

Indigenous Literary Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand



Tina Makereti

Subject: Oceanic Literatures, Fiction, Literary Theory Online Publication Date: Jun 2020

DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190201098.013.984

Summary and Keywords

As the second decade of the 21st century draws to a close, Indigenous literary studies in Aotearoa New Zealand are characterized primarily by tension between abundance and scarcity. The abundance relates to a wealth of writers, texts, and forms, both contemporary and archival. Many historical texts and literary contexts are being revealed and investigated for the first time. Abundance in this context also signifies the richness of approach, technique, and language use in both contemporary and archival texts. The significance of this deep archive is yet to be fully realized, due in part to the scarcity of scholars in Indigenous literatures of Aotearoa, a lack which is cemented and institutionalized by the absence of university courses that focus primarily on Indigenous literatures in English. A paucity of published Māori and Pasifika creative texts, particularly long-form fiction, further solidifies a perceptible absence in New Zealand writing. Significant scholarship is being developed despite this, however. And rather than being limited to viewing Indigenous literatures through the lens of English or New Zealand literary history, Indigenous scholars present innovative historical, geographical, and creative genre frameworks that open up multiple ways of reading and engaging with Indigenous literatures. In New Zealand, Māori literature is any writing produced by the Indigenous population. Māori and Moriori are the name of the Indigenous peoples of New Zealand, who also identify within distinct tribal groupings. In international contexts, the word “Indigenous” may be used more frequently to describe Māori, but in a New Zealand context, the term “Māori” is almost exclusively used. It should be noted that Māori is not a literary category, however. It is a cultural identity. It therefore follows that any form of literature can be produced by a Māori writer, and may be labeled “Māori writing.”

Drawing on a long literary whakapapa, or genealogy, Māori writers and literary scholars are crossing colonially imposed boundaries to recognize distinctively Indigenous creative and critical epistemologies. Having passed through the Māori cultural renaissance of the 1970s to the 1990s, Māori writers no longer grapple with the need to articulate their right to existence as distinct peoples, but instead enjoy the autonomy to decide how that distinctive existence may best be expressed. One of the most lively aspects of contemporary Indigenous literature in New Zealand is the emphasis on new ways to present, read, incorporate, and interpret te reo Māori in English language texts.

Keywords: Māori, literature, Pasifika, Pacific, Oceanic, Indigenous, whakapapa, narrative, talanoa, decolonization, postcolonial, New Zealand

Defining Māori Literature

As the second decade of the 21st century draws to a close, Indigenous literary studies in Aotearoa New Zealand are characterized primarily by tension between abundance and scarcity.¹ The abundance relates to a wealth of writers, texts and forms, both contemporary and archival. Many historical texts and literary contexts are being revealed and investigated for the first time. Abundance in this context also signifies the richness of approach, technique, and language use in both contemporary and archival texts. The significance of this deep archive is yet to be fully realized, due in part to the scarcity of scholars in Indigenous literatures of Aotearoa, a lack that is cemented and institutionalized by the absence of university courses focusing primarily on Indigenous literatures in English. A paucity of published Māori and Pasifika creative texts, particularly in long-form fiction, further solidifies a perceptible absence in New Zealand writing, one that is obvious to Indigenous readers and scholars but may have been largely invisible to Pākehā readers until the second decade of the 21st century.²

“Indigenous” in a New Zealand context can mean many things but is primarily used interchangeably with the word “Māori,” which is a local Indigenous word that the first peoples of Aotearoa gave themselves on first encountering European settlers (and means, literally, “normal”). Māori also identify within distinct tribal groupings. There are other groups of Indigenous people in New Zealand as well. Rēkohu, or the Chatham Islands, is the easternmost island of New Zealand and is home to a distinctive Indigenous group called Moriori (also meaning “normal” in their language). One may also consider that many of the immigrant Pasifika peoples living in Aotearoa are Indigenous to the Pacific, and since New Zealand is a Pacific country, Pasifika peoples occupy a dual relationship with Aotearoa and Māori.³ As Alice Te Punga Somerville notes: “If Māori are Pacific, Māori literary studies must therefore be connected to Pacific literary studies.”⁴ The relevance of Pacific Indigeneity will emerge throughout this article, though the focus here is primarily Māori literature. It can therefore be assumed that when the term “Indigeneity” is used, it may include wider Pacific groups, depending on context, and when the term “Māori” is used, it denotes “Indigenous people of New Zealand,” which also generally includes Moriori. The close kinship ties between these two groups, and the necessity for brevity, preclude the naming of both Indigenous groups at every juncture.

In New Zealand, Māori literature is any writing produced by the Indigenous population. It should be noted that “Māori” is not a literary category, however. It is a cultural identity. It therefore follows that any form of literature can be produced by a Māori writer and may be labeled “Māori literature.” In Māori cultural terms, all that is needed for a person to *be* Māori is whakapapa, which is a genealogical link to Māori ancestors. An individual need not have a particular world view, proficiency with the Māori language, darker skin tone, or any other outward markers of so-called authenticity to be considered Māori. This

means that within the cultural identity category of “Māori” there is a wide and diverse spectrum of ways to live *as* Māori, and these may all be expressed in Māori literature. Even so, contemporary Māori literary scholars continue to have complex discussions about the application of this term. An accessible example can be found in the work of Māori filmmaker Taika Waititi. In a review for *Variety* magazine, non-Indigenous American reviewer Peter Debruges questioned the Indigenous authenticity of Waititi’s representation of 1980s Māori in the film *Boy*. However, for Māori viewers, the characters were distinctively recognizably Māori, as informed by personal experience.⁵ But what of Waititi’s later films, like *Thor: Ragnarok* and the vampire mockumentary *What We Do in the Shadows*? Not so distinctively recognizably Māori, and yet many would argue for these as Māori literature.

Despite the potential wideness of the field, it may be necessary to limit the definition in order to give some shape and parameters to the work of examining “Indigenous Literary Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand.” This article therefore focuses primarily on literature that is more perceptibly Māori, identifiable through character, language, subject matter, or author as Māori. At the same time, it recognizes the many imperceptible layers at work in Māori creativity as essential to any discussion of our literatures. This article is therefore already centered in a number of contradictions or paradoxes: the abundance and scarcity of Māori literatures and scholarship existing at once and in tension with each other; outside expectations and perceptions of what Indigenous literatures consist of versus the Indigenous experience of our own literatures; and what is outwardly perceptible in relation to what is implicit. This relationship between the seen and unseen, and this state of paradox and tension, is entirely appropriate to contemporary Māori perspectives (which are also multiple and diverse) and to studies in contemporary Māori literatures.

Māori philosopher Carl Te Hira Mika, in his contribution to *Critical Conversations in Kāupapa Māori* (2017), sheds some light on this unsteady ground by arguing that: “[. . .] one’s concept of an object or idea should remain incomplete and somewhat obscured, rather than certain.”⁶ Mika extends his argument to address the visibility or invisibility of Māori content in Māori creative work:

Māori content does not need to be overtly mentioned in order for a Māori discussion to have occurred. My premise here is that we Māori come to an idea (whakaaro) in a Māori way [. . .] and that our arrival at an idea therefore makes for a Māori expression. We conceive of an aspect of the world as the world impacts on us—this is one aspect of whakaaro. Our subsequent expression of that idea, of course, may look no different from that of a non-Māori person in any way that can be sensed, yet we can speculate that there is a subtle, subterranean difference in the texture of the writing (of Māori expression) that we can think of as mysterious because it is beyond our immediate access.⁷

All of this is clearly applicable to Taika Waititi’s oeuvre. However, this philosophy of Māori perception must jostle with Western metaphysics, which state:

[. . .] something cannot be unless it is able to be perceived through the senses. In other words, within a Western frame, we are prohibited from saying there is an unseen Māori phenomenon at work that invites us to express an idea in a Māori way unless both that Māori force and that Māori way can be demonstrated.⁸

This is the colonizing view with which Mika disagrees, suggesting instead that we turn to the power of speculation, which is “more our task than proclaiming about a thing.”⁹

Any overview of “Indigenous Literary Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand” will therefore necessarily fail to come to exclusive definitions or conclusions, for to do so would misrepresent the scope of Māori literatures and the underlying kaupapa or Māori worldview of storytelling, which, like the Pasifika talanoa, is a continuous conversation and narrative, without beginning or end, that can be told in varying ways by various members. Says Mika:

The sustained gaze of certainty is born of colonisation by Western academic or rational desires, and Kaupapa Māori threatens to act as an emissary of these desires when it encourages the Kaupapa Māori researcher to approach an object or idea as if it is complete and knowable, or at least as if it does not need to be encountered as mysterious. We are all implicated in this colonising phenomenon in various ways.¹⁰

For too long, we have been compelled to define Indigenous perspectives within English literature parameters when our cultural worlds do not fit the limitations of the English literary academy. In surveying 21st-century movements in Indigenous studies in New Zealand literature, I define “Indigenous studies” primarily as Indigenous approaches to the study of Indigenous literatures in New Zealand. Due to space constraints, the focus is necessarily limited to an overview of contemporary innovations and scholarship, with a brief overview of practitioners.

One further note about approach. It is imperative, as an Indigenous scholar and writer, that I identify my position and subjectivity, understanding that all scholarship is imbued with cultural assumptions and that the presentation of scholarship without recognition of the subjectivities of its source may simply reproduce dominant colonial, monocultural, and damaging discourses around Indigenous peoples and Indigenous cultural artifacts. Indigenous communities have long recognized that there is nothing neutral about the work that the academy produces, particularly in relation to colonized and subjugated peoples. It is in recognition of this power dynamic that I identify myself as a Māori and Pākehā, and as both a creative prose writer and academic. As such, I occupy a position as insider-outsider both culturally and academically. It would be disingenuous to not use first-person pronouns at times, as these roles give me access to particular communities, particular knowledges, and particular points of view. In addition, in such a small community of writers and scholars, it is difficult to avoid referencing my own work. In particular, these multiple roles mean that I am actively involved in creating the literature at the same time that I am critiquing it.

More than this, identifying my position here is a useful introduction to an emphasis on Indigenous scholars and methodologies. One of the basic tenets of kaupapa Māori methodologies, introduced in 1999 by Linda Tuhiwai Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* and much developed since, is that research be "undertaken by Māori, for Māori and with Māori."¹¹ This approach does not necessarily reject the contributions of non-Māori researchers, but does recognize that Māori researchers have different rights, responsibilities, and insights relating to our own worlds and work. At its worst, non-Māori research about Māori in general can result in "inaccuracies and misinterpretations."¹² Rather than viewing Indigenous literatures through the limited lens of English or New Zealand literary history, Indigenous scholars present historical, geographical, and creative genre frameworks that open up multiple ways of reading and engaging with Indigenous literatures, as exemplified by Mika.

Te Pataka Whakapapa—An Abundant Literary Genealogy

A distinctive trait of Indigenous scholarship in Māori literature in the 21st century has been a reassessment of where, when, and how Māori literature in English has been produced, and what it consists of. To reference an Indigenous literary scholar from outside the New Zealand context, Chadwick Allen, who studies Māori texts in his work on comparative Indigenous methodologies, states:

Let us begin with the premise that, like other contemporary indigenous arts, indigenous literatures in English—or primarily in English—are products of complicated genealogies, genealogies that include diverse and multiply intersecting lines: political, social, personal, textual, linguistic, aesthetic.¹³

Let us not forget historical and cultural. This may seem self-evident, yet non-Indigenous commentary on Māori literature continues to struggle with the vastness and complexity of the Māori worldview as exemplified in our literature and still regularly defines it in a limited way, as is evidenced in the continued critical attention focused almost solely on authors and texts who emerged in the latter part of the 20th century. These works are "predominantly taught in New Zealand schools and discussed internationally in postcolonial and Indigenous studies," which inevitably results in a more limited range of perceptions about Māori literature and society.¹⁴ Contemporary Māori scholars are reframing the way Māori literature has been defined in the past, with compelling results.

Unfortunately, however, Māori readers and commentators may also be complicit in the limitations placed on defining Māori literature, or at least may have learned well the lessons of colonization. As Alice Te Punga Somerville notes:

[In] A recent profile of iconic Māori writer Witi Ihimaera, a national Māori magazine with an estimated readership of one hundred thousand, enthused that prior to Ihimaera's first novel "there was no Māori literary tradition." [. . .] Indeed, Māori

people had been writing and publishing since the early nineteenth century and the Māori literary tradition, when not limited to written literature, is centuries old; when not limited to Aotearoa, it stretches back across the Pacific for millenia.¹⁵

Arini Loader argues that even written literature stretches further back in time than we tend to acknowledge. She notes the prevalence of mnemonic and symbolic systems in pre-European Māori societies, as well as the enthusiasm with which Māori recognized and adopted the Latin alphabet. Loader references noted composer, writer, and teacher Hirini Melbourne:

Maori were surrounded by writing in their daily life; the carvings on posts and houses, the marks on cloaks, the very architecture of the great meeting houses. The fact that texts—compositions, speeches, ritual replies, and so forth—were memorised, not written down, does not mean that the ancient Maori inhabited a world from which writing was absent.¹⁶

Teresia Teaiwa furthers this argument in her essay, “Reclaiming the Visual Roots of Pacific Literature,” in which she challenges the dominant narrative about Pacific (including Māori) literature, that writing did not exist in our region until the arrival of Europeans.¹⁷ This belief is not neutral, Teaiwa argues, because lack is seen to equal deficiency, and the “detractors see this originary lack as a permanent impediment to the development of worthy literature.”¹⁸ By recognizing the multiple and abundant sources of visual symbolic and narrative systems in the Pacific, Teaiwa hopes to liberate Pacific literature “from a singular and oral genealogical origin” which “inhibits the reception of the literature,” the outcomes of which include a lack of interest and support. Teaiwa identifies the multiple ways in which Pacific written literatures are minimized and underestimated, often by Indigenous readers who see the form as somehow inauthentic, culturally inappropriate, or as a colonial tool. The perception that Pacific literature is either underdeveloped (largely non-Indigenous commentators) or culturally inappropriate (both non-Indigenous and Indigenous readers) creates a closed loop which makes it difficult for the literature to gain full recognition. Teaiwa recognizes that this way of thinking continues “to mystify writing as a practice and reinforce it as alien. To portray precontact Pacific societies as pure is not only reductive, it ignores whole genres of systemic visual culture across the region.”¹⁹ Like Te Punga Somerville and Loader, Teaiwa identifies many systems of narrative representation in tapa cloth, weaving, and carving traditions.

Some of the most “penetrating analysis of Pacific symbology is emerging, not from academics, but from an artist and cultural practitioner” or from many artists and cultural practitioners.²⁰ Teaiwa identifies Tohi, who researched sennit (coconut fiber) lashings found throughout the Pacific as bindings for beams in houses and canoes. As the artist researched deeper into the tradition, he discovered not just an aesthetic system, but a semi-otic one:

From his three-dimensional modeling of *lalava*, Tohi has identified a system of symbols that can be broken down into the equivalent of linguistic morphemes.

Thus, becoming literate in the symbology of *lalava* would enable one to read narratives in the lashings.²¹

Teaiwa's proposal that Pacific people had technologies similar to writing seeks to "demystify and domesticate, even indigenize, Pacific literature."²²

This is a tremendously useful approach to inculcate in the teaching of Oceanic literatures in university settings.²³ Recognizing the full extent of historical Māori and Pasifika articulations of narrative as literature fits a Kaupapa Māori perspective that begins with a whakapapa conceptual framework. As has been noted, the most common translation of whakapapa is genealogy, but the concept of whakapapa encompasses a much broader and deeper set of meanings that are fundamental to any understanding of Māori culture (and therefore Māori literature). Essentially, whakapapa is: "[. . .] the genealogical descent of all living things from the gods to the present time. . . . Everything has a whakapapa: birds, fish, animals, trees, and every other living thing; soil, rocks and mountains also have a whakapapa."²⁴ In fact, whakapapa goes back further than the "gods," to the basic elemental building blocks of the universe, conceived of by Māori as Te Kore, Te Pō, and Te Ao Mārama. Comprehended as genealogically linked, every thing that exists is related in some way to everything else, in both a metaphorical and literal sense. Ani Mikaere explains it thus:

My position is that whakapapa embodies a comprehensive conceptual framework that enables us to make sense of our world. It allows us to explain where we have come from and to envisage where we are going. It provides us with guidance on how we should behave towards one another and it helps us to understand how we fit into the world around us. It shapes the way we think about ourselves and about the issues that confront us from one day to the next.²⁵

Mikaere notes Whatarangi Winiata's definition of whakapapa as a technique "which made possible the unlimited accumulation of knowledge" (286). As Moana Jackson demonstrates, this technique has close associations with our creation narratives themselves, "that transformed darkness into light, 'nothingness' into a dazzling reality, and a void into a life-filled experience."²⁶ Like Mika, Mikaere sees these creation narratives as fundamental to the Māori worldview, taking into account a genealogy that begins with the mysteries of creation:

The genius of these understandings is the balance they strike between satisfying the human need to give meaning to our existence, while simultaneously acknowledging that we cannot and do not need to 'know' everything.²⁷

Yet she also asserts the deeply practical nature of these understandings, which acknowledge the extent to which our survival is dependent on our relationships with the world around us.

In line with this thinking, in 2017 I developed a literary whakapapa that departs from what has been traditionally accepted in mainstream academic literary discourse as the

standard timeline for the development of Māori literature.²⁸ Usually, Māori literature in English is seen as a late development of New Zealand literature, which is itself seen as a late development of English literature. As Teaiwa suggests, this is a kind of deficit model in which our lateness to development of a written literature in English (our first poetry and fiction appearing in the 1960s) is implicitly interpreted as a lack of ability, on one hand, or disinterest in the form—perhaps even rejection of the form as culturally inappropriate—on the other. There are a number of problems with this approach, perhaps primarily that it is inaccurate, as Teaiwa demonstrates, but most dangerously that it devalues Māori literature, both in terms of the way it is received and the way perception undermines production of new work. The alternative model I propose takes as its origins the origins of all Māori literature, whether produced in English or not. The following literary whakapapa begins with creation narratives that are themselves genealogical (fig. 1):

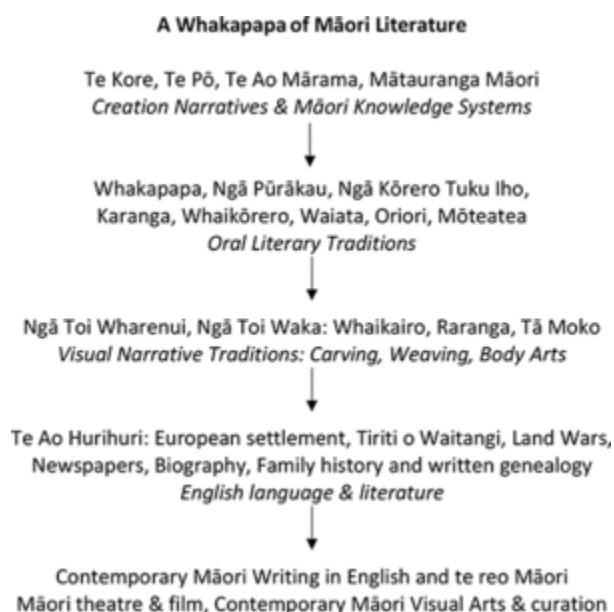


Figure 1. Whakapapa of Māori literature.

Created by author.

This literary whakapapa “places writing in English and English literatures as a late but very important addition to a Māori literary heritage that was already extremely rich in literary forms that had been long-established.”²⁹ However, immediately on generating this model, it was clear to me that it was still inadequate, particularly in terms of its top-down directionality. Instead, what’s needed is a model that recognizes “that our understanding of culture, stories, history and ancestors is transformed by the moment we find ourselves in.”³⁰ Such a model may look something like this (fig. 2):

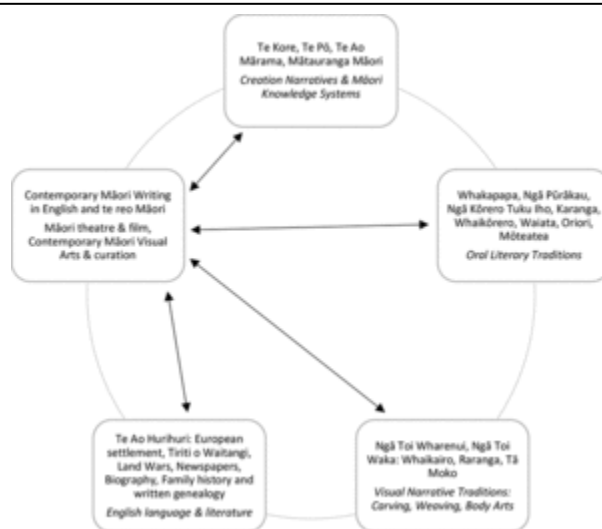


Figure 2. Spiral Whakapapa of Māori literature.

Created by author.

We can see, then, that:

The whakapapa of Māori literature does not work only in one direction: culture is always in flux, and colonisation—the ongoing process of colonisation—shapes, limits, distorts, and shifts how we know and tell our own stories. We are constantly spiralling back to reconnect and re-enact that whakapapa.³¹

This model identifies Indigenous origins for Māori literature, which does not seem such a radical notion, but has been, until now, largely unconsidered by mainstream schools of New Zealand English literature. While some effort has sometimes been made to recognize customary forms of Māori creativity, these are not often recognized and studied as “literature” and sometimes even writing in English goes unnoticed.³² At the same time, this literary whakapapa model also recognizes the prominence of the English literary tradition but does not allow it to dominate. In this way, the literary whakapapa model allows for contemporary and future Indigenous literatures to evolve beyond colonial and Eurocentric constraints.

I have begun with an examination of how Indigenous scholars are looking back, but this is not to signal an obsession with origins and history. Rather, it recognizes an opening of definitions and approaches. The other ways this field is being stretched are geographical and linguistic. To return to the opening quote, the genealogies of Māori literature are complex and multiple, and it is in understanding these genealogies in more depth that we strengthen the discipline. “A focus on literary whakapapa,” notes Te Punga Somerville, “rather than literary singularity turns our attention to networks, links, and possibilities—to the recognition that there is always more.”³³

The Great Talanoa I: Speaking across and between Borders

There are two ways in which Māori writers and Indigenous scholars of Māori writing are further expanding accepted notions of what Māori literature is and how it can be understood. The first is geographic, and it is important to note here how Māori scholars have been informed and influenced by the work of Indigenous Pasifika scholars and writers. In her groundbreaking work, *Once Were Pacific: Māori Connections to Oceania*, Te Punga Somerville follows the lead of Epeli Hau'ofa, Albert Wendt, and Subramani, as well as numerous of her Pacific contemporaries who figure the Pacific Ocean as continent and the sea a superhighway between islands. Such a view repositions Māori writing in relation to Oceania and the world, recalling the great migrations throughout the Pacific that brought us finally to Aotearoa. For Te Punga Somerville, this “configuration of Oceania has significant implications for the reading of Māori texts because Aotearoa is visible when someone looks at the place with ‘Oceanic’ eyes rather than treating New Zealand as a white (or an empty) metropole to which Oceanic people migrate.”³⁴

Te Punga Somerville carefully traces the connections between Māori and Pasifika peoples and their literatures. In doing so, she invokes a literary whakapapa model, but even wider in scope, making metaphorical links to a more expansive literature through the use of visual narratives like tapa. She also redefines Māori literature by recognizing the work of Māori writers who live outside New Zealand, raising relevant questions about what it means to be Indigenous, and how colonial borders affect preexisting relationships between Indigenous groups, their lands, and their seas.

Parallel developments have occurred in Māori creative writing at the same time as the theoretical underpinnings of *Once Were Pacific* and other critical writing on the subject has taken shape. The second decade of the 21st century has been marked by writing that looks beyond the borders of Aotearoa New Zealand. Sometimes this “looking beyond” is done speculatively, as signaled by Robert Sullivan’s *Star Waka* (1999) and embodied by Nic Low’s *Arms Race* (2014) or Steph Matuku’s YA work; sometimes historically, as represented by Paula Morris’s *Rangatira* (2011) or my own *The Imaginary Lives of James Pōneke* (2018); sometimes geographically, as represented by much of Morris’s other work and various Māori short stories; and often culturally, for which we may read any number of stories, Patricia Grace’s *Chappy* (2017), Low’s aforementioned book, or Mark Sweet’s *Zhu Mao* (2011), among others.³⁵ Notable during this period is the development of editor Anton Blank’s journal, *Ora Nui*, now approaching its fourth edition. All but the first edition of Blank’s Māori literary journal have made explicit links beyond the borders of Aotearoa. The second edition brought together Māori and Aboriginal Australian writers, while the third, named “Going Global,” placed Māori on the world stage, claiming “The Māori gaze is becoming more international” and demarcating itself as a “site for experimental literature.”³⁶ The forthcoming fourth edition will focus on the Austronesian migration from Taiwan to New Zealand, presumably taking in the vast Pacific between. In an interesting parallel, at the Taipei International Book Exhibition in 2015, New Zealand writ-

ers were guests of honor, but Māori writers were hosted primarily by Indigenous Taiwanese groups, presenting on the Indigenous Taiwanese stage more often than the New Zealand one. It is clear that the time when Māori literature could be described as only concerned with what happens within Māori communities and within New Zealand's borders has long since passed.

These developments are exemplified in the anthology *Black Marks on the White Page* (2017). The impetus for the book was Witi Ihimaera's unceasing aspiration to see new Māori literature collected and celebrated, to check its health, and to take its pulse. The necessity for such work is particularly prevalent in communities where there is less publication due to greater external pressures, such as is experienced by Indigenous peoples living with the continued effects of colonization. The statistics for Māori publishing continue to surprise and alarm most general readers, who assume that Māori writing is well represented in New Zealand literature.³⁷ In data from five different years between 2007 and 2015 presented at the Auckland Writers Festival in 2017, the rate of publication for Māori literature ranged from 1.6 percent to 6 percent, landing most frequently at 4 percent. The Māori population of New Zealand is 15 percent.³⁸ Clearly, on numbers alone, this is very poor representation for Māori literature. The Auckland Writers Festival lecture argued that the problems with representation of Māori in the academy are closely connected to problems in publication of Māori literature, which are then connected to problems with reception, reading, and education systems, all of which are closely linked to the socioeconomic position of Māori populations; that is, Māori books are not published abundantly and therefore not as easily available as they should be; young Māori are not attracted to the field because they are not exposed to a literature that is essentially theirs or scholarship that embodies their world views; and Māori research in this area is undervalued, creating a cyclical pattern of deficiency.³⁹ Writing in te reo Māori suffers from similar issues. The reasons for this are complex, centered predominantly in the colonial project, and not necessarily due to any animosity on the part of publishers or the literary community. However, historically and contemporarily, there has been ignorance, or simply complacency, in these communities. Te Punga Somerville reveals the stark issues in her 2016 essay, "Māori Writing in Place; Writing in Māori Place":

Within the New Zealand literary community, when one looks at official events, anthologies and course syllabi, there is little place for Māori; there are few Māori places. This, too, is power: the appearance of collection after collection of writing by Pākehā New Zealanders, whatever the genre, with one or two dollops of brown. To pick one from a lineup of possible examples, of the 63 poems in the 2011 anthology *Best of Best NZ Poems* only four are by Māori authors.⁴⁰

In addition, in a search of university courses:

English departments in New Zealand universities taught six books by four Māori writers. (Including drama, eight books by six Māori writers.) The books on offer imply that nobody Māori has published anything worth reading (or at least teaching) since 2005 or written fiction since 1994.⁴¹

It is clear that within this literary environment, anthologies edited by Māori have the potential to make a significant impact. As the introduction to *Black Marks on the White Page* states: “[. . .] still the page is white and still the marks we make upon it are radical acts of transgression.”⁴²

Ihimaera continues to be one of Māori literature’s most active writers and has dedicated decades to the project of collecting our writing, but until 2015, he had yet to see that work taken up by others on a regular basis. Forty-five years after “the first Māori novel” was published, the number of Māori writers who are able to write and publish consistently is still much lower than may be expected, as has been demonstrated. With characteristic energy, on realizing that there had been no such anthology since his last in 2007, Ihimaera asked me to co-edit a volume with him. In what may be viewed wryly as a “succession plan,” Ihimaera has begun to collaborate with as many younger writers as possible to ensure the continuation of this work, as evidenced in 2019’s *Pūrākau: Māori Myths Retold by Māori Writers*, edited with Whiti Hereaka.

Recognizing that an excellent and comprehensive anthology of Māori poetry, *Puna Wai Kōrero*, had been published in 2016, in *Black Marks* we settled on fiction as our main focus, yet we departed from previous anthologies of Māori fiction almost immediately. One of the objectives of *Black Marks* was to offer an expansive view of who Māori writers are and what we write about, in response to the tendency of readers and scholars to define Māori writing through subject matter or some imagined parameters of “authenticity.”⁴³ The aim was also to foreground an Oceanic literary network that existed prior to European colonization—one that links us to the entire Pacific, including French Polynesia and Australia—rather than to limit ourselves within the borders of Aotearoa. While other disciplines, in the social sciences for example, emphasize the very separate histories and cultural present of Māori and Pasifika peoples, in literature it is clear that viewing the creative output of our different Oceanic nations collectively is more appropriate to the contemporary moment.⁴⁴ Some of this can be attributed to strength in numbers, some to shared histories of colonization and resistance, and some to the very exciting and dynamic literary conversations that are occurring between Māori and Pasifika peoples. *Black Marks* therefore sets out to “go beyond the edges of what is expected from Oceanic writing.” The introduction describes the borders that are crossed by the writers who feature in the collection: regional, and in subject matter, style, or form. “These are stories” it says, “that expand our world aesthetically, politically, linguistically and culturally.”⁴⁵

Furthermore, this approach has critical foundations that exemplify the work we do as inheritors of multiple literary traditions and Indigenous creators of new narratives. *Black Marks* makes a very clear case for a literary “talanoa” that is informed by pre-European navigational networks, visual narratives, and multiple languages and cultures. The complexity of meaning behind the term “talanoa” is exemplified in Jione Havea’s piece from the anthology, which begins with the idea that a talanoa is simultaneously a conversation, a story, and a telling:

[. . .] “talanoa” is a word used in several (but not all) of the native Pasifika languages;

In the world of talanoa, *story* dies without the *telling* and the *conversation*, *telling* becomes an attempt to control when one does not respect the *story* or give room for *conversation*; and *conversation* is empty without the *story* and *telling*. In talanoa cultures, there is no separation between story, telling and conversation.⁴⁶

Presented as a talanoa, *Black Marks* is therefore envisaged as an ongoing conversation between all the writers, readers, and regions it encompasses. The dedication—“For all who walk, carve, talk, dance, chant, paint and sing the Pacific into the future / A talanoa awaits you / Welcome—join the kōrero”—explicitly invites the ongoing input of creative practitioners to keep generating more literature and does not limit the talanoa to words on a page. The inclusion of visual art, performance artists, and photography links the work of writers with that of their contemporaries who work with and create visual narratives.

The Great Talanoa II: Speaking across and between Languages

It should not be surprising that the other great talanoa taking place is linguistic. The Māori cultural renaissance of the 1970s–1990s—in which Māori sought to reclaim rights to the lands, language, and cultural autonomy alienated by colonization—resulted in new educational and political movements like kohanga reo, and even brought about governmental change, such as the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal.⁴⁷ Having passed through this era, Māori writers no longer grapple with the need to articulate their right to existence as distinct peoples, but instead enjoy the autonomy to decide *how* that distinctive existence may best be expressed. Historically, Māori were dispossessed of their own language in addition to their land base in a series of brutal political, legal, educational, spiritual, and physical confiscations and appropriations, the result of which still reverberate painfully through contemporary communities. However, the Treaty of Waitangi-based restitutions and the re-energized cultural movements of the last fifty years, since the 1970s, have had an effect, which, in most cases, has been positive. Celebration and incorporation of Māori culture and language is now the norm in almost all New Zealand communities, and while it still has its detractors, the enthusiasm with which New Zealanders are now embracing te reo Māori (demonstrated in the overwhelming influx of students to Māori language classes) demonstrates a new maturity and willingness to embrace the bilingual foundation of our nation.⁴⁸

One of the most lively aspects of contemporary Indigenous literature in New Zealand is the emphasis on new ways to present, read, incorporate, and interpret te reo Māori in English language texts. Experimentation in this area is becoming more prevalent, as evidenced in bilingual publications like *tātai whetū: seven Māori women poets in translation* (2018) and *Moetū* (2017). Both volumes present poetry or prose in English on one page

alongside Māori versions on the facing page. The overall effect is more than may have been anticipated—both languages occupying equal but different spaces in the text, giving the same narrative or intent in entirely different modes. The writers cooperate, but do not expect literal translations of English. Instead, the resulting text transcends any expectation of English language dominance. For a country grappling with how to reclaim its Indigenous language, the outcome is instructive. In addition, while the number of creative texts published exclusively in te reo Māori for adults remains extremely small (one count was five in total), the newly established Kotahi Rau Pukapuka Trust aims to translate 100 English language books into te reo Māori in ten years.⁴⁹

Another approach, which may at first seem less complex, is that Māori writers have long incorporated te reo words in English language texts without explanation, just as Māori often incorporate te reo in their everyday conversation. Whether in the poetry of Hone Tuwhare or the prose of Keri Hulme or Patricia Grace, the choice to incorporate Māori words unglossed was initially received by the general reading public as challenging, confronting, or simply confusing, a response that belied an unsophisticated, monocultural literary community. Says Grace:

[. . .] we just grew up using certain Māori words in English sentences so that's what I've used in my writing. It's because I wanted to be true to the characters and the way they spoke, not from any sense of wanting to alienate readers, which I've been accused of. I don't think anyone would want to do that [. . .] A glossary and italics were what were used for foreign languages, and I didn't want Māori to be treated as a foreign language in its own country.⁵⁰

Although the technique of incorporating everyday te reo words in English sentences may seem relatively subtle, the impact of simple “political” decisions like Grace's regarding glossaries has a far-reaching impact. This approach is more commonly accepted now and more common, though the same objections continue to arise. However, what is more significant in this context is the extent to which experiments in te reo use, or bilingual presentations of narrative, have started to gain traction. The contributions of these “bilanguaging” experiments are still comparatively small in New Zealand literature, but their popularity, and the frequency with which they are now appearing, suggests a trajectory of increased importance.

In a comprehensive piece on the significance and meaning of dual language texts in New Zealand, multilingual critic Mikayla Curtis states:

The recentering of indigenous languages and accompanying cultures makes bilanguaging a decolonising literacy [. . .it] pushes at the boundaries of cultural and linguistic identity. Further, it acknowledges the multiplicity of intentions and situations behind bicultural and bilingual choices made in creative endeavour: active resistance and political protest; a reflection of lived experience; by choice or by default.⁵¹

Curtis argues also for bilanguaging as a reading and writing method that blurs and broadens boundaries, sometimes beyond the expectations or comfort levels of readers. Taking Wendt's lead, Curtis argues against hybridity and the type of blending it infers. Instead, a case is made for multiplicity and duality, as exemplified in literary moments of translingualism and code-switching. Citing Chadwick Allen's definition of bilanguaging as "writing *among* two or more languages and cultural systems, fully cognisant of the politics of their unequal, often asymmetrical relationships," Curtis suggests that these texts are produced in polylinguistic and polycultural space.⁵² Given the various contemporary uses of the prefix "poly" to denote "Polynesian," these terms have pleasing cultural associations beyond the inferred meaning of "many."

Sometimes texts include entire passages in the Indigenous language untranslated, as *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings* (2014) does with te reo Māori, the Indigenous language of the Chatham Islands. While the English language sections around the re Māori give context full enough for no meaning to be lost in the narrative, the English is not an attempt to "translate" the re Māori. Any attempt to translate those passages would be inadequate, and in addition, the effect of presenting the "voice" of a supposedly dead language has a purpose beyond line by line comprehension. The sight of an unfamiliar Indigenous language can be a prompt to the reader to consider how and why that language came to be almost extinct. In contrast, the editors of *Ora Nui* choose to gloss all te reo Māori. This is an unusual choice in New Zealand publishing, though perhaps the intended international audience of the journal is the reason for it. Most Māori writers choose to avoid this; however, an ongoing conversation continues between writers, publishers, and communities, given the prevalence of reader preference for glossaries.

One of the problems with glossing Indigenous language is that representations of meaning in English are rarely adequate, especially if the glossary is brief. Writer and scholar Gildea precisely describes the consequences:

[. . .] when the definitions being applied to a minority language come overwhelmingly from the dominant culture, they can lose cultural complexity. The ideological information that is being freighted within them slides incrementally toward partial meanings deemed acceptable by the dominant culture.

The need to identify the literal "twin" of a word is a crisis of translation no matter the field, but, for poetry, this need feels closer to transgression. When we read a poem in English we expect to be delighted by the ambiguities found in the language choices [. . . however the] code-switch to te reo Māori means that elements culturally specific to Māori will be glossed over, whitewashed, deemphasised, trivialised or minimised.⁵³

Te reo Māori is a famously metaphorical language, so the bilingual or partially bilingual writer has a very wide and rich linguistic toolbox to play with. Multiple connotations and denotations rely on facility with not just the languages, but the cultures they represent; it is rarely useful to learn the dictionary meaning of a word unless the reader also has access to the real-life applications of that word in various contexts. While the increased

presence and celebration of bilingual texts represents a positive innovation for New Zealand literature as a whole, there are frustrations inherent in a literary community that has yet to fully comprehend the significance of writing that incorporates te reo Māori, or indeed, the remarkably different worldview it embodies. This problem has been the subject of two extraordinary essays by Gildea, which stand as exemplars of the essential need for Indigenous critics to contend with fundamentally Indigenous questions. It is possible this need relates to skill set as much as to culture or ethnicity in that Gildea has the linguistic and cultural background to read bilingual writing. Curtis is non-Māori, demonstrating that insightful cultural understandings are not off limits to Pākehā, but certainly that a more intensive effort is required to learn the language and cultural underpinnings of Māori literature in order to produce legitimate critique. As Gildea notes: “The problem is not the writer’s use of te reo Māori in literature, but that Aotearoa needs more scholars and educated readers of Māori writing [. . .] The ‘general consensus’ of ‘integrated borrowing’ only provides a shallow understanding.”⁵⁴

Drawing on a whakapapa model similar to the one I proposed in 2017, Gildea illustrates how te reo Māori words with accepted meanings, “that New Zealanders commonly think they ‘know’,” are misunderstood. One of these is “whakapapa,” another is “whakamā,” commonly translated as “shame”:

The English word for shame is about self-stigmatisation, about humiliation, but in Māori, the word *whakamā* is different. It is a collective shame, where you realise that you have made choices that have separated you from the collective. And you have become visible to that collective because you are outside of it [. . .].

The root word for shame in English means “to cover oneself.” Like with blankets, maybe. Or mud. Or hatred. To be camouflaged in a thicket, on a bank, or in the darkness of the night. Māori do not hide their shame. Nor their grief. It is visible to themselves and others because it means they have become dislodged, disconnected, from their *whakapapa*.⁵⁵

Only through careful tracing of etymology, both Māori and English, through elucidation of cultural information, *and* through her own personal narrative and poetry, can Gildea demonstrate the gap in meaning between simple accepted definitions and nuanced, multi-layered Māori experiences. This kind of research is crucial to the future of Indigenous studies in New Zealand literature, and it is instructive that Gildea, like many of her contemporaries, is a creative practitioner-scholar. Indigenous epistemologies are best served by the nexus between creative and critical approaches. As Alice Te Punga Somerville, among others, suggests, the creative is critical, and implicit in Indigenous studies is a perspective that does not separate creative and theoretical ways of understanding the world, just as our cultures do not.

Te Whakapuāwai: Flourishing beyond the Renaissance

We can see, then, that the most critically robust and innovative criticism about Indigenous literature in Aotearoa aligns with the dynamic and critically vigorous creative work Māori writers are producing. This expansive talanoa incorporates energetic re-imaginings in decolonizing spaces that are defined by Indigenous writers. But not everyone is paying attention to this talanoa. In fact, it is still common for a more limited, insular view of Māori literature to be promoted, largely under the descriptor, “the Māori renaissance.” This is problematic for a number of reasons, not least that it freezes Māori culture and literature as a fixed entity with a limited range of expression.

One manifestation of this view is a central chapter from *A History of New Zealand Literature* (2016), titled “The Māori Renaissance from 1972,” by Melissa Kennedy. While the book itself includes other chapters that reference Māori literature to a greater or lesser degree, there are only two chapters written by Māori about historical Māori literature specifically (Loader and Te Punga Somerville).⁵⁶ Kennedy’s chapter therefore represents the only focused study of contemporary Māori literature. The tenets of the Māori renaissance are presented as “continuity with the pre-European past, coequality in the bicultural present, positive cultural difference, the secure possession of a distinct world outlook, and special status derived from priority in the land.”⁵⁷ All of these are reflected in a distinct Māori literature in English that emerges in the latter decades of the 20th century.

Kennedy’s point of view contrasts sharply with the other approaches presented here. Stating that “The Māori Renaissance continues to dominate in new Māori writing,” she defines particular tropes and themes, such as “pastoral lyricism” and “social realism” that continue to dominate Māori writing.⁵⁸ For example, Kennedy suggests that “Bigs,” a character from *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*, embodies the “figuring of Māori culture as an embattled repossession” to support her contention that we are still living in the era of the Māori renaissance due to the continual “recycling and reworking” of such themes.⁵⁹ I would argue that where such tropes do appear in early 21st-century Māori writing, a careful reading will reveal how they are complicated or challenged. As Kennedy points out, Bigs only comes to know himself when he learns about his culture and te reo Māori. What the analysis neglects to notice is that his twin sister, one of three main protagonists, experiences no such personal revelation and throughout the novel grapples with how to understand herself as the descendant of three cultures, a problem Bigs can only contend with by ignoring all but one. Other characters from the book are similarly disregarded. Citing New Zealand literary critic Patrick Evans, Kennedy asserts that Pākehā characters are irrelevant to Māori writers, who are often antagonistic toward them.⁶⁰ This ignores a significant Irish ancestor and affable Pākehā father in *Where the Rēkohu Bone Sings*, who play important roles in the novel.

It is therefore clear that the chapter views Māori literature through the lens of a singularly European perspective, as exemplified in the additional assertion that “Māori took on a

role to educate Pākehā” with a “didactic voice, focused on cultural differences unavailable to Pākehā”.⁶¹ Such a view centralizes Pākehā as the dominant focus of Māori writing—a notion that is, in the context of the multiple talanoa and Māori literary whakapapa described in this article, quite extraordinary, if not absurd. What we are left with, then, in *A History of New Zealand Literature*, is a prominent 21st-century literary reference text that makes only passing reference to many of the most significant texts and movements of the past two decades, since the beginning of the 21st century, and does little to recognize the most energetic innovations and concerns of contemporary Māori literature.

My question, then, is how relevant are analyses of Māori literature that are embedded in Eurocentric perspectives, and how do they come to occupy a privileged position in academia? While I have focused on one particular example, this approach is largely reinforced by other mainstream academic and creative texts, as Te Punga Somerville notes.⁶² It is not that critical approaches from non-Māori scholars are necessarily erroneous, but that overemphasis on that work is detrimental to advancement of this field. The promotion of this kind of critique represents a barrier to the development and advancement of Indigenous perspectives, a problem that is reinforced by a paucity of institutional support for scholars in this area, particularly Māori scholars. Though there are courses that include or touch on Māori literature in English at New Zealand universities, there are none that focus solely on the topic. More research on Māori literature is produced overseas than in New Zealand. There can be no more than a handful of staff who can consider Māori literature in English a primary research focus and are thus appropriate supervisors of postgraduate degrees in the topic. Even fewer are Māori. For a Māori student, this can represent an impenetrable obstruction to development as a scholar. And yet, as we have seen, the field is burgeoning with exciting approaches and analyses. If Indigenous approaches continue to go largely unheeded and unsupported, the dominant analyses will continue to lack critical vigor, or simply accuracy.

Kei kōnei ngā Kaituhi Māori: Surveying the Field

The abundant literary genealogy and cross-cultural, cross-regional, multilingual, Oceanic theoretical underpinnings for Indigenous literary studies in Aotearoa New Zealand are clearly dynamic, expansive, and not yet fully realized in 2020. The most perceptive, precise, and remarkable thinking comes from critics who are Indigenous, bilingual, and creative practitioners, able to think beyond Eurocentric modes of definition. But in order to ensure the flourishing of such vibrant literary studies, much more is required, particularly in removing barriers to the continued development of Māori creative and critical contributions. That means appropriate investment in Indigenous scholarship and publication, and recognition of how the research connects with the realities of Māori communities and their literatures. Indigenous literary studies in Aotearoa New Zealand face multiple challenges that can be met with the same sense of dynamic exchange that typifies contemporary Māori creative writing.

There are positive signs that the future of Māori literature is in good hands. As we move into the third decade of the 21st century, we are experiencing growth in new Māori voices at the same time as we maintain excellence among our kaumatua or elders and pakeke or mature writers. Witi Ihimaera, Patricia Grace, Renee, and Apirana Taylor are still among our strongest writers and continue to inspire younger generations through both their own writing and their attendance at Māori writing gatherings like the biannual Te Hā Māori Writers Hui, which has experienced a revival since 2014. Pakeke writers actively producing work in the past decade (2010s) include Hinemoana Baker, Ben Brown, David Geary, Anahera Gildea, Whiti Hereaka, Kelly Joseph, Nic Low, Tina Makereti, Kelly Ana Morey, Paula Morris, Kiri Piahana-Wong, Robert Sullivan, Mark Sweet, Alice Tawhai, Alice Te Punga Somerville, and Briar Wood. Like their predecessors, many of these writers are teaching formally or informally, publishing critical work, and editing, anthologizing, and promoting the work of their peers and new writers. Finally, some of the most exciting developments come in the emergence of a generation of new and rangatahi or young writers: Tayi Tibble, who, alongside her prize-winning 2018 poetry collection, is editing an edition of the prestigious Victoria University Press literary journal *Sport*; essa may ranapiri, who published their first collection of poetry in 2019 but has also edited and self-published two anthologies: *queer the pitch: poetry from lgbtqia+ people across Aotearoa* (2018) and *Te Rito o te Harakeke: A Collection of Writing for Ihumātao* (2019), edited with other rangatahi writers Hana Pera Aoake, Sinead Overbye, and Michelle Rahurahu Scott.⁶³ These publications signal the strength and energy of young Māori writers and feature the talents of other pakeke/rangatahi/emerging writers like Cassandra Barnett, Jacqueline Carter, K-t Harrison, Steph Matuku, and Ruby Mae Hinepunui Solly. This article focuses on the page, but in the fields of stage and screen, there are a plethora of great storytellers producing.

Such precious growth remains precarious in any literary environment that is subject to the predominance of non-Indigenous scholars, editors, and writers, and also to the whims of commercial imperatives. With the best of intentions, a certain degree of vigilance is still required to ensure the retention of any ground regained. A reader will not yet find sole-authored books by many of the writers I have named, but there is clearly abundant potential and space for more Māori writers to become established. We must ensure that these new voices are not lost.

Further Reading

Curtis, Makyla. “**The Poetics of Bilanguaging: An Unfurling Legacy—Ngā Toikupu o ngā reo taharua: e tākiri ana te aroā pānui.**” *ka mate ka ora: A New Zealand Journal of Poetry And Poetics* 14 (July 2016): 70–94.

Gildea, Anahera. “**Kōiwi Pāmaomao—The Distance in Our Bones.**” *The Pantograph Punch* (April 2, 2018).

Gildea, Anahera. “**Bone Shame: Grief, Te Ao Māori and the Liminal Space where Translation Fails.**” *Cordite Poetry Review* (May 1, 2018).

Hoskins, Te Kawehau, and Alison Jones, eds. *Critical Conversations in Kaupapa Māori*. Wellington: Huia, 2017.

Ihimaera, Witi, and Tina Makereti, eds. *Black Marks on the White Page*. Auckland: Vintage, 2019.

Ihimaera, Witi, and Whiti Hereaka, eds. *Pūrākau: Māori Myths Retold by Māori Writers*. Auckland: Vintage, 2017.

Loader, Arini. "Early Māori Literature: The Writing of Hakaraia Kiharoa." In *A History of New Zealand Literature*, ed. Mark Williams, 31–43. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Low, Nic. *Arms Race*. Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2014.

Makereti, Tina. "**Māori Writing: Speaking with Two Mouths.**" *Journal of New Zealand Studies* NS26 (March 2018): 57–65.

Makereti, Tina. "**Poutokomanawa—The Heartpost.**" *Academy of New Zealand Literature* (May 2017).

Marsh, Selina Tusitala. "Tala Tusi: The Teller is the Tale." Lecture presented at the New Zealand Book Council, 2016.

Mikaere, Ani. *Colonizing Myths, Māori Realities: He Rukuruku Whakaaro*. Wellington: Huia, 2011.

Rakuraku, Maraea, and Vana Manasiadis, eds. *Tātai whetū: Seven Māori Women Poets in Translation*. Wellington: Seraph Press, 2018.

ranapiri, essa may. *ransack*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2019.

Te Punga Somerville, Alice. *Once Were Pacific—Māori Connections to Oceania*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016.

Te Punga Somerville, Alice. "Te Ao Hou: Te Pataka." In *A History of New Zealand Literature*, edited by Mark Williams, 182–194. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Teaiwa, Teresia. "**What Remains to be Seen: Reclaiming the Visual Roots of Pacific Literature.**" *PMLA* (May 2010): 730–736.

Tibble, Tayi. *Poukahangatus*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2018.

Whaitiri, Reina, and Robert Sullivan, eds. *Puna Wai Kōrero: An Anthology of Māori Poetry in English*. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2014.

Notes:

(1.) In accordance with contemporary scholarship in global Indigenous studies and Indigeneity, the term “Indigenous” and related terms are always capitalized when referring to Indigenous peoples and communities, as the term refers to historical, cultural, and political collective human identities. Lower case spelling of the term “indigenous” refers to non-specific endemic species, like flora and fauna. Spelling “indigenous” with a lower case “i” when referring to Indigenous Peoples would reproduce dominant modes that fail to recognize Indigenous knowledges and identities.

(2.) New Zealanders of European descent.

(3.) Peoples from various island nations of the Pacific, such as Samoa, Tonga, the Cook Islands, Niue, Fiji or the Kiribati, French Polynesia, and the two Papua nations. The region is vast and the term is inclusive of all the different nations therein. It is an Indigenized form of the European word “Pacific.”

(4.) Alice Te Punga Somerville, *Once Were Pacific—Māori Connections to Oceania* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 7.

(5.) Jo Smith, “Shaking the Frame: Taika Waititi’s Anti-Anthropological Edge,” in *Media Studies Journal of Aotearoa New Zealand*, special issue on Taika Waititi’s *Boy 13*, no. 1 (2012).

(6.) Mika, Carl Te Hira, “The Uncertain Kaupapa of Kaupapa Māori,” in *Critical Conversations in Kaupapa Māori*, ed. Te Kawehau Hoskins and Alison Jones (Wellington: Huia, 2017), 119–132, 119.

(7.) Mika, *Critical Conversations* 120.

(8.) Mika, *Critical Conversations* 120.

(9.) Mika, *Critical Conversations* 121.

(10.) Mika, *Critical Conversations* 119.

(11.) Ani Mikaere, “From Kaupapa Māori Research to Researching Kaupapa Māori: Making Our Contribution to Māori Survival,” in *Kei Tua o te Pae Hui Proceedings* (Wellington: NZCER Press, 2011), 32.

(12.) Mikaere, “From Kaupapa Māori Research to Researching Kaupapa Māori,” 30.

(13.) Chadwick Allen, “Rere ke/Moving Differently: Indigenizing Methodologies for Comparative Indigenous Literary Studies,” *Journal of New Zealand Literature*, special issue: *Comparative Approaches to Indigenous Literary Studies* (2007): 44

(14.) Melissa Kennedy, “The Māori Renaissance from 1972,” in *A History of New Zealand Literature*, ed. Mark Williams (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 279.

- (15.) Alice Te Punga Somerville, "Te Ao Hou," in *A History of New Zealand Literature*, ed. Mark Williams (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 182–194.
- (16.) Arini Loader, "Cacoethes Scribendi: Early Māori Writing in the 19th Century World," Public Lecture, September 2, 2017.
- (17.) Teresia Teaiwa, "What Remains to be Seen: Reclaiming the Visual Roots of Pacific Literature," *PMLA* 125, no. 3 (May 2010): 730–736.
- (18.) Teaiwa, "What Remains to be Seen," 730
- (19.) Teaiwa, "What Remains to be Seen," 734.
- (20.) Teaiwa, "What Remains to be Seen," 734.
- (21.) Teaiwa, "What Remains to be Seen," 735.
- (22.) Teaiwa, "What Remains to be Seen," 735.
- (23.) Oceanic is a term used to encompass all of the Pacific Islands, including New Zealand and other countries which may not be seen as "Pacific islands," at least by New Zealanders.
- (24.) Barlow quoted in Mikaere, "From Kaupapa Māori Research to Researching Kaupapa Māori," 289.
- (25.) Ani Mikaere, "Whakapapa and Taonga: Connecting the Memory," in *Colonizing Myths Māori Realities: He rukuruku whakaaro* (Wellington: Huia and Te Wānanga o Raukawa, 2011), 286.
- (26.) Mikaere, "Whakapapa and Taonga: Connecting the Memory," 287.
- (27.) Mikaere, "Whakapapa and Taonga: Connecting the Memory," 288.
- (28.) Tina Makereti, "Māori Writing: Speaking with Two Mouths," *Journal of New Zealand Studies* NS26 (March 2018): 57–65.
- (29.) Makereti, "Māori Writing: Speaking with Two Mouths," 62.
- (30.) Makereti, "Māori Writing: Speaking with Two Mouths," 62.
- (31.) Makereti, "Māori Writing: Speaking with Two Mouths," 62.
- (32.) Mark Williams, "The Long Māori Renaissance," in *Other Renaissances*, ed. Gang Zhou, Brenda Deen Schildgen, and Sander L. Gilman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 207–226; see Allen, "Rere ke/Moving Differently"; see Te Punga Somerville, *Once Were Pacific*.
- (33.) Te Punga Somerville, "Te Ao Hou," 192.

(34.) Te Punga Somerville, *Once Were Pacific*, 6.

(35.) See *Ngā Hau E Wha* (Huia, 2017); and Nic Low, *Arms Race* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2014).

(36.) Anton Blank, "Introduction," *Ora Nui* 3 (2017): 1.

(37.) Kennedy, "The Māori Renaissance from 1972," 285.

(38.) Tina Makereti, "Poutokomanawa—The Heartpost," Academy of New Zealand Literature, last modified May 2017.

(39.) Makereti, "Poutokomanawa—The Heartpost."

(40.) Alice Te Punga Somerville, "Māori Writing in Place; Writing in Māori Place," in *Extraordinary Anywhere: Essays on Place from Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. Ingrid Horrocks and Cherie Lacey (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2016), 102.

(41.) Te Punga Somerville, "Māori Writing in Place; Writing in Māori Place," 103.

(42.) Witi Ihimaera and Tina Makereti, *Black Marks on the White Page* (Auckland: Vintage, 2017), 7.

(43.) See this article's first section, "Defining Māori Literature," for a more expansive definition.

(44.) An example of this, which may be difficult to imagine for those outside of the region, is that Māori do not tend to describe ourselves as "Pacific" people, and New Zealand is rarely described as a Pacific island by New Zealanders. There is a strong sense of separation between the two groups. Hence literary residencies and grants are separated as either "Māori" or "Pacific" (or "general"). It is not unusual for Māori to question their right to occupy Pacific spaces, and vice versa, which can be interpreted as a nonsensical result of the colonial process.

(45.) Ihimaera and Makereti, *Black Marks on the White Page*, 13.

(46.) Jione Havea, "The Vanua is Fo'ohake," in *Black Marks on the White Page*, ed. Witi Ihimaera and Tina Makereti (Auckland: Vintage, 2017), 135.

(47.) Often translated as "language nests," kohanga reo are Māori language preschools that were born in an urban marae environment led by women and quickly became widespread and supported by the government due to their critical success in both preserving the Māori language and re-instilling cultural confidence in Māori communities. Internationally recognized and emulated, kohanga reo were soon followed by Kura Kaupapa schools and high schools following the same model. In regard to the Waitangi Tribunal: "The Waitangi Tribunal is a standing commission of inquiry. It makes recommendations on claims brought by Māori relating to legislation, policies, actions or omissions of the Crown that are alleged to breach the promises made in the Treaty of Waitangi."

(48.) See Hundreds on wait-lists for beginner reo classes.

(49.) See <https://www.facebook.com/Breakfaston1/videos/409323019782951/?v=409323019782951>; See <https://thespinoff.co.nz/atea/10-10-2019/harry-potter-among-100-books-set-to-be-translated-into-te-reo-maori/>.

(50.) Adam Dudding, "The Interview: Patricia Grace,".

(51.) Dudding, "The Interview: Patricia Grace."

(52.) Makyla Curtis, "The Poetics of Bilanguaging: An Unfurling Legacy—Ngā Toikupu o ngā reo taharua: e tākiri ana te aroā pānui," *ka mate ka ora: a new zealand journal of poetry and poetics* 14 (July 2016): 70–94.

(53.) Anahera Gildea, "Kōiwi Pāmaomao—The Distance in Our Bones," *The Pantograph Punch* (April 2 2018).

(54.) Anahera Gildea, "Bone Shame: Grief, Te Ao Māori and the Liminal Space where Translation Fails," *Cordite Poetry Review* (May 1, 2018).

(55.) Gildea, "Bone Shame."

(56.) See endnotes 16 and 17.

(57.) Kennedy, "The Māori Renaissance from 1972," 277.

(58.) Kennedy, "The Māori Renaissance from 1972," 277.

(59.) Kennedy, "The Māori Renaissance from 1972," 282–283.

(60.) Kennedy, "The Māori Renaissance from 1972," 282–283.

(61.) Kennedy, "The Māori Renaissance from 1972," 280.

(62.) Te Punga Somerville, "Māori Writing in Place," 102.

(63.) See *queer the pitch*; see Rangatahi o te Pene.

Tina Makereti

Victoria University of Wellington School of English, Film, Theatre, Media Studies and Art History