has confirmed that any probability of genocide is remote - at 579, 714 the Maori population has never been more numerous - there is some justified concern that mere survival will achieve little if it is not linked to a secure identity, and a Maori centred approach to development, and a wider access than currently exists to the range of disciplines necessary for advancement in today's world (Durie, M., 1997, p. 1).

The kete, distinguishable as a cultural repository, is used metaphorically in this chapter to explore the notion of identity. The particular kete imaged is a kete whiri. Kete whiri are constructed from the base of the basket where the muka is plaited into a central spinal cord from which the woven whenu (threads) extend. The central plait grounds each kete in whakapapa, while the whenu characterise the multitude of socio-political factors that represent the diverse realities in which Maori live (Durie, M., 1995), and in which the participants develop and sustain their identity. Kete identifiable as a Maori icon of both customary and contemporary significance is used here to metaphorically represent the matrices of intersecting factors and relationships woven by participants, that when combined, make the tensions and patterning of each kete unique.

The metaphor of patu, identified in chapter six situates identity in whakapapa, further anchored within 'a context of the personal, the collective and the total environment' (Durie, A., 1997). Whakapapa provides an expansive framework that is inward looking, recognising the origin of phenomena while simultaneously requiring an outward focus based on growth and development (Smith, L., 1992; Durie, M., 1997; Royal, 1998). The framework does not therefore forfeit the origin of phenomena to the extended social networks to which they contribute; rather such a framework seeks a relational understanding of one to the other. Whakapapa as an analytic tool thus encapsulates a form of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1974) based on connective
principles that include, amongst others, notions of complementarity, reciprocity and guardianship.

Tuhiwai-Smith (1992) argues that the centrality of Maori women’s identity and the attendant specificities of historical and cultural realities are denied full expression when subsumed within existing analyses that situate Maori as other, or, subsume Maori within their norms. The significance of phenomena (whether people or taonga) are thus revealed by locating them within cultural context that shape, moulds and continues to revere them.

Te Hoe Nuku Roa (Durie, M., et al: 1996) in their longitudinal study of Maori profiles have developed from initial data, four cultural identity profiles: a secure identity, a positive identity, a notional identity, and a compromised identity. Durie (M.,1995) links a secure Maori identity to access to cultural resources that encompass people, land, language and knowledge. Seven characteristics have been identified as significant markers of personal identity. These characteristics include: self identification, knowledge of whakapapa, marae participation, involvement with whanau, access to whenua tipu, contact with Maori people and ability in Maori language. These characteristics centrally locate both primordial and circumstantial factors as intersecting threads in the construction of a Maori identity in contemporary contexts.

Glazer and Moynihan (1975) conceptualise identity in primordialist terms, arguing that identity resides

depth in history and experience, and they must in some way be taken into account by those who govern societies (Glazer and Moynihan 1975, p. 19).

They further argue that the hope of doing without ethnicity (as its subgroups assimilate to the majority group), maybe as utopian and as questionable an enterprise as the

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1Identity derived from the Latin root idem connotes sameness and continuity. Where its philosophical tradition has centred on permanence amid change and unity amid diversity, in the latter half of this century, it has become more closely aligned to individualism (Plummer 1994). Identity thus was initially seen as a connective phenomena that situated individuals relationally to others in terms of 'sameness' requiring the understanding of 'the process whereby individuals are effectively linked to their fellows (sic) in groups' (Foote 1951 cited in Walker 1969).
hope of doing without social class in society. The terms in which one understands ethnicity and the world, is, according to Geertz (1973), 'less a matter of social circumstance or construction than being derived from primordial origins' (p. 258).

This chapter focuses on the ways in which the participants see 'self', as Maori and women. In chapter one of this thesis the multifaceted contribution of Maori women in customary Maori societies was outlined. In the previous chapter the symbolic and metaphoric significance of patu as a taonga understood within a whakapapa framework was delineated. This chapter explores the ways these two chapters inform participants' sense of self by investigating:

i) what a Maori identity means to this group of women; and
ii) the significant factors that characterise the women's self ascribed Maori identity.

Contexts for Korero: The Participants' Stories.

Six of the eight women grew up in the post war era of the 1950's and 1960's and two in the seventies. During this period an enormous demographic shift of seventy percent of the Maori population moved to the urban areas (Walker 1990). Many of the whanau of the women involved in this study, were faced with the dilemma of holding on to a culture while eking out an existence that would physically sustain their children. It was a period during which race relations continued to be touted internationally as being exemplary. Walker (1990) situates the ideological notion of 'harmony' in,

(t)he crushing of the pacifist prophets Te Whaiti and Rua Kenana (which) ended any immediate pursuit of sovereignty in the new nation, that claimed for itself a reputation of having the finest race relations in the world (p.186).

More immediate to the era in which six of the women grew up was the drawing together of both groups to fight a common foe off shore. In many respects the Second World War served to mask growing inequities within the nation. By highlighting a commonality of purpose, the need to jointly fight the external threat to Western culture, attention on the cultural erosion occurring on shore was minimised. The paradox
however, as noted by Mead (L., 1996), was identified in "that Maori soldiers who fought in World War II were regarded as winning our 'citizenship' (of our own nation)" (p. 27). The international view of racial harmony did not match the lived realities of the women's narratives. Walker (1990) maintains that the struggle against Pakeha hegemony in the post war era was led by women and the establishment of the first national Maori organisation, the Maori Women's Welfare League in 1951.

The tension faced by whanau as they raised children while attempting to balance what they valued with economic (physical) viability suggest that the notion of 'one nation one people' bore little cost for the dominant group while actively attempting to culturally bankrupt the other. The dilemma faced by participants was not the result of mixed marriages between Maori and Non-Maori as each of the women identified both parents as Maori. It was the marriage arrangements between two peoples that was seen to be problematic. As articulated by one participant

I'm the product, ... of two Maori people who went through a depression and a father who went to the Second World War and who thought Michael Joseph Savage was a wonderful politician, and thought,...Sir Apirana Ngata was the bees knees, so really, they thought that, even though they didn't articulate it in these words, really they thought that assimilation was the best way to go, that is, do everything you can for your kids to succeed, basically which would have been monocultural, and in order to facilitate that happening, their behaviour demonstrated it rather than their words. We reserve everything that we consider Maori, the culture and the language and the ceremonies for ourselves, our peers, our generation and our Whanau. Okay, so they started really, ... in their actions, deliberately, whether they thought about it or not, trying to distance us from it, as far as possible. A good example basically of that would be like, you know, when your cousins went to Anglican you went to school or if there was a hui at the Marae and it was a school day, you went to school ... (participant, individual interview).

The hegemonic precepts advanced through the multifarious apparatus of state (Gramsci 1971) served to entrench taken for granted assumptions about colonial superiority. Capturing the cultural high ground was very much dependant on a particular conceptualisation of difference that placed the coloniser at the centre and Maori as indigenous on the deviant periphery. In the words of the participant cited above hegemonic norms required a form of psychological *institutionalisation* advanced through *violation by legislation*. For whanau, the impact, as previously noted by Walker (1990) and Durie (1997), reached into the very core of cultural values, beliefs and practices.
Marginal status further perpetuated by the insidious influence of selective media representation (Durie, A., 1997), in promoted social practices (Walker, 1990), and encased in ‘sympathetic’ discourse that blamed the victim, (Smith, L., 1981; Walker 1990; Simon 1994; Jenkins 1995; Johnston and Pihama 1995) provides a backdrop upon which both subordinate and superordinate groups come to accept as ‘common sense’ their differentiated status. Furthermore for those unconvinced of the ‘natural order of things’ the implicit coercive force of the State’s control of judiciary processes, police and military forces (Gramsci, 1971) served to further entrench dominant views of the world (Mita, 1993). The lived consequences of these unchecked views of the world were felt by participants as whanau coped with frustrations and the internalisation of external disapproval of Maori.

...that’s the trouble with you bloody Maori kids, this is my mum talking as a Maori herself, so you give up. But I know the impetus to succeed from my mum was just as great and I don’t think she considered how she was going about it, how she pushed me to succeed in a negative way ... like she could have probably said well,...Oh, you know, you’re going to have get in there, it’s going to be tough, be determined and that’s what’s going to get you through but what she chose to do was focus on the negative and .. It worked... I thought I can bloody do this, you know, I’ll show you ... so the grit and the determination sets in (same participant as cited above, individual interview).

The insidious structural, social and ideological attendants of colonisation created convoluted pathways for Maori children in a world where a Maori stock of knowledge was not only seen as valueless, but also detrimental to health, spirituality, education, family and societal advancement (Durie, M., 1997). Conflict in homes where adult Maori, their thought processes, codes of conduct, values, beliefs and cultural practices were critically seen to be the root cause of problems faced by children in school contexts, (Ramsay, 1972, 1984) highlight the grit and the determination required to develop and sustain a personal and social Maori identity for each generation.

As children, the participants were not consciously aware that the fabric of Maori society was being challenged but nevertheless experienced some of contradictions and dilemmas faced by whanau as they came to terms with physical well being and cultural erosion.
Whakapapa and Whanau

The participants most frequently talked about themselves in relation to others. The weaving of their identity represented an intricate pattern of relationships in which they were genealogically placed. In this sense, as suggested in the patu metaphor, knowing these women is not strictly about a description of the individual as much as it is about understanding the multilayered network that they remained connected to.

Whanau as an organising concept was used by the participants in one of two ways, genealogically and socio-politically. First and foremost it was used in the context of those with whom they had whakapapa links; their own genealogical matrix to which they contributed.

... each challenge in my life, the Whanau was there and that’s why even today I believe that whenever you meet challenges or you’re faced with problems hoki atu ki te kainga ka reira tonu te oranga o te Whanau [return home as that’s where the wellbeing/strength of the family resides] and I think that’s one of the beauties of having a strong Whanau base. When you need advice understanding any difficulty there’s only one place to get everything, that’s back home ... (participant, individual interview - my translation bracketed)

All the participants came from large families. For the majority the concept of whanau extended beyond two or three generational units. Six of the eight women considered their background working class, half of whom moved for seasonal employment and indicated financial hardship that at times made physical contact with extended whanau difficult. When extended whanau were geographically distanced narratives provided an important coupling to number of role models, some of whom had passed away generations before.

... they built within me. That’s what my upbringing gave me within the Whanau, ... If you look at Maori who have got a strong Whanau base, extended Whanau, all in there even when hiki mau etahi wa ka taka ka heke ki reira ra te whanau te whanau ki te haka tu ano ki te awhi ratou (when you stumble the whanau are there to pick you up, help you be strong and carry on). I always had that there for me ...so that’s what got me through, that pride.. As well as my mother, my auntsies and uncles were excellent role models for me and always there, If you achieved they were there to support and give you further encouragement to carry on. (participant, individual interview - my figurative translation bracketed)
The multilevelled nature of whakapapa and whanau provided the frame of reference through which participants identified themselves, marked out time, referred to geographical space and remember significant events. Some participants used intergenerational factors to mark out time and space; *I started school in (an urban area) then we returned home so mum could look after our Koroua after our kuia died ... ; Of course dad's Kuia had died before we moved. Others used intragenerational differences to explain events; my aunty is the *matamua* (eldest) my father is the *potiki* (youngest) so she... ; I was the oldest so I had to stay behind ...*

For each participant reference to whanau and whakapapa frameworks took for granted an audiences' understanding of concepts not widely understood. Each woman was using whakapapa as a framework to integrate self into matrices that were expansive and able to be used to understand others. References to whanau included the specifying of particular places; *my koro was born there; .. that's home for our whanau*"; integrated geographical features; *(name of river) that's where (my husband's) whanau is from;* noted regional histories; *given (the iwi) history, the location of the kura in the heart of ..;* included regional whakapapa when in other areas to explain local acceptance of their roles; *their tipuna was a female. Thus understanding the individual was dependant on understanding their relationships within complex networks.*

All the participants, in terms of whakapapa, identified both parents as Maori although the ways in which whanau operated could not be claimed to be unitary. For one participant being a whangai was seen to provide both benefits and tensions. For another *it was definitely a mans world, while for three women, mum was the dominant one. For the remaining three participants authority held by one or the other parent was less apparent as they grew up.*
In the second instance whanau was used notionally to talk about relationships that connected multiracial groups, primarily in urban areas, with the common goal of fostering and perpetuating a Maori identity, values and culture whether it be centred around religious, educational, social or political initiatives.

.. (in order) to stand up, in a sense so you develop another Whanau, a second Whanau system which was Maori within the training college and university system ... what I’m talking about is the Maori club, if you became a member of that you developed strong bonds, so you were actually building another support system for you that you could relate to..

...different groups emerged, all those things began to happen in the sixties. We all became very active in terms of standing up for our own rights so we developed another type of whanau. We had to ... no one else in those places was giving us support at that time...
(participant, individual interview )

According to Triandis (1995) social perception among collectivists consists of a set of relationships organised around an individual. Among individualists the focus is on an individual who has relationships. Lebra (1984 cited in Triandis 1995, p. 69) identified the distinction between collectivism and individualism when juxtaposing interviews with Japanese and American women. In interviewing Japanese women Lebra found that much was learnt about their relationships and almost nothing about themselves, whereas, the opposite was found when interviewing American women, she learnt little about their relationships but a great deal about them. As with the Japanese women, the participants in this study attributed their strength, authority and positive characteristics either, to the enabling qualities of significant people around them, we were nurtured into our roles by mum, dad and our old people, or conversely, in response to those who undermined them I’ll show you.

One particular reflection typifies both facets and is drawn from a reflection of leaving home for Teachers Training College.

I owe a lot particularly to my mother who basically dragged me by the horns, ah by the ears. Both of them got me up there into the hostel and I found the first few months quite difficult on my own, didn’t know anyone, um except one or two, but I think why I owe so much to my mother, she was a very strong person and stood up to authority and was able to overcome the barriers that Maori were facing and I think it’s due to her training that I was able to persevere and stand up. I mean at that particular time racism was well and truly alive. ... I can give you examples of that one, you couldn’t get flats, you didn’t get served at the shops, that sort of thing ... I went through that period ... it taught me something about equity, equality and standing up for your rights (participant, individual interview )
Many of the participants focused on the attributes of role models within the whanau as a means of identifying individual characteristics. Personal characteristics commonly shared with significant whanau members were valued; *my son is just like the tipuna he's named after; I'm more like mum's side from (iwi) ...* rather than being divorced from the wider group with whom they identified.

It was that determination to achieve, that development period I'd gone through, the constant push, the support and the role model of my mother and extended Whanau, the support from them. It is what gave me the background, the strength and built within me the determination to achieve and rise above the mire because Maori generally were down here (indicates floor with hand).

The *mire* resisted was clearly seen to exist outside the whanau context. The tensions and contradictions caused by colonisation are apparent in the ways whanau grappled with imposed divisions between life styles and life chances\(^2\). The narratives from two participants shared highlight some of the tensions caused by assimilationist policies, and the ways these factors impacted on these two women's sense of what it meant.

**He kitenga kanohi, he hokinga whakaaro\(^3\); two women's memories.**

Both narratives in this section expose tensions and contradictions faced by whanau with the formation of foreign discursive practice\(^4\), previously indicated by Walker (1990) and Durie (M., 1997), that positioned being Maori and acting Maori as marginal and inferior. The contradiction is evident in the juxtaposition of Maori discursive practice that centre Maori (people) as Maori (normal).

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\(^2\)Life styles is used here to indicate what happens in the private domain (within the realm of home) while life chances refers to the mannerisms and behaviours one was to adopt in order to be competitive in the public domain (within the employment market). Such divisions prior to colonisation did not require a chameleon like existence.

\(^3\)Whakatauaki, to see the face is to stir the memory. Brougham, A., and Reed, W., (’992, p. 63).

\(^4\)Hall and Gieben (1992) maintain that a discourse is a group of statements which provide a language for talking about - ie a way of representing - a particular kind of knowledge about a topic. When statements about a topic are made within a particular discourse, the discourse makes it possible to construct the topic in a certain way, it also limits the other ways in which the topic can be constructed. Hall and Gieben further make the point that discourse is not based on conventional distinctions between thought and action and, language and practice. ‘Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language. But it is itself produced by practice’. ‘Discursive practice’ - the practice of producing meaning, since all social practices entail meaning, all practices have a discursive aspect. Said (1989) and Churchill (1992) have argued that discourse, ‘from the West about the Rest’ (Said 1989 p. 369) is deeply implicated in practice.
One participant's early life was characterised by a number of moves between the tribal boundaries of both parents, with dad seeking work in the forestry industry. The era in which these events occurred was also characterised, as previously mentioned, by a marked demographic shift in the Maori population seeking employment and increased life chances offered in urban centres. Though this participant's whanau remained rural they were not immune to the 'promise' of increased life chances by moving to urban centres. Balancing what was known within Maori lifestyles and what was promised if colonial principles were adopted meant two different and at times conflicting codes being advanced within this woman's home,

... because my mothers first language is English and she was the dominant one in the relationship. My father's first language was Maori but of course at that stage my mother had convinced him that speaking English to us all the time would help us in our future development - you know - the way of the world was Pakeha - and so that's why we never heard Maori being spoken in our home other than when my father was with his family, still continues to this day, when he's with his sisters they only speak Maori when he was with his mother they only spoke Maori ... but we were spoken to (and still are) by our aunts and our Kuia in English - that was the kind of pressure my mother put on my Kuia.

The hierarchical ordering of ethnic groups bought with it attendant assumptions about the functional and ideological superiority of English over Maori. The conflict and consequent dilemmas arising from devaluation of Maori language across educational, economic and political domains provided the catalyst for opposition to language retention in whanau. Language shift (Baker 1996) was hastened by entrenching English as the high status language of government, law, commerce, media and school. As submitted in evidence at the Waitangi Tribunal Te Reo Report (1986) "English was taught as the bread and butter language", speaking Maori at school was a physically punishable offence. Where Maori had once served as the means of communication in all the social, spiritual and political realms in Maori society, legislated language shift in schools, aided the discursive formation (Foucault 1980) of English as superior resulting in diglossia\(^5\). English became the norm, limiting the

\(^5\)Diglossia makes reference to bilingual communities and how language usage often becomes separated by situation and function (see for example Baker 1996). Early bilingual theories associated with cognitive functioning and educational attainment posited bilinguals as inferior to monolinguals (Fishman 1976; Skutnabb-Kangas 1981; Baker 1996). Naïve theories based on finite cognitive capacity to acquire language gave rise to theoretical positions suggesting increased competency in a second language could only be achieved at the expense of the first. Hence in a situation where English competency became the avenue through which the social goods of society and economic life chances; power and privilege were accessed, whanau faced the dilemma of bilingualism (ideologically seen to be
number of contexts in which competency in te reo Maori was either valued or required. Te reo Maori was thus relegated to the private domain, limiting its utility outside homes to formal encounter on the marae and a diminishing number of Maori social occasions.

The paradox identified by Johnston and Pihama (1995) was encased in the advancement of 'sameness' in which 'same' constantly changed. In relation to the acquisition of English "when we did speak the 'real' language, we weren't perceived as the same at all; we were labelled as deficient, not speaking what was defined as 'standard' English" (p. 3). Whanau actively encouraged English competency for the participant not as a choice but a fundamental necessity for survival. Insuring English was to be the first language also impacted on other cultural practices.

... my mother definitely held the reigns (Dad's whanau) didn't particularly care for my mother very much .. (they thought) she had very Pakeha ways. ... Because my sister is one of the older ones of course my Kuia desperately wanted to keep her but my mother wouldn't allow her to. There was also a concession made ... they would speak English when we were around and that's what happened.

While access to Maori language was consciously limited cultural competency and access to cultural resources became a point upon which tensions were negotiated.

... dad always liked to work in his tribal areas and his Kuia was from (there). He wanted us to be brought up in a Maori community as opposed to my mother who wanted to go urban ...

Through the course of the interview it was made clear that English was promoted in order to provide the children with their 'bread and butter'. It was not however, considered a form of cultural replacement. Mum, strongly in favour of English was equally adamant about the children knowing who they were - made particularly clear in relation to contesting school experiences: if there was anything that smacked of racism mum would be straight up there. Dad's position was that,..

... in that community our father always felt that we should have you know been quite nurtured in our Maoriness so we were very fortunate in that, ... my father ... was quite different to a lot of Maori men around that particular area, and as a result of that, he became the driver. We didn't own a car but he became the driver particularly for the old people because of his nature. He was brought up by our old people and so he naturally had this affinity with kuia and koroua. I can't remember us actually having real friends when we were little because we were always going off to these kuia and koroua with our father.

a detrimental option) or English monolingualism. Nevertheless, although intergenerational heritage language transmission diminished few equalising effects resulted.
... and so that's how he sought of nurtured our sense of Maoriness in that it was something to treasure, my sister still recounts lots of these times, I mean, if you ask her, she was always nurtured much closer than I was in things Maori being the eldest child, being the one that both sides of the families particularly enjoyed because she was quiet and she could sit still longer than what I could ... when I think on it we were nurtured into our roles,

The pressure to seek employment began to divide whanau into two generation family units as the 'universal culture of capitalism' (Walker 1990) became the totalising organisational structure of society. Mobilising whanau as a cheap expendable workforce as seasonal work flowed through its peaks and troughs commodified whanau into transportable economic units easily located and relocated to meet labour demands. Although this whanau remained within tribal boundaries, frequent access to cultural resources and hapu boundaries became constrained by lack of money, long working hours, time and distance. Paid employment not only separated 'dad' from those who nurtured his sense of self, but also, altered the pattern in which the woman's identity was being woven.

... our Kuia died by the time we went to ... things changed a lot then because dad was away from a lot of our old people. Because of the lack of money we couldn't readily go back to our families. Even though to other people it may have been a three quarters of an hour drive but when you haven't got much money it's a long way. ... I know (dad) was particularly lonely at that stage but because money was always tight in milling communities he used to work in the forestry as well, so I suppose he was occupied because he'd work twelve hour days...  

Both parents are highly regarded by the participant, each valued for the different strengths and attributes they were seen to instil.

... I think another thing too that of course my parents ... (were role models) my mother because she knows where it's at. She's always got a goal and will always work towards it, towards it in her way, a very determined way, but also my father, I'm drawing more and more on his experiences than what I used to. I was always closest to my mother but, I can actually see where his depth is and he's got a totally different aura about him - he and his family have developed that side of us that is to a depth that - I just took that 'or granted - till I met other people and I realised my god you know what a rich store I had and I just never realised it. He's not a talker he doesn't speak often, neither do his family but I've actually learnt how to listen ...

In this vignette⁶, the weaving of the whenu commenced within the context of whanau located within iwi defined boundaries. What is made clear is that for this participant,

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⁶The vignette gives an incomplete account, particularly in regard to 'mums' representation, later discussions show in relation to educational contexts her determination to challenge those who undermine the values instilled within the whanau.
identity is grounded in whakapapa and developed through a number of significant relationships that facilitate access to cultural resources. Growing up within tribal boundaries combined with sustained contact and extended whanau, facilitated the opportunity for conscious transmission of cultural knowledge pertaining to people, places and events. The nurturing of respective roles amongst siblings provided the substance for her later contention that cultural knowledge was far richer in breadth and depth than could be encapsulated in any one individual. The participant’s kete woven with strong connective networks grounded in whakapapa, enabled the participant to later temper external influences that attempted to challenge her Maoriness based on narrow stereotypical identity markers.

For all this, the whanau were not immune to external policies and social practices that implicitly and explicitly acted to devalue cultural practices and characteristics seen to be significant to this woman in the development of her Maori icentity. The most explicit in this vignette centred on loss of intergenerational language transmission which contributed to the disruption of other cultural practices. Where analyses of cultural disruption for Maori have tended to focus on complicating factors of urbanisation, those remaining in rural areas also faced challenges presented by the universalising nature of colonisation and the culture of capitalism.

**He kitenga kanohi, he hokinga whakaaro**

Another participant living in this time frame grew up in her tribal region within a whanau context that functioned in a different way; the context was urban. Discursive practice evident in community structures, social activities, physical and psychological mindscapes were seen to be the predominant cultural boundaries to be negotiated.
The children were nurtured in a sheltered environment that focused on the immediate family. Life was seen to be definitely a man’s world ... this is what men do and this is what women do.

That was actually coming through our Whanau too, where the women, you know, where you had to know your place as far as a woman was concerned and the men did all the men’s things around the house and the woman would do all the women’s things around the house.

The participant was from a whanau that by all accounts could be considered a statistical rarity. Speaking of the decade prior to the Hunn report (1960) (which noted a ‘statistical blackout’ of Maori presence in the higher levels of secondary school?), at least three siblings in dad’s generation had tertiary education. Academic successes achieved by whanau members instilled a sense of awe in the participant and endorsed for her meritocratic principles and neutrality of educational contexts perpetuated by whanau while the cultural cost of success remained unquestioned.

In those days too, it was really hard to go to university or to get a degree for anybody, not only for Maori people, but for anybody, it was a great thing, it was just awesome. I can remember my uncle being one of the first Maoris to graduate from Lincoln and that was just awesome, he was in the papers and all over the place ... it was very rare and I think whereas now.. more women, Maoris are achieving, it’s really good.

Dad was highly respected and provided the initial parameters in which self was understood.

Dad was an excellent teacher ... he went on to be a really good principal as well.... We all looked up to dad as being the cleverest person on this earth and everything dad said was right ... he set everything, like we always had a big meal at night, and we always sat at the table - there were seven kids, and we all had our own chairs. And we weren't allowed to sit anywhere else - we all had our own places at the table and dad had his at the head and mum had hers down at the other end, but mum served all of us and dad, you know, dad was always the head of the table...We had to be well mannered. You weren’t allowed to leave the table without saying excuse me and we said grace every time we ate. And we also helped, we all had our little jobs to do.

The high profile dad had in and outside the whanau, constituted significant threads in the ongoing construction of kete. Values were instilled in an environment where parameters were clearly defined, children were sheltered and educational achievement was the primary focus for the seven children.

... I probably led quite a sheltered childhood really. I probably had a quite strict upbringing where education was the thing with my parents. We had to do well in education and because we had a lot of kids in our family that support that they gave us had to be shared amongst the whole lot of us - everyone.

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7The report states only 0.5 percent of Maori secondary students reached the seventh form.
The notion of being sheltered could be read in a number of ways. One possible reading is the need to shelter and protect Maori children from the harshest effects of racism and what being Maori meant in the discourse of school employment and future life chances. Conversely it could also be read as a means of distancing children from other Maori also as a means to shelter children from the same influences by association noted above. The latter is less likely however, as the participant attended a school that was nearly a native school, in an urban context where other educational options existed.

I s'pose there were a lot of Maori kids at school but you kind of didn't even talk about that in those days. You never talked about that sort of thing. You just got on. You were a very criticised race of people at that stage too. And you never could sort of, kind of stood up for your rights like you do now.

With little attention in public forums on that sort of thing racial discourse, cultural analyses, theories of hegemony, processes of colonisation and its effects were lost in the discourse of neutral systems and processes purporting to be based on principles of meritocracy and egalitarianism.

Discursive practice denied the group two important forms of language: i) their heritage language by structurally divorcing it from public domains, and ii) any form of emancipatory language to articulate their experiences in any other terms than hegemonic norms advanced. The challenge in constructing a Maori identity in such circumstances occurred across cultural boundaries where the power and privilege of the dominant group was manifest in a myriad of explicit and implicit social and structural forms. Concurrent ideological assumptions about Maori deviancy and inferiority and urban pepper potting (Walker 1990) left little space to develop Maori theoretical positions in public forums. Durie (A., 1997) suggests the intergenerational effect on those subjected to inequalities can lead to 'submersion of Maoriness ... as a survival strategy by those who perceive their life chances to be threatened by a definitive identification as Maori' (p. 157). This participant was aware of whanau, hapu and iwi affiliation, but not talking about that sort of thing made it very much a private
affair. The extent to which it was privatised reduced the level of contact with extended whanau.

The close knit family was not considered extended. Contact with extended whanau was often formalised and infrequent.

    You were saying before distance meant a lot then. Was that a factor in the amount of time spent...

    With cousins? Ah, no I don’t think it would have made much difference whether we were physically close or not, I just think we didn’t place much importance on it. In my mum and dad’s family, especially my dad’s family, you couldn’t just pack up and go to your aunties, you know, you had to sort of ring them up and make an appointment - see if it was good for them, whereas you know I s’pose what I’m doing with my kids today and myself probably is the opposite to what happened when I was a kid.

While some cultural knowledge was held by the participant it was not overtly operationalised as she grew up. During high school the participant spent time living with Maori speaking grandparents. The pressure to see self from the position of other creates tensions between the two generations. Internalising the public criticisms of Maori cultural practices creates conditions in which intergenerational transmission of language and further cultural knowledge becomes problematic. The intergenerational shift in values and attitudes to Maori language and cultural practices at times polarises whanau members. The participant’s generation being rewarded for knowing and emulating colonial world views in external contexts, creates disjunctions. Maori as a criticised race of people juxtaposed against growing concerns of older generations regarding contamination of cultural knowledge, provides a corrosive thread in kete at a time when many kuia and koroua withheld significant aspects of cultural knowledge for fear of cultural knowledge debasement (Durie, A., 1997).

    ... then my dad got a job as a principal and I stayed with my grandparents. They’re both Maori speaking and you know I learnt absolutely nothing from them as far as learning reo was concerned ... which I really think is just, you know, I wished at that stage in my life that I had’ve.

Learning the reo it just didn’t happen in those days. That was their ... thing and if they wanted to talk about us they always switched to Maori. ... when I talked about the boys and girls thing, this was the adults and the kids thing - you know, we’re the adults and you’re just the kids so you just keep quiet and that’s what we did do. We did do those things in those days, we just kept quiet and did as we were told.
On reflection mum provides an implicit value base for this participant not instantly obvious in comparison to the explicit role played by dad. Nevertheless subliminally mum is seen to provide the foundation for the participant's confidence and the ways she has consciously attempted to facilitate later whanau practices.

... we were actually taught to stay close. We were told, like our mother always said to us look after each other. When I die, she'd say, I want to know that I'm going to leave behind all you kids looking after each other. And I think that's what made us stick close together. We were told by mum to do that and it's so important. ... mum would always say don't worry when you grow up and you've got your own family you'll help each other as sisters and that's exactly what happens. ... I just think back to what mum said ... when you grow up, when you are all together, you'll repay each other.

The successes and the confidence, I've probably got from both my parents. Probably, more from my mum than my dad. Even though dad was the big career boy and the big golfer and the big fisherman and the everything, mum looked after us kids and toddled along behind him. She was probably the one who gave me the confidence underneath it all.

Mum provides the blueprint for current whanau structure for this woman and her siblings in which less formalised and extended whanau contact are currently maintained and valued. Where an emphasis on subjugating differences and Maori cultural precepts in favour of the security offered in increased life chances dominated early reflections, "identities continue to be made and remade as life circumstances (social and political environments) change so that even the submerged can recover a Maori identity given sufficient confidence and opportunity" (Durie, A., 1997, p. 157).

I was probably influenced a lot by my mum ... a lot of things that mum used to tell us. And I do, I would listen to what she would say ... I suppose I just grew up just grew along, I've always had a very supportive family. We're always there for each other and we never fight and my two children have grown up to know their cousins really well and all the cousins are really good friends. If my kids need to go anywhere, to anyone in the family they can just go.

... sharing with whanau is important, making sure that, mind you my kids make sure that they know their cousins too, you know, they can't get over how I don't know my cousins very well, you know, they say "Gee mum why don't you know your cousins very well, I'd hate not to know my cousins" and things like that.

Providing the opportunity for the participant's children to learn Maori and be schooled in Maori Boarding contexts where Maori networks can be fostered has been a priority. This too has caused challenges as children question mum's the lack of contact with extended family in formative years, leading the participant to contemplate the social forces at work that made things different then.
The point emerging from the dialogue is that positive identity development is complex enough in monocultural contexts, but when situated in opposition to dominant discursive practice, constructing kete becomes an exercise in determination, courage and fortitude, somewhat reminiscent of the characteristics of Māori women outlined in chapter one. In one way or another identity development becomes a costly exercise caught within power differentials and a political milieu in which identification with groups outside the 'norm' is problematic. Assimilation meant different things for different whanau. There was never a choice between assimilating or not assimilating - between being colonised or not being colonised - it is a matter of degree. The diverse realities of the two participants bear testimony to the variety of whanau dynamics and pathways travelled that impact on the design of each kete. In both vignettes, the ways in which women impact on the design and construction of kete is also significant. In the first narrative the role of women played inside and outside the home is overtly obvious. In the second she is a quiet enabler sustaining the access to principles of whanau structure that would be utilised in the adult life of the participant.

**Women and whanau**

Women in the main were seen as authoritative, fulfilling many roles and reiterating many of the characteristics and attributes noted in the customary narratives outlined in chapter one. Significant female characters within whanau were situated in critical roles encompassing whaea, kuia, matamua/potiki, tuakana/teina and aunties. They ranged in character from being quiet unobtrusive supporters and confidence builders, as seen in the previous vignette, to dominant matriarchal characters in homes where *mum was definitely the boss*. They afforded children access to cultural resources derived from their own whakapapa lines and were described as initiators of fundamental decisions made regarding whanau.
One particular narrative draws many of these elements together. It also draws on the significance of ordinal placement in whakapapa, which provides the foundation for an aunt to claim rights and privileges over the affairs of a younger male sibling long after he had established his own economic independence. In the incident recounted, an aunt claimed the right as matamua (first born) to actively participate in decisions being made in the whanau of the potiki (last born) when deliberating the educational and career choices of her younger sibling’s offspring.

I returned home for my seventh form year and my dad’s big sister yet again, the same one who made us all go to boarding school, stepped in and said oh I don’t think she should go back to (name of school). (She) didn’t think that the education standards were good enough. So I went into town, into the big smoke ... and lived with (her) and went to a co-ed college ... (participant, individual interview)

The participant indicates that this was not a one off incident recognising that this women was seen to hold a position of both power and authority in her whanau. This aunt like many of the women in the participants’ lives became a critical advocate for whanau in educational contexts. Many women were seen to be a power to be reckoned with.

When I finished seventh form, I did a deal with my dad that I’d sharemilk for him for a year. My aunt came down and beat the [proverbial] crap out of my father (laughs)

Was she older than him?

Yes, she was the oldest in his family and he was the baby. She said, you know, you didn’t waste all this money on her becoming a bloody farmer ... get a grip and so they had one great big massive argument at my dad’s house. She sort of stamped her foot of authority and he bowed ... and she actually signed my name on the teachers college forms, I didn’t apply for teachers college the first thing I knew about teachers college as a whole was when I got a letter saying I had an interview. (participant, individual interview)

Six of the eight women indicated that their mothers worked, either on farms alongside their husbands, in seasonal employment, in factories and in one instance where both parents taught. One participant saw her whanau structured around a gendered division of labour particularly apparent with the parents’ roles but less distinct amongst the seven children who all had (their) jobs to do.

Many of the mentors undeterred by limited formal education themselves, advocated, cajoled, supported, pushed and at times bullied children to succeed. They were women who were seen to both issue and withstand challenges. Being Maori, being
woman, being strong, being vocal and having authority were discursively linked to a body of knowledge that extended to metaphysical connections. Bearing the names of ancestors further connected participants to attendant narratives that also centred woman as role models.

A Name to go by ...

Returning to the metaphoric use of patu, the customary practise of naming patu provides an avenue through which individual taonga were linked to specific events (Te Ngaheretoto), geographical regions (Te Rohe O Tu Whakatupua), ancestors (Tane-nui-a-rangi) or revered principles of practice (Te Manawaroa) (Durie, M., 1990). In the similar way group and individual names, both formal and informal, also carry with them a store of past and present history. Personal names - though not always - serve as indicators of basic group identity. Two group names common to Aotearoa/New Zealand used as identity markers are Maori and Pakeha. Although both names are of Maori vernacular their attendant socio-historic meanings are best understood within a colonial discourse (Walker, 1990; M. Durie, 1997; Smith, L., 1992).

Customarily Maori group names were delineated by the hapu or iwi to which individuals belonged. Personal names tended to link individuals to significant historical incidents, ancestors or valued principles of practise. Primary utilisation of names by participants was linked to whakapapa and secondly reflected a growing political awareness of colonisation. Characteristic of oral tradition, the value of individual names, explicitly discussed by half of the participants, was their conscious use of names as metaphysical couplings. Names were used to breach the perceptual distinctions of past and present delineated by Western concepts of time and to reduce the space between where they resided and places of significance.
I really value my name ... I have always valued my name because it reminds me of who I am and where I come from ... and I want my kids to carry this name ... carrying your name doesn’t just mean you write it at the end of your first name. (participant, paired interview)

Note here too that the significance of a name is located in its ability to strengthen the whenu derived from the whiri, the initial plait in the kete that constitutes whanau and whakapapa.

The participants’ awareness that some tupuna were ‘given’ names recognised that whanau were at times prone to external socio-political influences that affected name choice.

the whole kaupapa value is important, you know, how my koroua fought to retain his name. Not the surname which they gave him but his name ... I hear my aunty crying because of the loss of our name, all those sorts of things keep me going, even though its really hard, because in your name is where you’re from, who you are. It helps to retain that sense of who you are without it looking like your covered over in someone else’s packaging. (participant, paired interview)

European names were in many cases acquired by baptism, by bestowal, or by political expediency. Issacs (1975) suggests that the shedding of colonial names, like reverting to customary names of land features, has been one of the more obvious, and more symbolic ways for ‘ex-colonial’ subjects to assert their independence and in so doing reassert their own ethnic/cultural identities. Names can also serve as indicators for gauging responses, ranging from; open or closed, being welcomed or repulsed, forming the basis for inclusion or exclusion (Issacs 1975). Hence name changing or bestowal by individuals can either i) serve to help gain some measure of anonymity by sharing, at least in name, the identity of the dominant group or conversely ii) reassert an ex-colonial identity. This included for one participant shedding the Colonial custom of forfeiting her own whanau name for that of her husbands at the time of marriage.

I was colonised when I married (my husband) I took his name - I have always stated I was going to revert back to my old name because that’s who I am... (our children) all have their own individual tupuna names because a lot of the names that they hold are no longer around... they carry those names and they are going to know who they are just like our tupuna did, ... I think that’s really important and that’s something we have consciously looked at. (participant, paired interview)

Naming and educating children about the significance of their names was also a deliberate means of sustaining connection with whakapapa and whenua tipu in which tupuna names were grounded.
... my own child she loves her name ... because we always tell her about (the kuia) who she was named after. Or ... who she was named by... and that is a reminder about who we are ... I do agree that cultures and people change over time, but it doesn't change so much that you become someone else. (participant, paired interview)

Further discussions reflected the application of traditional practices in contemporary contexts, such as, the number of children named after locations associated with whanau in the Maori Battalion, marking significant campaigns in the second world war.

Sustaining cultural resources linked to identity was seen to require conscious effort. Without conscious consideration of the power to name and particularly the language in which naming occurs, the legacy of legislative prohibition and prevailing social practice would secure its extinction. This necessitated a conscious effort to thread language into the ongoing patterning of many of the women's' identity.

**Reo as a woven thread**

Seven of the eight participants either had some competency in te reo Maori prior to entering teaching, commenced Maori language courses during their training or, have since taken courses in an attempt to develop their competency. For one participant Maori is her first language. All had access to native speakers as children. Although many participants remain in frequent contact with this generation these native speakers still find it difficult to change established practices and talk to these women in Maori.

I just got right into Te Reo actually and then I thought oh geez I was saying it right, don't know where the heck it came from - it's probably - you know - it's the old nurture versus nature sort of thing ... It was a around (when I was growing up) even though I wasn't aware of it being spoken but it was around. I can remember at training college actually going on to ... Marae and I was doing my Karanga. I'd practised to do this Karanga to go on to the Marae and when I started the Karanga that came out was nothing like the Karanga that I'd practised ... I don't know where it came from but it obviously came from my nanny. I can remember what our Maori tutor said to me. She said, where did that come from? And I said, I don't know, but obviously it was one of my nanny's. My tupuna must be looking after me. She goes it's a beautiful Karanga ... it was my very first Karanga and I was so pleased that it came from them and not from one that I had to learn out of the book ... Little things like that happened actually quite a lot in my experience it's not until you sought of sit back and
reflect you think geez you know you did have a high input in Maori that you just weren’t aware of, weren’t aware of at all. (participant, individual interview)

For the women without Maori as their first language, reclaiming reo to varying degrees has been considered at different stages as a means to further extend links to their cultural identity. For one woman living with native speaking grandparents during part high school she wished, *at that stage I’d learnt it then*. The comment appeared wistful underpinned by the assumption that she was perhaps too old to start now - although she had schooled her own children in situations where they could address this issue.

For the other six participants strengthening their Maori identity was tied, in part, to reclaiming the language. For one this occurred upon entry into a Maori boarding school and her first experience with a large number of other Maori youth.

*I was Maori but I didn’t know how to speak Maori at all, my parents would speak it, it never dawned on them, ... we actually had them up about that, we said - “will you guys can Korero how come you never bothered to teach us?”* But you know in their time, when they went to school, they were all punished for speaking Maori - and I don’t think it even dawned on them that we might be interested, probably because of the community that we lived in as well [with few other Maori], they never bothered to teach us. But, definitely when I got to school, I thought, I’m a Maori and I don’t know anything, ... other than basic greetings but [boarding school] was totally different than the school I’d come from, at first I wondered why I got sent there, you know, had I been bad, why had I been sent away? It took me the better part of the first year to understand ... (participant, individual interview)

What the participant sought to understand was the reason she needed to be separated from whanau (although she understood there was little option because of the lack of proximity of local high schools) in order to be educated. She further sought an understanding of some of the confusing experiences primary school had offered her as a child from the only Maori family at school.

Language reclamation intertwined as a thread woven into identity extends beyond the present. Many of the women seek to locate themselves in environments where language is contextually embedded for themselves while all are actively involved in supporting the development of language rich institutional spaces for Maori youth. The significance of language as an identity marker for many of these women is about discursive practice because like all discursive practice embedded within the language
are mechanisms that make some concepts more easy to articulate then others. One such concept is the integral relationship of identity being grounded in land.

Marae and Whenua Tipu

Geographical location and symbolically rich structures such as marae were discussed in terms of nourishing and revitalising some participants’ sense of self as Maori women. Identity embedded in whanau and whakapapa linked participants to hapu and iwi, encompassing, _growing up next to the marae; by the river; in sight of our mountain; the urupa down the road;_ and notions of _ukaipo_. Many of the women who grew up with access to these cultural resources took for granted these dimensions of identity believing in their youth that they were a 'given' for all Maori. Not until later in life, as circumstances drew them out of iwi boundaries, did they realise that the _rich store I had and I just never realised it._

Contact with places as a means of spiritual revitalisation emerged as part of the way some participants saw themselves remaining intact. For some women living outside their tribal regions understanding the socio-political idiosyncrasies of the tribal areas in which they worked was seen to be important. Recognising the significance of whenua tipu to Tangata whenua helped sustain their own sense of home place. For others it provided the motivation to apply for positions within their own rohe or within the tribal bounds of their partners. Motivation to apply for specific positions were associated with relocating whanau to whenua tipu, in some instances, it meant reducing whanau income from two to one.

Well for me to be honest, my husband wanted to move back home and we needed a job because we knew he wouldn’t have a job to move home too. (participant, paired interview)

For another participant it meant reduced professional status,

... this position was a sideways move from where I was. It meant I was coming back to ... where my husband is from ... (participant, paired interview)
In both cases moving home became a way to strengthen links for children to what they believed to be significant in order to sustain a positive identity. For yet another participant recognising the significance of geographical location had implications for her teaching practice

...That's where I had to change... [for] different communities ... I also found that you had to make, I call them minor adjustments within Maori communities, there's no two [Maori] communities that are the same, so you have to make adjustments ... but what I had going for me in that position, which was a kura Maori, I was in a Maori community... their tipuna was a female, ... the other thing was that my husband is from that area... (participant, individual interview)

Metaphysical connection to whenua tipu and by association Marae and people provided the sustenance to face work based stresses when distance made physical contact difficult. When at home there was no fanfare attached to ceremonies implied but a simple replenishment of self and strengthening of the strands that interwove participants into wider matrices. This conversation occurred between two other participants in a paired interview,

P1 Things like how we need to be close to land. Sometimes I need to go back home and just sit on the beach. Nothing big just sit on the beach. By myself. I mean I do that. At ... and at .... That's where I belong. That's all I need and that's fine. Stand or sit in the paddock ... and just enjoy doing that. Sometimes I need to go to my marae and sit with my kuia and just sit with her, not talk, just sit.

P2 Yeah I know what you mean doing the dishes in the back and listening to jokes and stories.

P1 It's the wairua, it's the aroha and we need every now and then to replenish our supplies. We need to replenish our supplies. Sure we go to the library, we go on courses, we get our batteries charged when we met these wonderful people who run fabulous inservice courses, but we still have a part of us that needs to be replenished ...

P2 that doesn't, that can't be met in that context ... that money can't buy.

P1 No - that money can't buy, that you can't go on courses and learn.

The comfort and security provided by such affiliation transcends present tense connections involving metaphysical linkages to people no longer physically present who nevertheless continue to make their presence felt.

Identity for many of the women thus incorporate the weaving of strands that combine whenua tipu, turangawaewae, marae, ukaipo, urupa, awa and maunga. These
features grounded in papatuanuku represented a sense of continuity and stability and reiterate the centrality of place for women.

In sum, whanau, whakapapa, names, marae, whenua tipu and reo either provided the initial characteristics of identity formation or increased in significance at different junctures of the women's lives. Variances in emphasis were also evident. Generally difference and diversity were recognised within the group also based on a number of culturally relevant factors addressed in the following discussion.

**Notions of difference and diversity embraced in Maori terms**

As advanced within the discussion of discourse around patu it is counter productive to see this group of women as strictly homogenous. While they recognise and promote commonalities at times they are equally mindful of their differences. To better understand this group an appreciation of the ways in which diversity is seen and acknowledged counters some of the stereotypical views of what it is to be Maori for this group of women. Participants acknowledged that in both customary and contemporary contexts-Maori identity is based on a culture that not only recognised but remains dependant on diversity to enhance the collective good. Durie (M., 1995) maintains,

... far from being homogenous, Maori are as diverse and complex as other sections of the population, even though they may have certain characteristics and features in common.... Maori live in diverse cultural worlds. There is no one reality nor is there any longer a single definition which will encompass the range of Maori lifestyles (p. 1).

Difference included such variables as: hapu and iwi affiliation; level of participation in tribal and hapu affairs; age; ordinal position amongst siblings; reo competency; politicisation of Maori issues and life experiences. The group did not claim they were homogenous nor did they accept that their views would necessarily reflect the views of the Maori population in any generalisable way. This was made clear by the participants in the group focus hui:
...whatever the topic is, it is but a snap shot of that individual..., we are not all the same... It's what the reader might take from the research and I guarantee that there will be those out there who will agree with what is said but there will also be many out there that may not agree with our views, or question what the study does not cover... that's fine but I think those points need to be said (participant, group focus hui).

This did not negate their acceptance of being grouped as Maori women but indicated that within such collectivities rich variances exist. The women did not feel they were in possession of 'the Maori voice' (Jackson 1997) though they were confident in their vocality about self in relation to being Maori and what that meant to them; about being students, educators, daughters, sisters (tuakana/teina; matamua/potiki), mothers, grandmothers, aunties, kohanga reo whanau members, union members, members of professional associations and a myriad of other things simultaneously. None of these factors negated their primary cultural identity. These roles were integrated into a unified sense of identity which for them remained constant. It was not something shed or attached according to context (although at times wrapped and protected, like patu, for safe keeping).

Neither difference nor similarity are foreign concepts within a Maori schema. Difference was accepted as 'given' according to commonly understood culturally delineated parameters. Difference was also recognised as a consequence of colonisation. In the latter position, through colonisation, the negative connotations of difference have by default acted as a catalyst for promoting commonalities (Johnston 1998). Durie (M., 1998) notes for Maori in particular that,

Before European contact, the word Maori simply meant normal or usual. There was no concept of a Maori identity in the sense of cultural similarities. Instead, the distinguishing features which demarcated groups were mainly attributable to tribal affiliations and the natural environment. ... In that sense, identity reflected historical, social and geographic characteristics (p. 53).

Durie states that the stark contrast between the culture of the newcomers and the culture of iwi provided the rationale for emphasising commonalities across tangata whenua rather than reiterating their commonly understood uniqueness. "Even then it was an identity more obvious to the newcomers, and in truth largely determined by them, rather than a true reflection of any sense of homogeneity on the part of Maori people" (1998, p. 53)
Acceptance of differences derived from home

For two participants, understanding differences between self and Maori peers also helped negate stereotypical views of behaviour and classification, as Maori. For one woman difference in Maori terms was understood as based on her identification as a whangai (adopted child). For another participant, her difference was defined in terms of a strong hapu connection. The latter recognised that the source of her identity provided the security to resist outside influences that she felt attempted to define the criteria upon which she should measure her Maoriness. She thus accepted observed differences between herself and Maori peers as the norm rather than perceiving them as a challenge to her sense of self.

... recognising the tribal differences (and) the hapu differences it was okay to be different, just cos you were both brown at teachers' college you didn't have to be the same... It's moving centres isn't it ... in some hapu you are on the periphery because of your Whakapapa line, in another one you're in the centre, move to somewhere else or another hui and you sit somewhere else in that forum ... it's like a revolving door ... which places you on inners and outers depending on your location and situation ...

we could also see because we had at [home] the Ministry of Works, we had other Maori people who came in from other areas so I could sort of see what was happening at training college... you could move that situation back home because we were getting more and more outsiders coming in ... but it was always balanced up in our family - you know - where we stood, as long as we always remembered who we were ... (participant, individual interview).

This participant was aware that she entered teachers' college slightly older than other students. She had worked and therefore had money and a vehicle, took selected studies (science and social studies) that separated her from Maori peers and did not feel competent nor confident participating in kapahaka. While this led other Maori as well as non-Maori to make assumptions about her Maoriness, she resisted being placed in any Maori box that questioned her authenticity. She was confident, having spent much of her youth in the company of kuia and koroua, in the knowledge that customarily no Maori individual held either all the knowledge or skills of all Maori things. Being Maori was not contingent upon her ability to sing or the suppleness of (her) wrists to swing a poi. She did not see herself as either superwoman or super Maori. Being sure of her hapu identity made her less susceptible to identity markers
ascribed by others based on homogenising notions of what it is to be Maori. Such a position is consistent with Rangihau’s (1975) assertion that for him identity is not founded on the notion of Maoritanga; rather it was based on Tuhoetanga, the tribe from which he claimed descent.

Identity, difference and professional practice

Recognising difference amongst Maori groups was considered an integral part of professional practice. Half of the participants spoke of diversity among Maori as a means of modifying or anticipating the need to modify their practice. That’s where I had to change, I found that you had to make adjustments within Maori communities, there’s no two communities that are the same.

While Maori communities were not seen to be homogeneous, the ability to relate to and understand these subtle variances were based on an understanding of hapu and tribal autonomy. Such recognition further included understanding that kawa and tikanga varied accordingly. The need to establish meaningful links with such rural communities was once again defined within Maori cultural precepts; I was in a Maori community, their tipuna was a female, and the other thing was that my husband is from that area.

Applying the same cultural criteria was not always effective however. For another participant using the same cultural yardstick had led her to make assumptions about the programme content in her school. She said that knowing this kura... given its history... and the particular rohe that it’s in, created for her expectations of high consideration of things Maori; but in practice such factors were found to mean little, as monocultural programmes, practices and thought processes afforded the same blatant institutionalisation observed in other schools.
Summary

In sum, given that this group was drawn together based upon their identification as Maori, it is not surprising that each participant sees herself as such. What is of primary interest are the attributes that characterise each individual kete and the centrality of this cultural repository in their lives. As illustrated previously, Kete whiri commence from a base plait that represents whakapapa and whanau.

However, the tension, - how loosely or tightly the threads are woven - is dependant upon how closely or loosely each of the identified characteristics are clustered together. This chapter has argued that the extending whenu and the tension with which they are woven indicates a process of identity construction that is ongoing and unique to the contemporary specificities of each participants reality.

This chapter identified that Kete is both process and product. As a process the potential patterning is indicated by the various ways the whenu are intertwined, capable of recognising the multiple, complex and contradictory circumstances with which Maori women currently contend. Identity as a process is discernible in the ways in which the participants talk about their sense of self as Maori. For example, each of the women, to varying degrees, indicated the influence of significant whanau members in general and women in particular strengthening the weaving process. Similarly marae, whenua tipu, and reo were notable enhancements to the overall kete construction, as they drew from their experiences, their whakapapa and whenua to consolidate their sense of "I am Maori".

As a product, being Maori recognises the individual's interconnectedness to whakapapa as a critical link in the genealogical matrix to which they contribute. Kete are recognisable as cultural repositories in which many things are stored, among
them, values, beliefs and taonga tuku iho. The products that reside within the kete enable future generations access to whakapapa, whenua and henceforth, identity.

At one level, Maori identity for these women is seen as given, immutable and highly valued. *I am Maori* is seen as a simple statement of fact. The simplicity of the statement accepted as 'given', however, neither neglects nor de-emphasises the participants' awareness of intracultural diversity nor the circumstantial specivities that either support or inhibit the development of a Maori identity. What the declaration does, is centrally locate their ethnic identity as the analytic tool that informs the women's analysis of current contexts and contributes to their educational practice and visions. *I'm a Maori first, then a teacher. I can stop being a teacher but I can't stop being Maori:* this supersedes an identity derived from professional status, class location or gender. Understanding the foundation upon which the participant's identity is grounded is therefore salient to their present positions within education, a point reiterated and expanded in the next chapter, "The Briefcase".

Identity for these women has clearly included primordial elements. Primordialist positions, as previously discussed in the genealogical placement of patu, emerged from shared dialogue in the individual, paired and group interviews. The dialogue linked participants to people, land and historic incident. Typically, references to whanau collapsed time, geographical distance and familial relationships into the one frame of reference; *that will always be home, that's where my kuia and Koroua grew up and are buried.*

No participant disputed a primordialist position utilising whakapapa as the plaisted ridge from which the kete commences. However locating whanau within the milieu of demographic, historic and socio-political specivities suggestec that whanau were not immune to external factors as indicated in the opening quote to this chapter. Glazer and Moynihan (1975) maintain circumstantialists
... look to specific and immediate circumstances to explain why groups maintain their identity, why ethnicity becomes a basis for mobilisation, why some situations are peaceful and others filled with conflict (p. 20).

Hence while primordialism informs the origin of identity it does not fully account for the specicities of the socio-political milieu in which identity develops.

... I would have to say that my experience, because I'm Maori and female in a monocultural society, those experiences as being Maori and a woman I can't change them it was just the luck of nature I suppose .... (the fact that I'm Maori has had) a major impact and influence everything I do. (participant, individual interview)

Participants' life experiences were commonly talked about in terms of adding to or detracting from, supporting or challenging their primary identity. One participant expressed this position explicitly in relation to herself and professional development in her teaching role:

... the other experiences are only an addend, to give me another dimension, it isn't the core. Definitely without a doubt it was my Maori upbringing and the support, the whanau .... (participant, individual interview)

Triandis\(^8\) (1995) points out that individual and collective orientations are better understood as 'a matrix rather than being read as rigid inflexible locations' (pp. 43-52) whether the social group is seen to be either homogeneous or heterogenous\(^9\). This is particularly pertinent where collectivists and individualist co-exist in the one society. Yinger (1994) maintains that in complex societies identity discourse must concurrently consider notions of power and ideologies of difference. Young (1990) in combining identity and difference suggests that the

... meaning of difference submits to the logic of identity. One group occupies the position of norm, against which all others are measured. The attempt to reduce all persons to the unity of common measure constructs as deviant those whose attributes differ from the group-specific attributes implicitly presumed in the norm. The drive to unify the particularity and multiplicity of practices, cultural symbols, and ways of relating in clear and distinct categories turns difference into exclusion (p. 168).

For Maori, since Colonial contact the politics of identity ascription has had a dual focus: retaining hapu and tribal identities, and the development of secondary pan-tribal amalgams. The purpose of which has been to highlight commonalities between

\(^8\)For definition of individualism and collectivism offered by Triandis see previous chapter.
\(^9\)Triandis cites for example detectable differences between rural and urban dwellers in Japan, New York state etc.
iwi for social and cultural support in urban contexts, or, in order to increase alliances and advance Maori centred aspirations (Durie, M., 1997). The primary authenticating factor in either instance being whakapapa.

The problematic with the term Maori however, as a means of classification and categorisation is derived from the context in which it was coined (Smith, L., 1992; Johnston and Pihama 1995). Smith (L., 1992) argues that although the term is of "Maori vernacular it is a Colonial construct that is as political in nature as is the ideological construct race" (p. 35). Smith further maintains that, "behind this label there lies the lived realities of generations of (Maori) women (p. 35). The majority of participants explicitly resisted being fractionated and sought integrative ways of centralising self and their understanding the world.

... as I was saying before .... I think it's this whole philosophy ...[where]... people say that there's a Maori world and there's a Pakeha world is rubbish - I'm Maori and this whole world's Maori and that's all there is to it. ... people say Maori world - Te ao tawhito ... I believe in my Maori world that there's a Te ao tawhito and there is a Te ao hou ... (participant, paired interview).

Participant's characteristically did not limit being Maori to 'identifiably Maori contexts' nor did they designate themselves as marginal or peripheral. Many did however recognise the disjunction created by colonisation as the demarcation point between te ao tawhito (customary cultural contexts) and te ao hou (current cultural contexts) but argued against either context being perceived as inert.

Identity markers were not perceived to be static nor necessarily homogenous. Differences encompassed customary notions of ordinal placement in whakapapa, linked to hapu and iwi affiliation, and being a whangai. Differences also included contemporary complexities attributed to colonisation and the consequent erosion of what was customarily 'given' or 'taken for granted' from a Maori centred base.

Thus, although identifying as Maori, the varying effects of colonisation meant that commonalities could not be automatically assumed. Characteristics of Maori identity
for this group continued to develop over time. What was considered important in this chapter was a means to understand the ways in which the participants wove the threads seen as significant to them. Such identity goes beyond compliance with stereotypical homogenising discourse. It is seen to be coherent and unitary to the extent that being Maori is a constant across contexts even in the face of contradiction, dilemma and paradox.