

**Marxism, Rangatiratanga, and Māori Economies**  
Can the rangatiratanga sphere be built within settler capitalism?

*By*

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# Abstract

The dynamics of settler colonialism, of which capitalism is a dominant feature, continue to constrain the ability of Māori to assert tino rangatiratanga. Before the arrival of Europeans, rangatiratanga over every aspect of life, including the economy, lay with the rangatira of hapū and iwi. Now there are other sites of power to contend with. The state and those who control capital have significant influence over the lives of Māori, including the capacity for self-determination. Māori have long asserted rangatiratanga against the state through various campaigns to change New Zealand's constitution to reflect the agreements between rangatira and the Crown in te Tiriti o Waitangi. The most recent effort is spearheaded by Matike Mai Aotearoa, the independent working group on constitutional transformation. Matike Mai focuses on the legal and political dimensions of constitutional transformation, including the construction of a new governance system in which a 'rangatiratanga sphere' (under Māori leadership) would govern in partnership with a kāwanatanga sphere (under the Crown). Little attention is paid, however, to the economic implications of constitutional transformation or to the role of capitalism in constraining rangatiratanga. I argue that for rangatiratanga to be fully realised, radical economic transformation is required to the same degree as constitutional transformation. Indigenous Marxist conceptions of the political economy highlight the relationship between the state and capitalists in the construction and perpetuation of settler capitalism. In posing the question, 'can the rangatiratanga sphere be built within settler capitalism?' this thesis aims both to draw attention to how settler capitalism has shaped Māori economies and to explore the role of Māori economies in restoring rangatiratanga. I develop a theoretical framework by drawing on Marxist scholarship, alongside contemporary literature on Māori economies, to help interpret the interview data from my research. A thematic analysis of the interviews suggests that the assertion or restoration of rangatiratanga is a central concern to participants in Māori economies. Far from being straightforward, however, rangatiratanga must be negotiated with the state and in the capitalist market, the very forces that have historically constrained it. I refer to this as the rangatiratanga paradox. Building the rangatiratanga sphere may be possible within settler capitalism, but it will always have to contend for power with the state and owners of capital.

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# Introduction: The rangatiratanga paradox

Witnessing the assertion of rangatiratanga in the face of colonial power is a powerful and moving experience. Last year Rawiri Waititi, co-leader of Te Pāti Māori, was ejected from Parliament after performing a haka in response to being told to sit down by the Speaker of the House. He had been addressing the issue of racism in Parliament, having just said, "if we find this attitude acceptable in this House, the constant barrage of insults to tangata whenua, then I find this House in disrepute" (McClure 2021, 0:25). It was at this point that he was told to "resume his seat" (McClure 2021, 0:45). Instead, he performed a haka. On being ejected from the House, in a moving act of Māori solidarity, he was joined not only by his co-leader Debbie Ngarewa-Packer but also by Green Party MP Teanau Tuiono. Moments like these are often unplanned, and when they happen, it is as if the tūpuna themselves are speaking. Watching the video footage of this rangatiratanga moment, I felt as though 280 years of colonial violence were being denounced.<sup>1</sup>

In material terms, of course, this action alone has done very little to change the situation for Māori under settler capitalism. However, it is a poignant example of what I refer to in this thesis as the 'rangatiratanga paradox'. Anthropologists Nancy Postero and Nicole Fabricant point out that "indigenous actors must negotiate their self-determination with the states whose essential characteristic is exerting territorial sovereignty" (2019, 95). Māori are frequently confronted by sites of power in which rangatiratanga has to be negotiated. In the example above, the rangatiratanga paradox refers to a situation where Te Pāti Māori had to negotiate rangatiratanga with the state. On the one hand, the primary goal of Te Pāti Māori in Parliament is to enhance the wellbeing of Māori constituents (Te Pāti Māori n.d.). The ability of rangatira to ensure the wellbeing of their people is a core aspect of rangatiratanga, as will be discussed below. On the other hand, every MP in Parliament is required to take an oath or make an affirmation of allegiance to the Crown (New Zealand Parliament 2017). Acknowledging the Queen as Sovereign of Aotearoa New Zealand, is the ultimate contradiction of rangatiratanga. However, working inside Parliament has long been an effective strategy for rangatira, and many advances for Māori wellbeing have been gained in that space. As part of negotiating these sites of power, rangatira and other leaders have to be strategic about when, where, and how they assert rangatiratanga. In this instance, Te Pāti Māori chose to draw attention to the

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<sup>1</sup> I highly recommend watching the video, not least of all to see Debbie Ngarewa-Packer's iconic pūkana. It can be found [here](#) or by typing "Māori party co-leader ejected from New Zealand parliament after performing haka" into the YouTube or Google search engines.

absurdity of being denied the opportunity to denounce racism against Māori. In asserting the right to have their voices heard, they were consequently removed (albeit temporarily) from their position of power.

At the heart of the rangatiratanga paradox lies the fact that rangatira did not cede sovereignty when they signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This is a fact that Māori have asserted since 1840 and one that has been confirmed by the government's own commission of inquiry, the Waitangi Tribunal (WAI 1040 2014). And yet, Māori participation in government requires this fact to be overlooked. Māori have long asserted rangatiratanga by challenging or seeking to change New Zealand's constitution. Matike Mai Aotearoa (the independent working group on constitutional transformation) spearheads the latest effort and has facilitated more than 252 hui throughout the country to discuss what might be done. A report based on the kōrero and ideas from these hui outlines various “indicative constitutional models” that could inform a more Te Tiriti-centric governance system (Matike Mai Aotearoa 2016, 9). It proposes that governance of this country could be determined by three “spheres of influence”: the “‘rangatiratanga sphere’, where Māori make decisions for Māori and the ‘kāwanatanga sphere’ where the Crown will make decisions for its people”, and a “relational sphere” which would allow both ‘Treaty partners to work together as equals (Matike Mai Aotearoa 2016, 9).

The emancipatory possibilities of a rangatiratanga sphere are numerous and have captured the imagination of many, including myself (Bargh and Tapsell 2021; Godfery 2017; Barber 2019; Webb 2019). While I cannot speak to any discussions that may be taking place within the Matike Mai working group itself, to the best of my knowledge, relatively little attention is paid in academic literature to the economic implications of constitutional transformation. My particular interest lies in the role that settler capitalism has played and continues to play in constraining rangatiratanga. In posing (and answering) the question ‘can the rangatiratanga sphere be built within settler capitalism?’ this thesis aims both to draw attention to how settler capitalism has shaped Māori economies and to explore the role of Māori economies in building the rangatiratanga sphere.

### *Language and terminology*

I have chosen not to provide English translations of kupu Māori in this thesis. Te reo Māori is the first language of this country, and I believe it falls to the responsibility of the reader to look up words they are unfamiliar with. As someone with very little knowledge of te reo Māori, I have found the opportunity to learn new kupu to be an empowering experience. I will, however, explain the key terms I use in this thesis.



### *Tino rangatiratanga and rangatiratanga*

My understanding of tino rangatiratanga comes from the work of Margaret Mutu (Ngāti Kahu, Te Rarawa, Ngāti Whātua) and Moana Jackson<sup>2</sup> (Ngāti Kahungunu, Rongomaiwahine, Ngāti Porou), who are, respectively, the chairperson and convener of the Matike Mai working group. According to Mutu (2021), rangatiratanga refers to "the exercise of mana", with mana meaning "ultimate power and authority derived from the gods"; tino rangatiratanga means the "exercise of absolute mana" (Mutu 2021, 269). Mutu explains that rangatiratanga includes "exercising paramount power and authority in respect of the people and their resources, so they can prosper and enjoy social, economic and spiritual wellbeing". Speaking about what rangatiratanga meant to Māori pre-colonisation and about the illegitimacy of Crown Sovereignty over Māori, Jackson (2020, 140, 144) writes:

The political power of mana or tino rangatiratanga became the art of recognising the interdependence of relationships while preserving the independence of each iwi and hapū polity. [...] To contemplate forfeiting that independence would have been legally impossible, politically untenable and culturally incomprehensible.

Based on the explanations of Mutu and Jackson, I draw out two aspects of rangatiratanga that are important in this thesis. First, tino rangatiratanga is a concept similar to sovereignty and is, therefore, directly opposed to the so-called sovereignty of the Crown. Second, rangatiratanga refers to the capacity, or ability, of rangatira to ensure the wellbeing of their people and whenua. I tend to use the term 'rangatiratanga' for both aspects; however, if I am referring specifically to the sovereignty aspect, I will use the term 'tino rangatiratanga'.

### *Māori economies*

I draw on the diverse economies framework to inform my understanding of economies. Diverse economies literature argues that economic activities (including, but not limited to, gardening, informal loans, community financing, barter, capitalist exchange, cooperatives, theft etc.) occur in many diverse economies rather than a single homogenous economy (Gibson-Graham 1996; 2006). This will be explored further in the first chapter. For the most part, I use the plural 'economies' and only use the singular 'economy' when referring to normative or classical definitions of the economy. However, it is sometimes necessary to use the terms together (economy/economies), for instance, when discussing a literature base that includes both the normative and the diverse economies definitions.

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<sup>2</sup> Sadly, Moana Jackson passed away during the time I have been writing this thesis. His contributions to the constitutional transformation movement (as well as many other kaupapa) have been monumental and will continue to inspire generations to come. Kua hinga he tōtara i te wao nui a Tane.

### *Settler capitalism*

Settler capitalism refers to the specific way(s) that capitalism has taken root in settler colonies. Its key features—distinguishing it from capitalism elsewhere—include the mass migration of a white settler population and the subjugation of an Indigenous population (Beilharz and Cox 2007). Glen Coulthard (2014) emphasises that the dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their lands and modes of life is not merely a feature of settler capitalism. Instead, he argues that the very success of settler capitalism is predicated on Indigenous dispossession and is, therefore, an ongoing requirement for capitalism in the settler-colonial context.

### *Positionality*

Many things shape both my interest in this topic and the way I relate to it. For the most part, my interest has been shaped through my academic exploration of the issues of power, justice and injustice, colonisation and decolonisation, the role of the state in shaping these issues and the role of ordinary people in responding to them. Broadly speaking, my academic interests have been influenced by Marxism, political-economic theory, and decolonisation literature. I have also been influenced by involvement in activism and have been particularly inspired by people leading the tino rangatiratanga movement in various capacities. I relate to this topic as a woman of Ngāpuhi and Pākehā descent. Although somewhat uneasy in my identity at times, writing on this topic is one way I can connect to and honour my tūpuna.

### *Thesis Outline*

In this thesis, I argue that the assertion of rangatiratanga must challenge both the power of the state and capitalism. Thus, constitutional transformation and building a rangatiratanga sphere must be accompanied by the radical economic transformation of capitalism. In chapter one, I discuss various Marxist and political-economic approaches to addressing the constraints of settler capitalism on rangatiratanga. In the first section of chapter one, I emphasise the importance of Glen Coulthard's (2014) concept of grounded normativity as an approach to Indigenous research that centres on Indigenous knowledge and experience. Noting the relative scarcity of Māori Marxist research—with the notable exceptions of Simon Barber (2019; 2020) and Evan Te Ahu Poata-Smith (1996; 1997; 2013)—I employ the approach of grounded normativity in my use of international scholars. In the second section, I outline two different theories of economic transformation. I draw on the diverse economies framework of political economists Julia Graham and Katherine Gibson (1996; 2006) and the Marxist sociologist Erik Olin Wright's (2010) concepts of power and hybrid economy to explain my theoretical approach to defining the economy and theorising economic transformation. Finally, I present 'the Aotearoa Socialist Compass', a conceptual tool for navigating pathways to economic transformation that I developed (Webb 2019) based on Wright's (2010) socialist compass.

In the second chapter, I turn my attention to Māori economies, past, present, and emerging. In the first section of chapter two, I present a historical overview of settler capitalism in this country, drawing attention to how it has shaped Māori economies over time. Employing an Indigenous Marxist lens, I pay particular attention to the combined power of the state and capital and how they are enforced through the process of primitive accumulation, the doctrine of discovery, and the politics of recognition. In the second section, I explore the literature on the contemporary Māori economy/economies, focusing on two broad topics: the critique of settler capitalism in shaping the contemporary Māori economy/economies, and the exploration of the transformative potential of the current and emerging Māori economies.

I present my original research in the third chapter with a thematic analysis of the interviews I conducted during this project. Drawing on Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke's (2013) guide to thematic analysis, I present a discussion of the themes I constructed from the interview data. There are two overarching themes that 'umbrella' a further seven themes. The theme 'mana whenua is paramount' overarches a cluster of themes relating to the rangatiratanga and the identity of smaller mana whenua groups (such as hapū, marae, and whānau). The themes convey that the rangatiratanga of smaller mana whenua groups has to be protected or asserted in contexts where iwi have become economically and politically dominant and where pan-tribal identities have replaced whakapapa connections. 'The rangatiratanga paradox' overarches a cluster of themes that convey the various ways participants assert rangatiratanga through their mahi and the paradox of having to negotiate rangatiratanga with the state and in the capitalist market. At the end of the chapter, I briefly touch on a salient feature of the data relating to the importance of returning land to Māori. Salient features are not themes but may still convey important information to help answer the research question.

In the fourth and final chapter, I draw together the theories and ideas outlined in chapter one, the historical analysis and contemporary literature from chapter two, and the key findings from chapter three to answer the thesis question: can the rangatiratanga sphere be built within settler capitalism? I argue that it is possible—to an extent—provided that we are guided by theories and strategies that challenge the power of settler capitalism and pursue multiple economic pathways. Regarding the first aspect of tino rangatiratanga, which relates to sovereignty, a rangatiratanga sphere can be built within capitalism because it need only challenge the sovereignty of the Crown. However, concerning the second aspect, a rangatiratanga sphere that ensures the wellbeing of Māori must also challenge the power of capitalism. I conclude, therefore, that while the political and economic project of building the rangatiratanga sphere can begin within settler capitalism, ultimately, it will require both constitutional transformation and radical economic transformation.

### *A note on original research*

There are two areas in this thesis that draw on my own research. The first is in chapter one, where I present the Aotearoa Socialist Compass, and the second is in chapter three, where I present the thematic analysis. This research is exploratory and has included naming certain concepts and models, for example, the 'rangatiratanga paradox', the 'Aotearoa Socialist Compass', and 'mana whenua consciousness' (a thematic thread in the 'mana whenua is paramount' cluster in chapter three, which relates to the Marxist idea of class consciousness). These are my tentative, anglophone attempts to name concepts that I think are important for a Marxist-influenced approach to Māori economies. While they may not be used beyond this thesis, I want to emphasise that there are likely more appropriate ways to name these concepts that could be learned through consulting people with more knowledge of tikanga.

With these qualifications in mind, and having outlined the thesis as a whole, I turn now to an exploration of an Indigenous Marxist approach to the rangatiratanga movement as a first step towards answering the question: can the rangatiratanga sphere be built within settler capitalism?

# Chapter One: Place-based Marxism and Indigenous self-determination

There is an uneasy relationship between Marxism and Indigenous self-determination movements. Historically, there has been a tendency within some Marxist traditions in settler-colonial contexts to prioritise class politics over the self-determination struggles of the Indigenous peoples on whose land they stand. However, the excellent scholarship of Indigenous Marxists has much to offer the politics of self-determination. This chapter is divided into two sections. I begin the first section by grounding myself in Indigenous approaches to Marxism before outlining some of the key dynamics of settler capitalism. In the second section, I explore theories of economic transformation. I begin with a brief overview of the diverse economies approach to economic transformation and then move to a more detailed overview of Erik Olin Wright's concepts of hybrid economy and sites of power. Finally, I introduce the Aotearoa Socialist Compass, a conceptual tool I have developed in previous work that will be useful to the project of building the rangatiratanga sphere.

## Grounded normativity

Exploring a Marxist approach to the rangatiratanga sphere may at first appear to be at odds with the theoretical or political position of some in the Matike Mai movement. For example, in an interview, Moana Jackson (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Porou) had this to say of Marx:

Sometimes some of the young people involved in such groups [Māori-led prison abolitionist groups] bring a Marxist analysis to prisons and so on which I think can be problematic for some of the reasons I think I mentioned before [seeing colonisation solely as a capitalist classist thing] —and also I guess because Marx is just another dead white man who in many ways had the same racist views about Indigenous peoples as did say, John Locke. (Jackson, Taylor, and Thomas 2017).

The statement quoted above may have been an off-hand comment to express the frustration Māori feel when pre-packaged Western ideologies are imposed on the lived realities of whānau and Māori communities. Indeed, Jackson goes on to express his agreement with the Marxist aphorism “From each according to their ability, to each according to their needs” (Jackson, Taylor, and Thomas 2017) later in the interview. However, his initial comment highlights a real tension within and between the

Marxist and decolonisation movements. This sentiment is reflected more broadly in a general lack of Māori engagement with Marxism.<sup>3</sup>

It is not just Māori who have reservations about using Marxism as an approach to Indigenous struggle. Indeed, there are many Indigenous voices who, contending with the Eurocentrism of the Marxist tradition, have argued that it is limiting, irrelevant, or even counter-productive to Indigenous emancipatory movements. For example, in the edited book *Marxism and Native Americans*, Indigenous scholars outline several criticisms relating to the use of Marxism in colonial contexts. The main criticisms tend to focus on Marx's alleged historical determinism (Means, 1983), his apparent support of colonisation, the failure of Marxists to address Indigenous political issues such as treaty rights, sovereignty, and self-determination (Churchill, 1983), and an unwillingness to confront the issues arising from industrialisation, such as its impact on Indigenous spirituality and relationship with the land (Means 1983; LaDuke 1983).

Some Indigenous scholars choose to engage with Marx but caution against the colonial way Marxism has sometimes been applied in different parts of the world. For example, Kāi Tahu scholar Simon Barber (2019) says, “There is a certain violence of abstraction in the perspective that demands the spread of a homogenous Marxist logic around the globe, one that reflects the same violence inherent in the expansion of capitalism.” While Barber ultimately supports the use of Marxism in Indigenous contexts, here he problematises the idea that Marxist logic, developed largely in relation to the European political economy, can be uncritically applied in the same way across the globe in vastly different contexts. The difference between Barber’s caution against the violence of abstraction and Jackson’s casual dismissal of Marx, or the critiques outlined in *Marx and Native Americans*, is that instead of his critique leading to a rejection of Marx, Barber critically engages the full breadth of his writings in a fruitful dialogue with contemporary Indigenous struggle.<sup>4</sup>

Weighing in on the issues surrounding Marxism and Indigenous struggles, Glen Coulthard (Yellowknives Dene), political scientist and author of *Red Skins, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, writes:

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<sup>3</sup> Notable exceptions in academia include Simon Barber (cited in the main text), Emilie Rākete, a Doctorial Candidate whose published work examines a historical materialist approach to prisons, and Evan Te Ahu Poata-Smith, whose PhD thesis offers a Marxist analysis of the roots of Māori oppression and suggests that Māori political resistance in the last third of the 20th century was shaped by the processes of capitalist development (Poata-Smith 2002). In another work, Poata-Smith (1996) critiques the neoliberal capitalist bent of Māori economic organisation (these will be explored in chapter two). In the activist sphere, groups such as People Against Prisons Aotearoa (2015) and Organise Aotearoa (n.d.), while not explicitly Marxist organisations, state publicly that they are anti-capitalist (or socialist in the case of OA).

<sup>4</sup> Barber draws particularly on *Marx at the Margins: On Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Non-Western Societies* by Kevin B. Anderson (2016), which explores the often-overlooked writings in which Marx develops his thinking in relation to colonisation and Indigenous struggle.

At its worst, this hostility has led to the premature rejection of Marx and Marxism by some Indigenous studies scholars on the one side, and to the belligerent, often ignorant, and sometimes racist dismissal of Indigenous peoples' contributions to radical thought and politics by Marxists on the other. [...] To my mind, then, for Indigenous peoples to reject or ignore the insights of Marx would be a mistake, especially if this amounts to a refusal on our part to critically engage his important critique of capitalist exploitation and his extensive writings on the entangled relationship between capitalism and colonialism. (Coulthard 2014, 8)

Here Coulthard, like Barber, endorses Marx while problematising the tendency of some Marxists to marginalise Indigenous knowledge. While it is unnecessary to reject Marx simply because he is another 'dead white man,' the wariness expressed by Jackson and others is not misplaced and should be taken as a reminder of the impact of colonisation on Indigenous knowledge.

Eurocentric ideologies applied in Indigenous contexts (of which Marxism is just one example) can, at times, feel unsafe because Western knowledge systems have been used to oppress, marginalise, and discredit Indigenous knowledge systems, causing actual harm. As Barber points out, the violence of abstraction in the ideological space can be just as harmful as material modes of colonisation. Writing about the colonisation of knowledge in her seminal text *Decolonising Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Porou) says, "Knowledge and culture were as much a part of imperialism as raw materials and military strength" (Smith 2012, 61). Smith explains that pre-colonial Indigenous life—which was politically, socially, and economically sophisticated—was seen as primitive, backward, and even non-human by Imperialists and European settlers. Enlightenment thinking has a disdain for societies structured through a close relationship with the land and other non-human beings (Coulthard 2014; Smith 2012). Alongside the physical violence of war, genocide, slavery, rape, and imprisonment, the institutional violence of replacing one knowledge system with another has caused lasting and ongoing harm to Indigenous peoples worldwide.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, mātauranga Māori mediates Māori engagement with the world. However, the suppression of mātauranga Māori has been a constant and enduring feature of colonisation and has led to disastrous consequences. Several current examples indicate that this is an ongoing issue. Recently, the failure of the government to consult Māori health practitioners and community leaders in the rollout of covid vaccines and other covid-related health measures has meant that our country's response has lacked the crucial and unique knowledge held by these rangatira. This, in turn, has meant that the pandemic has disproportionately negatively affected Māori in terms of health and economic impacts (Barber et al. 2020). Other examples include the dismissal of mātauranga Māori in water safety measures (McConnell 2021). Evidence suggests that Indigenous peoples, whose mātauranga has invaluable contributions to mitigate climate change, have been excluded from

positions of influence (RNZ 2022). Multiply this phenomenon across almost every aspect of Indigenous life, and the harm caused by the colonisation of knowledge is astounding.

While Marxism is ultimately an emancipatory tradition, it is understandable that Indigenous peoples are wary of its history of dismissing, even erasing, Indigenous understandings of justice and emancipation. However, when we (Indigenous researchers) start with the certainty that mātauranga Māori (and other Indigenous knowledge systems) are legitimate, useful, and transformative, we can critically engage with non-Indigenous, even Eurocentric, perspectives without reproducing colonial power relations. In other words, we can engage Marx's critiques of capitalism with a sense of safety that comes from being grounded in our unique context. Coulthard has a helpful way of expressing this grounded approach to decolonisation:

I call this place-based foundation of Indigenous decolonial thought and practice *grounded normativity*, by which I mean the modalities of Indigenous land-connected practices and longstanding experiential knowledge that inform and structure our ethical engagements with the world and our relationships with human and non-human others over time. (Coulthard 2014, 13)

Coulthard's grounded normativity is the perfect response to the violence of abstraction that some Marxists are guilty of and can be used as a methodological approach to Indigenous Marxism. Working from a position of place-based, grounded normativity, Coulthard recontextualises Marx's thinking by shifting the analytical lens "from an emphasis on the *capital relation* to the *colonial relation*" (Coulthard 2014, 10). He argues that Marx was only interested in colonialism insofar as it demonstrated the colonial nature of capitalism, adding that Marx was more interested in the expropriation of the worker's labour time rather than Indigenous dispossession from land. Coulthard, on the other hand, centres his critique of capitalism on the colonial dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their land and modes of life. He makes several other important adaptations to Marx's theory of primitive accumulation, which I will address in the next section.

Barber has a somewhat more generous view of Marx's writings, insisting that his engagement with the realities of Indigenous peoples toward the end of his life indicates that "Marx himself saw the need for his theory to undergo transformation through engagement with modes of life beyond those of Europe and conceptual frameworks beyond those of European construction" (Barber 2019, 45). In a similar way to Coulthard, Barber takes on the task of transforming Marx's thinking. Grounding himself in mātauranga Māori, he engages Marx's later writings (namely the *Grundrisse* notebooks and volume one of *Capital*) in the construction of a 'Māori Mārx'. Barber's Māori Mārx—which he argues "has a vital contribution to make towards this life-and-death struggle [the struggle of people and the



planet against the forces of capitalism]”—is not a Marxist perspective of te ao Māori, but a *Māori reading of Marx*. Here, as with Coulthard, the analytical lens is flipped, and capitalism is critiqued not from the perspective of the placeless worker but from Indigenous peoples grounded in a particular place and even from the perspective of Papatūānuku herself.<sup>5</sup>

Coulthard and Barber engage with Marx in a nuanced way appropriate to the Indigenous struggle against settler capitalism. Their work convincingly highlights the merits of Marx's core ideas while acknowledging Indigenous critiques of his Eurocentrism. More importantly, they *transform* Marx's thinking and, in doing so, offer a unique and grounded place from which to critique the dynamics of settler capitalism. This grounded approach to Marxism—as will be demonstrated throughout this thesis—fills a crucial gap in Māori politics and economic strategy and has much to offer the emancipatory movement towards the realisation of tino rangatiratanga and the building of the rangatiratanga sphere.

### *The dynamics of settler-capitalism*

To gain an appreciation of how settler capitalism has shaped Māori economies, it is important not just to examine when and how capitalism arrived in this country but also to understand the basis of the capitalist mode of production itself. I begin, therefore, with a basic explanation of Marx's theory of primitive accumulation. I lead with Marx, not because his contributions are of more importance to this discussion than Indigenous accounts of colonisation, but to demonstrate how the logic of capitalist accumulation has informed and continues to inform the logic of colonisation. Capitalism not only made colonisation necessary, but in many instances, it made it possible. However, as Coulthard argues convincingly, a Marxist understanding of colonisation is not enough to explain the atrocities experienced by Indigenous peoples or the continued dominance of the settler-state over Indigenous peoples and their territories. I turn, therefore, to a discussion of the doctrine of discovery—a set of legal principles that justified European colonisation—and settler-colonial theory to demonstrate the reinforcing relationship between capitalists and the settler-colonial state. I end this section with an outline of Coulthard's analysis of the politics of recognition. His analysis in *Red Skin, White Masks* is instrumental to a Marxist critique of today's capitalist trajectory of Māori economies.

### *Primitive accumulation*

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<sup>5</sup> Perhaps one of Barber's most interesting ideas in his construction of a Māori Marx is his conception of Papatūānuku as proletarian. I do not have the space to go into the details here, but it extends Coulthard's work in a creative way.

Marx's theory of primitive accumulation, outlined in the first volume of *Capital*, exposes the violence inherent in the origin of capitalism. He directly challenges the myth—perpetuated by economists such as Adam Smith and maintained to this day by classical economics—that accumulated wealth is the result of the capitalist's own hard work, the willingness to take calculated risks, and the ability to be guided by the precepts of economic rationality. Marx argues against this, claiming instead that primitive accumulation, the very basis of capitalist wealth, can only be achieved through “conquest, enslavement, robbery, and murder” (Marx 1976, 874). Broadly speaking, primitive accumulation involves the dual processes of enclosure and proletarianisation. Enclosure refers to the process in which land is subsumed into the capitalist mode of production by fencing off or ‘enclosing’ commonly used land for private use and ownership. Proletarianisation is the process in which people are subsumed into the capitalist relation of production as landless workers who have no choice but to sell their labour to capitalists.

Marx's observations about enclosure were primarily based on his analysis of 16<sup>th</sup>- 18<sup>th</sup> century England, a period in which small-scale agrarian production on common land was forced to give way to larger privately owned sheep pastures. While this was seen as a more efficient use of land, at least by those who accumulated wealth from it, Marx points out that the monarchical state did not initially endorse the practice:

The process was carried on by means of individual acts of violence against which legislation, for a hundred and fifty years, fought in vain. The advance made by the 18<sup>th</sup> century shows itself in this, that the law itself becomes now the instrument of the theft of the people's land, although the large farmers make use of their little independent methods as well. (Marx 1976, 885)

Elaborating on this, Marxist political theorist and historian Ellen Meiksins Wood (2002) points out that the “new kind of enclosure movement” of the 18<sup>th</sup> century owed its success to the newfound influence the landed class had in shaping the law. The process of enclosure depends, for a large part, on the endorsement and protection of the state. While this is a feature of capitalism anywhere, the way this dynamic has been applied in settler-colonial contexts has had particular implications for Indigenous peoples whose connection to the land is intertwined with identity. Not only does capitalism depend on the state to support the enclosure of land and enforce private property laws, but it is the expansion of capitalism that first made the existence of a colonial settler state necessary, and indeed possible.

The second part of primitive accumulation, proletarianisation, is the process in which people are drawn into the capitalist relations of production; or, as Marx puts it: “when great masses of men are suddenly and forcibly torn from their means of subsistence, and hurled onto the labour-market as free, unprotected and rightless proletarians” (1976, 876). Classically, proletarianisation is a process in

which the landless class (proletariat) become dependent on the landed class (capitalists) for survival. Marx develops this idea by, once again, analysing the history of the English working class. He observed that where once they worked to produce for themselves as small-scale agrarian farmers, now they must work for the capitalist class in return for a wage. In *Capital*, Marx demonstrates that under capitalism, economic growth demands that labour be remunerated at a rate less than its value, leaving a surplus value in capitalist hands. This serves two purposes: first, workers remain poor and dependent on the capitalist labour market; second, the surplus value can be converted into capital (for example, by buying more land, labour, raw materials etc.), thus perpetuating capitalist accumulation. In exposing the violence and injustice of capitalism, Marx challenges the classical economist's assumption that capitalist wealth is the natural result of market competition. Whereas classical economists perpetuate the myth that the 'invisible hand of the market determines the distribution of wealth, Marx's historical materialism emphasises that capitalist wealth can be traced back to violent primitive accumulation.

There are several ways in which Indigenous Marxists have extended Marx's theory of primitive accumulation. Coulthard points out that for Marx, primitive accumulation explained only the initial stages of capitalism, and he did not see it as an ongoing feature. He goes on to argue, as others have done, that the ever-expanding frontiers of capitalism continuously subsume collectively owned land, natural resources, and people into the capitalist mode and relations of production (Coulthard 2014; Federici, 2012; Harvey 2004). For as long as Indigenous peoples hold land in common and participate in non-capitalist economic activities, primitive accumulation will constantly threaten Indigenous modes of life. Even if the period of classical primitive accumulation has passed, Indigenous peoples remain under constant pressure to develop, sell, or privatise what little land remains to them. Furthermore, ongoing processes of proletarianisation ensure that Indigenous people remain dependent on the settler state and the capitalist market for survival. Capitalism did not spread throughout the globe by merit of its efficiency. Rather, it was forced upon Indigenous peoples, predicated on the theft of their land and nullifying their sovereignty as self-determining peoples. This required an organised and systemic assault on Indigenous peoples by European nations and was justified through a shared legal system now referred to as the doctrine of discovery.

### *The doctrine of discovery*

The doctrine of discovery refers to the set of legal principles that European countries (including England) used to justify the colonisation of Indigenous lands and bodies. In *Discovering Indigenous Lands: The Doctrine of Discovery in the English Colonies*, legal scholars—Robert Miller, Jacinta Ruru (Raukawa, Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāti Maniapoto), Larissa Behrendt, and Tracey Lindberg—unpack these

legal principles and examine their continued influence in England's former colonies. In the first chapter, Miller (2010) explains the history of the doctrine of discovery, identifies its core legal principles, and explains the United States Supreme Court case that set the precedent that enabled other former colonies of England (including Aotearoa New Zealand) to enshrine the doctrine of discovery in law. In chapters eight and nine, Ruru (2010) details how the doctrine of discovery has been applied here and how it continues to determine Crown-Māori relations. I examine Ruru's contributions in the next chapter.

Miller traces the origin of the doctrine of discovery as far as the fifth century AD when the Roman Catholic Church began establishing the idea of a global papal jurisdiction. Various papal bulls were issued, allowing Europeans to conquer non-Christian nations on the basis that they were spreading the gospel. They also gave them the right to sovereignty based on discovery; hence they are now known as the doctrine of discovery. Miller explains that the doctrine of discovery is now recognised as the first system of international law. When England left the Roman Catholic Church, Queen Elizabeth the First was concerned that the Pope, and other Catholic nations, would no longer recognise her sovereignty, and so she asserted that discovery was not enough to claim sovereignty; instead, the land must also be occupied by the conquering peoples. Two things make this history, seemingly so far removed from Aotearoa New Zealand, relevant to the present discussion. First, Captain Cook practised rituals of discovery in the Pacific, showing that the doctrine of discovery greatly influenced the culture of colonisation at this time. Second, the Supreme Court case that enshrined the principles of the doctrine of discovery in United States law had been used as a legal precedent in Aotearoa New Zealand, to dispossess Māori of their land (Ruru 2010).

Patrick Wolfe, an Australian colonial studies scholar, argues that the doctrine of discovery forms the legal basis for the reinforcing relationship between the settler-state and capitalists. He explains that while the alleged discovery of lands ensured dominion over the land, sovereignty could not be claimed until it had been "consummated by possession" (Wolfe 2006, 393). He goes on to explain that while capitalists may have had economic motives for colonial expansion, politically, colonisation was seen as a solution to the widespread poverty experienced by the British working class. Given that it was primitive accumulation which created this poverty in the first place, a misplaced sense of entitlement to land, and the sense of European superiority influenced by the doctrine of discovery, meant that the immigrant working class played a vital role in enclosing and 'consummating' Indigenous lands. Commenting on the "lawless rabble" who plundered Cherokee lands in the 1830s, Wolfe elaborates on this concept:

A global dimension to the frenzy for native land is reflected in the fact that, as economic immigrants, the rabble were generally drawn from the ranks of Europe's landless. [...] Rather

than something separate from or running counter to the colonial state, the murderous activities of the frontier rabble constitute its principal means of expansion. (Wolfe, 2006, 392)

Wolfe also notes that while the pillaging activities of this so-called rabble were technically considered outside the law of the conquering European state, they were deemed “inevitable” and were later justified.

### *The politics of recognition*

In *Red Skin, White Masks*, Glen Coulthard addresses a current mode of settler-capitalist reproduction—practised in liberal settler-states such as Canada and Aotearoa New Zealand—known as the politics of recognition. He describes the politics of recognition as a “range of recognition-based models of liberal pluralism that seek to ‘reconcile’ Indigenous assertions of nationhood with settler-state sovereignty” (2014, 3). He explains, “Although these models tend to vary in both theory and practice, most call for the delegation of land, capital, and political power from the state to Indigenous communities through a combination of land claim settlements, economic development initiatives, and self-government agreements.” The politics of recognition also include promoting and celebrating Indigenous cultural identity (for example, the revival of the language, teaching Indigenous history, celebrating Indigenous holidays etc.). Missing from these politics, he argues, is the acknowledgement that the very existence of the settler-capitalist state is predicated on the suppression of Indigenous sovereignty and land-based collective economies. Thus, any concessions made in the name of recognition come with an implicit or sometimes overt, assertion of settler-state sovereignty. Furthermore, Coulthard points out that while cultural difference is recognised and celebrated, material inequalities between Indigenous peoples and settlers are attributed to the failings of the individual; the role of the settler-capitalist state in creating and maintaining inequality remains unaddressed. Not only are the violent origins of settler-capitalism hidden, but the capitalist development of Indigenous land is also explicitly encouraged. Progressive settler-colonial states, such as Canada and Aotearoa New Zealand, engage in the politics of recognition to maintain and legitimise their power while appearing to support Indigenous peoples.

The core argument progressed in *Red Skin, White Masks* is that the politics of recognition have failed to achieve the self-determination goals of the Indigenous peoples of Canada. Coulthard argues that the politics of recognition appease Indigenous demands to have their sovereignty recognised without posing a serious threat to settler-state sovereignty or capitalism. He notes that this argument is unlikely to be popular among many Indigenous scholars and leaders because it suggests that “much of our efforts over the last four decades to attain settler-state recognition of our rights to land and self-government have, in fact, encouraged the opposite—the continued dispossession of our

homelands and the ongoing usurpation of our self-determining authority" (Coulthard 2014, 24). Similar arguments (discussed in the next chapter) have been made in Aotearoa New Zealand, about how the Treaty settlement process has required iwi to pursue neoliberal economic pathways. Rangatira and other economic and political leaders have been criticised for seeming to accept these processes and their enthusiasm for capitalist expansion.

While I acknowledge that the dynamics of settler-capitalism outlined above—primitive accumulation, the doctrine of discovery, and the politics of recognition—have severely constrained rangatiratanga, I think the dismissal of the efforts of rangatira and economic leaders who engage in the politics of recognition is premature. Coulthard (2014, 24) speaks of the "conciliatory" nature of the politics of recognition. While conciliation or appeasement is certainly the state's intention, it does not follow that Indigenous leaders must accept the refreshed assertions of state sovereignty that so often accompany the settlement of land claims or the devolution of governance. In their research with the Guaraní' community of Charagua, Bolivia, anthropologists Nancy Postero and Nicole Fabricant explore the ways Indigenous peoples negotiate self-determination with the state. They explain that Guaraní' peoples' articulate:

a vision of indigenous self-determination based in *nandereku*, or 'our way of being in the world. Rather than a liberal notion of territorial administration, this understanding of autonomy implies reciprocal relations between people and the land. We show how the Guaraní' must negotiate the 'spaces in between' competing notions of state and local sovereignty to approach their vision of self-determination. We argue that their efforts to assert indigenous autonomy can act as a form of emancipatory 'politics,' but that they are entangled with the 'policing' of the state, requiring skillful negotiations. Thus, their alternative notions of sovereignty must, at times, be smuggled in under the cover of other seemingly shared agendas such as economic development or liberalism. (Postero and Fabricant 2019, 95).

As opposed to conciliation, the language of skilful negotiation implies a more assertive, or at least less complacent, role for Indigenous peoples seeking self-determination. I will examine the nuances of 'negotiation' versus 'recognition' in more detail in chapter four.

Once the colonial nature of capitalism is laid bare, it becomes clear that the realisation of a rangatiratanga sphere depends, to a certain extent, on anti-capitalist economic transformation. As Coulthard (2014, 173) passionately asserts, "For Indigenous nations to live, capitalism must die. And for capitalism to die, we must actively participate in the construction of Indigenous alternatives to it." While I agree that an unrestrained continuation of the capitalist mode of production is life-threatening (particularly to Indigenous modes of life), I

am not convinced that seeking the end of capitalism is a realistic goal at this time. The ‘capitalism must die’ rhetoric implies a linear movement from capitalism to something else and suggests that we *cannot* live as Indigenous peoples until we have reached the goal of ending capitalism. I suggest that the starting point for economic transformation is the recognition that capitalism is not, and never has been, the only economic logic structuring life for Māori following colonisation. Economic activity outside of capitalism has been crucial to Māori survival and must not be ignored in our efforts to overthrow capitalism.

## Putting capitalism in its place

Settler capitalism is tightly woven into the life and death struggle of Indigenous peoples. The dynamics outlined above have created a world in which Indigenous survival depends on the very sites of power that constrain rangatiratanga. It is not the focus of this thesis to discuss constitutional transformation or the legal aspects of the rangatiratanga sphere. Instead, I turn my attention to the role of Māori economies in restoring rangatiratanga. This requires a deeper analysis of the way economies are defined and how they are shaped by the various sites of power in this country. Special attention needs to be paid to the role of capitalism in constraining Indigenous power.

### *Diverse economies*

Political economists of all stripes have challenged classical economic definitions of the economy, which present it as a singular, homogenous, *capitalist* entity that cannot easily be influenced by ordinary people. When the economy is written about or articulated by mainstream economists, bankers, and politicians, it can sometimes be portrayed as something separate from culture and domestic life, separate even from politics. In short, normative definitions of the economy present it as a ‘thing’ rather than a system of interconnected political and social relationships. Marxists and other political economists have made convincing arguments against the portrayal of capitalism as universal, natural, and inevitable, highlighting instead its cultural, social, and political specificity (Marx 1976; Polyani 1944; Wood 2002).<sup>6</sup> Despite this, there remains a tendency within some Marxist traditions that focus on bringing an end to capitalism while ignoring or minimising the presence of non-capitalist economies. All too often, in the effort to expose the violent origins of capitalist wealth or the violence of the state in maintaining capitalist wealth, many Marxists tend to overlook the existing diversity of non-capitalist economies and transformative potential. There are two issues at stake here. The first is

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<sup>6</sup> As noted earlier, there was a time when Marx saw capitalism as an inevitable stage in economic development but never as the only option.

the discursive power attached to the classical framing of the economy as a singular, homogenous, uninfluenceable ‘thing’ detached from the political and cultural milieu; the second is the disproportionate attention given by Marxists to ‘ending’ capitalism at the expense of recognising diverse economies.

Feminist political economists and geographers Katherine Gibson and Julie Graham (J.K. Gibson-Graham) address these issues in their books *The end of Capitalism (As We Knew It)* and *A Post-Capitalist Politics*. Gibson-Graham, and the growing field of diverse economies literature, which they have inspired, deconstruct the language surrounding the economy, including the term ‘economy’ itself. They argue that normative definitions of the economy represent only a subset of economic activity that occurs alongside a much more extensive network of diverse *economies*. Diverse economies theorists have developed a helpful model to illustrate this point (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: Diverse Economies Iceberg by Community Economies Collective is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. (Community Economies n.d.)

Here, the visible tip of the iceberg represents the normative definition of ‘the economy’—wage labour, commodity markets, and capitalist enterprise—while the submerged part represents the many economic activities that contribute to the ‘diverse economies’ which exist alongside capitalism. Excluding things such as housework, barter, sliding-scale pricing, theft, and so on from conceptions



and measurements of the economy implicitly renders them un-economic. In identifying such activities within diverse economies, Gibson-Graham and others reclaim the discursive power to shape economic possibility.

Gibson-Graham (1996; 2006) argue against what they call the 'capitalocentric' way Marxists tend to approach the political economy. Capitalocentrism "involves situating capitalism at the center [sic] of development narratives, thus tending to devalue or marginalise possibilities of non-capitalist development" (Gibson-Graham, 1996, 41). This is similar to the issue that people have with Marx's notion that capitalism is an inevitable developmental step that all societies must go through. While Barber (2019) argues that Marx began to change his thinking on this toward the end of his life, capitalocentrism, as Gibson-Graham argue, has certainly been a feature of Marxism since. Further to this, they argue that Marxists shoot themselves in the foot when they theorise capitalism as a totalising system:

Marxism has produced a discourse of Capitalism that ostensibly delineates an object of transformative class politics but that operates more powerfully to discourage and marginalise projects of class transformation. In a sense, Marxism has contributed to the socialist absence through the very way in which it has theorised the capitalist presence. (Gibson-Graham, 1996, 252)

The problem with capitalocentrism, they argue, is that it implies that economic transformation hinges on the revolutionary possibility of overthrowing an entire system before an alternative society can be built.

There are two lessons I take away from the diverse economies framework that inform my ideas around tino rangatiratanga and economic transformation. First, Māori economies that operate outside of capitalism exist. They have persisted despite colonisation and contribute to Māori economic wellbeing in fundamental, tangible ways. This means that capitalism is not, and never has been our only option. Discussions of diverse Māori economies will be taken up in the next chapter. Much like Te Pāti Māori asserting rangatiratanga in parliament, the persistence of diverse Māori economies is an example of how tino rangatiratanga, in an economic sense, can and has been asserted in the face of settler capitalism. Second, when viewed through the diverse economies framework, the possibilities for economic transformation multiply. Instead of focusing only on the seemingly impossible task of bringing an end to capitalism (it is easier to imagine the end of the world, after all), economic transformation can also be about empowering the diverse Indigenous alternatives to it. Rather than waiting for 'the revolution, we can see the fruits of our revolutionary efforts in the here and now (Gibson-Graham 2006).

However, capitalism still exists within the diverse economies framework, and its exploitative logic threatens Indigenous lives. While it might feel hopeful and refreshing to move on from the Left's preoccupation with ending capitalism and focus instead on empowering diverse economies, it would be a mistake to ignore or gloss over the real and colonial-like power wielded by those who control capital. What is needed, then, is an approach to economic transformation that both empowers existing alternatives to capitalism and, at the same time, disempowers or undermines the power of the state and capital.

### *Hybrid economies and radical economic transformation*

Erik Olin Wright is an American sociologist and Marxist whose approach to socialism, as an alternative to capitalism, fits well with Gibson-Graham's understanding of economies. Like Gibson-Graham, he does not see capitalism as a totalising global system but as a particular set of economic arrangements which form only part of a wider 'hybrid economy'. While he does not suggest (or even think possible) a complete overthrow of capitalism, he proposes that certain strategies of economic transformation could bring about "a radical democratic egalitarian alternative to capitalism" (Wright 2010, 110). In his book *Envisioning Real Utopias*, Wright articulates these strategies of transformation thoroughly and systematically. He starts by offering a "diagnosis and critique" of capitalism before outlining socialist alternatives and finally presenting theories of economic transformation.

### *Concepts of power and economy*

Wright defines power simply as "the capacity of actors to accomplish things in the world" (2010, 111). He categorises three primary sites of power that structure economic activity: state power, economic power, and social power. According to Wright, state power refers to the capacity to make and enforce rules over a territory; economic power is the capacity to control economic resources (for example, labour and capital), production, and distribution; social power refers to the capacity to mobilise collective action through voluntary associations in civil society. Unsurprisingly, he notes that these sites of power are by no means equal in their influence over the economy.

Indeed, for Wright, it is precisely the imbalance of these sites of power that determines what kind of economic structure a given economy reflects: statist, capitalist, or socialist. Statism refers to an economy in which the means of production are owned by the state and where economic activities such as production, distribution, and the allocation of resources are controlled through state power. Capitalism is defined as an economy in which the means of production are privately owned, and economic activity (as per above) is determined by economic power deployed by the owners of

capital.<sup>7</sup> Wright takes a somewhat unorthodox approach to socialism, defining it as an economy in which the means of production are socially owned, and economic activity is determined by social power, that is, the power that comes from ordinary people when they organise within civil society. He insists that the 'social' in socialism ought to be taken seriously and argues against the orthodox tendency to reduce socialism to a "purely statist response to capitalism" (Wright 2010, 110).

As with Gibson-Graham, Wright does not see the economy as a homogenous, capitalist entity. Instead, he refers to the economy as 'hybrid'; that is, an economy structured by all three types of power to varying degrees. He writes:

In terms of these definitions, no actual living economy has ever been purely capitalist or statist or socialist, since it is never the case that the allocation, control and use of economic resources is determined by a single form of power. Such pure cases live only in the fantasies (or nightmares) of theorists. (Wright 2010,123)

Further to this, he argues that 'pure cases' such as totalitarianism (where the state controls everything), libertarian capitalism (where everything is determined by the market, with little to no role for the state or social collectives), or classical Marxist Communism (where the economy is "absorbed into civil society") would be impossible to maintain over time (Wright 2010, 123). Therefore, he argues, it is likely that all three sites of power will have at least some influence over the economy.

Compared with Coulthard (2014, 173), who asserts that "capitalism must die", Wright (2010, 366) holds the relatively pessimistic view that "Capitalism will survive, for the foreseeable future anyway." While he argues that economic crises have revealed that the irrationality of capitalism causes great suffering, he admits that "suffering and irrationality are never enough to generate fundamental social transformation" (Wright 2010, 366). So rather than aiming to end capitalism altogether, Wright suggests it is more pragmatic to create institutional designs that leverage social power to "effectively control the production and distribution of goods and services" (2010, 129). A socialist economy, he argues, requires state power and economic power to be redirected through

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<sup>7</sup> For Wright, economic power is based on control over economic resources. I find this term misleading. 'Economic power' implies that it is a power that can be exercised in any economy (statist, capitalist, or socialist). However, Wright makes a point of attaching it specifically to capitalism: "Capitalism is an economic structure within which the means of production are privately owned, and the allocation and use of resources for different social purposes is accomplished through the exercise of economic power. Investments and the control of production are the result of the exercise of economic power by owners of capital" (Wright 2010, 120). To me, it would make sense to use the term 'capital power' rather than 'economic power'. However, for consistency, I will continue to use Wright's term.

channels controlled by associations in civil society. Furthermore, he points out that this can be achieved in many different ways.

### *The Socialist Compass*

To demonstrate the various ways in which socialism can be progressed, Wright constructs a 'socialist compass', a conceptual tool which points toward various "pathways to social empowerment" (2010, 129). Wright's socialist compass has three points—economic power, social power, and state power—which indicate the sites of power involved in constructing a given socialist pathway. For Wright, socialism is not so much about abolishing state power or economic power but instead finding ways of socialising them. Using the metaphor of the compass, Wright points to various existing or potential economic pathways which, if pursued simultaneously, he proposes could lead to radical democratic egalitarian alternatives to capitalism.

Wright starts by identifying three primary pathways to socialism that can be combined in any number of ways to create more pathways:

1. Social empowerment over the way state power affects economic activity;
2. Social empowerment over the way economic power shapes economic activity; and
3. Social empowerment directly over economic activity. (Wright 2010, 129)

Wright goes on to articulate seven pathways to socialism. While he admits that each by itself is not enough to pose a threat to capitalism, he argues that "substantial movement along all of them taken together would constitute a fundamental transformation of capitalism's class relations and the structures of power and privilege rooted in them" (Wright 2010,144). In this thesis, I focus more on the sites of power that shape economies rather than the specifics of the various pathways articulated by Wright. However, it is useful to indicate what Wright has in mind when discussing the kinds of institutional designs made possible through combinations of the three primary pathways above. Below, I outline the examples Wright gives of the social empowerment of state power and economic power.

Wright explains that the social empowerment of the state could involve political parties that are deeply rooted in working-class struggle and have significant influence in the deployment of state power. This would include the ability to regulate economic activity. While he notes that historically (e.g. in the USSR), this form of state socialism has not led to emancipatory economic outcomes for workers, he argues that the theory of centralised economic organisation rooted in deep democracy is sound. However, there are other ways state power can be socially empowered. Wright also describes associational democracy, where organised labour associations (e.g. unions) come together with

associations of employers and state agencies to bargain over economic regulations. Here social empowerment relies on the democracy of the labour associations themselves as well as their capacity to influence economic regulation (such as working hours and conditions, remuneration, self-determination over work). He points out that if sufficient capacity is built within worker associations, then the capacity of the state and capitalist elites to determine the economy diminishes. Wright also describes the idea of participatory socialism. In this scenario, similarly to traditional state socialism, the socially empowered state (think deep democracy) has a direct role in determining economic processes. However, there is also a role for citizens who may join various associations that directly influence economic activity (e.g. determining how a city council spends its budget).

Social empowerment over the way economic power (which under capitalism is typically held by capitalists) affects the economy also includes the example of associational democracy outlined above. To re-iterate, labour associations would engage in bargaining strategies for better conditions in privately owned firms. This is a relatively limited form of social empowerment, but Wright argues it has been effective in many liberal democracies. He argues that a deeper form of the socialisation of economic power, however, includes the idea of replacing shareholder boards with stakeholder boards. In this scenario, people who are impacted by the economic power of capitalists (e.g. workers or the Indigenous peoples on whose land an economic entity is based) have the opportunity to inform the economic practices of capitalists. Wright also gives the example of cooperatives—economic entities wholly owned and controlled by the workers. Many cooperatives operate on a one-person-one-vote basis. This means that each worker/owner has equal control over production and the redistribution of surplus. Cooperatives operate alongside various other economic entities in the market.

These are just some of the ways in which state power and economic power can be subordinated to social power. Wright argues that any number of institutional designs based on these principles are possible. He emphasises that multiple pathways must be pursued together rather than committing to just one form of social empowerment. The more opportunities we have for social empowerment, the greater our capacity for radical egalitarian economic transformation.

Wright writes for a popular audience and expresses a desire that his work will be relevant in other countries as well as his own. I find many of Wright's ideas concerning the power of the state and capital to be extremely useful in the present discussion regarding the assertion of rangatiratanga within Māori economies. However, his work lacks an adequate critique of colonial power or any acknowledgement of the Indigenous struggle. Wright (2010, 76) argues that capitalism "fuels" imperialism, suggesting that capitalism not only requires imperialism but also makes it possible. Despite this insightful critique of imperialism and the fact that he draws largely from a North American

context, he does not address the Indigenous struggle against settler capitalism. Where Wright does briefly mention Indigenous North Americans, he refers to them as though they are simply another association in civil society. Part of the reason for this may be that in an effort to appeal to a broad and popular audience, he did not want to ground himself in a particular context. Regardless of his intentions, this is the kind of Eurocentric, colonial approach that the aforementioned Indigenous scholars have criticised.

Like other Marxist approaches to Indigenous emancipatory politics, Wright's work needs to be transformed before it can be useful in Aotearoa New Zealand. Just as Coulthard and Barber approach Marx from a position of grounded normativity, I engage with Wright knowing that not all of his ideas will fit well in this context. I present below an attempt to begin a recontextualisation of Wright's formulations. In so doing, I acknowledge that others may have different ways of articulating the issues of state and capital power in relation to self-determination efforts that are perhaps more grounded in mātauranga Māori.

While I find Wright's compass useful, one important aspect needs to be amended if it is to be of any use here in Aotearoa New Zealand. It needs a fourth point! I have addressed this issue in previous work, constructing the Aotearoa Socialist Compass (henceforth, ASC) with 'tino rangatiratanga' as the fourth point and site of power (Webb, 2019). Just as Wright does not adequately address Indigenous struggle, he also does not acknowledge Indigenous Nations as particular sites of power. Grounded normativity demands the centring of Indigenous experience and knowledge in any political project concerning Indigenous peoples or land (Coulthard 2014). In Aotearoa New Zealand, this means starting from a position that regards tino rangatiratanga as the legitimate and inalienable expression of sovereignty and self-determination (Mutu 2021; Jackson 2020). Our tūpuna who signed te Tiriti were rangatira who signed on behalf of the people, and at the time, regardless of what happened later, were treated by the Crown as legitimate holders of power and authority. Consequently, the ASC would not be complete without tino rangatiratanga (power)<sup>8</sup> as a compass point.

If power means the capacity for actors to achieve things in the world, then what does tino rangatiratanga mean as a site of power? Articulated in the context of the ASC, tino rangatiratanga means the capacity of rangatira—and others who hold positions of power in te ao Māori—to act in the best interests of their people. In my article (Webb 2019), I explain that iwi, hapū and other Māori authorities are not directly comparable to either the state or voluntary civil associations (the site of social power). Instead, they encompass aspects of both, as well as having qualities unique to te ao

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<sup>8</sup> I use 'tino rangatiratanga (power)' to denote the term tino in its context as a compass point while attempting to avoid using a tautological phrase (in which two different words mean the same thing).

Māori. For example, in a similar way to the state, iwi and hapū have authority over their territory.<sup>9</sup> Just as civil associations have the capacity to mobilise and organise everyday people, so too do various associations (e.g. marae committees, Māori trusts and councils etc.) within hapū, iwi, and other Māori organisations. Unlike civil associations, however, iwi and hapū are united by the quality of kinship and uri. Therefore, the power of tino rangatiratanga differs from Wright's definition of social power as the capacity to mobilise collective action through voluntary associations in civil society.

The ASC is a conceptual tool that helps make sense of the sites of power that shape Māori economies. Adding the fourth point helps identify the nuances specific to Māori forms of social, political, and economic organisation. In the following chapters, I address some of the ways Māori have asserted rangatiratanga against state power (i.e. the government) and economic power (deployed by owners of capital). At times this has taken the form of active resistance to the forces of settler capitalism. However, more often, it has required the skillful negotiation of rangatiratanga with the state or in the capitalist market. I pick up the compass again in the fourth chapter, where I use it to point to the pathways that might help build the rangatiratanga sphere through the subordination of state power and economic power to tino rangatiratanga (power) and social power.

This thesis aims both to draw attention to how settler capitalism has shaped Māori economies and to explore the role of Māori economies in restoring rangatiratanga. This chapter has been the first step in meeting these aims. I have argued that a Marxist analysis of the political economy is necessary to the tino rangatiratanga movement and that it has received little attention to date. Drawing on the work of Coulthard and Barber, I have grounded my Marxist approach in the economic and political realities of Māori. I have outlined the key dynamics of settler capitalism—primitive accumulation, the doctrine of discovery, and the politics of recognition—and these will be used throughout the thesis to demonstrate the impact of colonisation on Māori economies. I have explored ways of framing the economy as diverse and hybrid and how these emphasise existing sites of economic transformation. Finally, I have introduced the Aotearoa Socialist Compass as a conceptual tool that can help navigate the Māori economy towards pathways to economic transformation that may help build the rangatiratanga sphere. I turn now to a discussion of Māori economies—past, present, and emerging.

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<sup>9</sup> Even though the authority of the state over territory in Aotearoa is contested in this thesis, the state still has the *capacity* to assert authority over territory, and therefore state power cannot be completely replaced with the tino rangatiratanga as a site of power. Indeed, in the spirit of Matike Mai, the state has a place in emancipatory futures.

## Chapter Two: Māori economies—past, present, and emerging

In the previous chapter, I outlined an Indigenous Marxist approach to addressing the impact of settler capitalism on Indigenous economies. In the present chapter, I turn my attention to Māori economies, past, present, and emerging. I begin with a historical overview of settler capitalism in this country, drawing attention to how it has shaped Māori economies over time. Employing an Indigenous Marxist lens, I pay particular attention to the combined forces of state and capital and how they play out through the process of primitive accumulation, the doctrine of discovery, and the politics of recognition. In the second section, I explore the literature on the contemporary Māori economy/economies, with a particular focus on two broad topics: the critique of settler-capitalism in shaping the contemporary Māori economy/economies and the exploration of the transformative potential of the current and emerging Māori economy/economies.

### A historical overview of settler-capitalism and Māori economies

What follows is a brief history of Māori political economies from pre-contact traditional economies right through to the beginning of the Treaty settlements and the neoliberal turn in the 1980s. I present this historical narrative through an Indigenous Marxist lens which emphasises the impact of primitive accumulation, the doctrine of discovery, and the politics of recognition on Māori economies. Consequently, it is a somewhat uneven history as I pay more attention to some periods than others. For instance, the first half of the historical overview deals primarily with the first 40 years of colonisation, while the second half covers from just before the turn of the century until the 1980s. I have two reasons for weighting this historical account slightly toward early colonisation. The first is to emphasise the sheer magnitude of the impact that this stage of colonisation has had in determining Māori economies. The second is that I need only briefly address the historical period of Treaty settlements and neoliberalism, as it is this period that becomes the focus of discussion in the second section of the chapter.

#### *Traditional Māori economies*

Cooperation, reciprocity, and collective wellbeing have long been central organising values in Māori economies. While competition, slavery, and warfare did occur *between* tribes (with greater regularity as economies became more sophisticated), *within* whānau and hapū, survival required interdependence. Citing evidence from Ngāi Tahu archaeologist Atholl Anderson, in his recent book



*Not in Narrow Seas: The Economic History of Aotearoa New Zealand*, Brian Easton (2020) gives an overview of Māori economies from 1250-1800. He conveys the evolution of Māori economic practices over this time. Some of the main changes included the shift of basic settlements from mainly coastal areas in the 1250-1450 period to much more sophisticated inland pā and kāinga in the 1650-1800 period. With these shifts came a greater reliance on large-scale gardening, although fishing and hunting also remained an essential feature of the economy. Economies were largely local and domestic, but a trade economy was eventually established between the North and South Islands. Stone was one of the major trading commodities; obsidian was brought from the north for use in the south and vice versa with pounamu (Easton 2020; Anderson 2015). Economic units were largely hapū based, although there were instances where hapū would join together as iwi for larger economic undertakings such as food gathering expeditions or warfare (Anderson 2015). Social and economic groupings were fairly fluid; as whānau grew in size, provided they had enough resources and good leadership, some split from the original group to form their own hapū. While economic relationships between hapū were maintained, the rangatiratanga of each hapū was fiercely protected and respected (Anderson 2015).

Traditional economies were regulated by tikanga. While rangatira were determined through direct lines of descent from a prominent ancestor, acceptance of their leadership was determined by their mana. The mana of rangatira rested on their skill in warfare and their ability to provide for the wellbeing of their people (Anderson 2015). Thus, rangatira were important economic agents in the early Māori economy. Other tikanga that shaped the economy included rāhui and tapu. These functioned to place limits on gathering resources if they were scarce or if it was unsafe to do so (Firth 2011 [1929]). The tikanga of utu and manaakitanga guided the reciprocal and interdependent relationship within and between hapū. Utu regulated disputes and restored balance by ensuring debts (e.g. the taking of a life or the raiding of resources) were not left unpaid (Firth 2011 [1929]). Manaakitanga facilitated a reciprocal relationship between hapū.<sup>10</sup> This was enacted through gift-giving or the laying on of lavish hākari for visiting hapū and rangatira (Firth 2011[1929]). While Māori economies changed rapidly after the arrival of Europeans, the economic function of hapū and the tikanga that guided economic relationships were maintained (Petrie 2006; Easton 2020).

### ***Primitive accumulation: enclosure***

British settlement and governance in Aotearoa New Zealand in the 1830s was somewhat haphazard but progressed steadily towards annexation in 1840. The British government was initially hesitant to provide any formal governance entity in Aotearoa New Zealand. Consequently, Māori had no British

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<sup>10</sup> Firth does not use the term manaakitanga, but he describes the practices that this term denotes (according to Mead 2016).

authority to turn to when disputes with settlers arose. Rangatira had to travel to Sydney or England to have grievances heard, but with no legal authority in Aotearoa New Zealand, there was little the British government could do to exercise control over their citizens (Binney et al. 2015). The disputes between settlers and Māori revolved around different understandings of land ownership (Binney et al. 2015, O'Malley 2019). However, Māori were also worried by the "unruly and unsanctioned behaviour of some settlers" (Ruru 2010, 210). According to Binney and colleagues (2015), whalers who had set up semi-permanent settlements along the coast would give substantial gifts (tuku) to Māori in exchange for occupation and use of the land which both parties understood remained under the rangatiratanga of Māori. This was the kind of economic arrangement, they argue, that Māori extended to more permanent settlers when they arrived. However, British settlers had quite a different understanding of the transaction and began claiming ownership of the land they believed they had purchased. At this time, noting the increasing settler demand, speculators from Sydney began to take an interest in Māori land (Binney et al. 2015). Aside from the increasing rate of unsubstantiated claims to Māori land, there was a certain amount of reciprocity between Māori and settlers, and Māori began a flourishing commerce economy which persisted into the 1850s (Petrie 2006). The balance of power remained, at least for a time, with Māori who significantly outnumbered the emerging settler population.

In recounting the history of colonisation in this country, scholars have tended to emphasise the colonial mechanisms of the state, such as the law (e.g. Ruru 2010) and military power (e.g. O'Malley). The role of capitalists and financial power, while touched on, tend to be treated as incidental to colonisation. Catherine Cumming (Ngāti Ranginui, Pākehā) offers another perspective, or "counter-history"—one which renders "financial institutions, instruments, and practices explicit in their capacity as central agents of colonisation" (Cumming 2019, 42).<sup>11</sup> In particular, Cumming focuses on the financial instruments and practices of the joint-stock system, speculation, and public bailout. She explains that the joint-stock system—in which capitalists pool their wealth to invest in risky ventures—was employed by Edward Gibbon Wakefield to set up the New Zealand Company. It was this action, she argues, that "initiated" colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand. Through this company, Wakefield's brother, Colonel William Wakefield, set about 'purchasing' vast tracts of Māori land, much of which amounted to unsubstantiated claims that would fail to "'stand up in any court'" (Patricia Burns cited in Cumming 2019, 58). The company was then able to on-sell cheaply acquired land, not only to settlers but to speculators in England who never intended to emigrate but instead wanted to capitalise on what they were led to believe would soon become a booming colonial land market.

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<sup>11</sup> For a Marxist perspective of Wakefield's dealings with Ngāi Tahu, see Simon Barber's article "In Wakefield's laboratory: Tangata Whenua into property/labour in Te Waipounamu" in which he describes the "classical moment of primitive accumulation" (2020, 229).

However, Cumming explains, Wakefield's plans were undercut both by the Crown's right to pre-emption (acquired through the Treaty of Waitangi) as well as the fact that—due in large part to a lack of investment by absentee owners—land did not increase in value quickly as had been hoped. This ultimately led to the public bailout and eventual Crown purchase of the New Zealand Company in 1850. By this stage, the British government, who had initially opposed Wakefield's colonial campaign, were fully invested in the organised colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Crown formally claimed sovereignty in 1840 by signing the Treaty of Waitangi. However, as legal scholar Jacinta Ruru (2010, 214) argues, "while the English version of the Treaty may have provided a harmonious gloss of overt cession, the Treaty in fact simply encapsulated the Doctrine of Discovery mindset [sic]". The obvious link between the Treaty and the doctrine of discovery principles is the Crown's right to pre-emption. Further to this, however, as Ruru points out, there were several inconsistencies in the way the Crown asserted sovereignty in Aotearoa that suggest the Crown intended to assert sovereignty with or without a treaty. For instance, Ruru mentions that the Letters Patent in 1839, prior to the Treaty:

amended the Commission of the Governor of New South Wales by enlarging this Australian colony to include 'any territory which is or may be acquired in sovereignty by Her Majesty . . . within that group of Islands in the Pacific Ocean, commonly called New Zealand . . . '. (Ruru 2010, 211).

Further to this, Crown sovereignty in the South Island, while eventually coming under the Treaty, was initially claimed by right of discovery, justified by the idea that "'with the wild savages in the Southern Islands, it appears scarcely possible to observe even the form of a Treaty'" (Hobson cited in Ruru 2010, 213). In other words, despite the rhetoric of protection and partnership surrounding discussions of the Treaty to this day, everything about the annexation of Aotearoa New Zealand from the 1830s onward was geared toward the dispossession of Māori from their lands and the extinguishing of their sovereignty. Ruru's legal account corroborates the emphatic assertion by Tina Ngata and Emalani Case (University of Otago 2019) that the colonisation of the Pacific was very much a part of the bloody legacy of the doctrine of discovery.

At the time of the signing of the Treaty, the balance of power arguably remained with Māori. In terms of rangatiratanga, Māori retained the capacity to determine most aspects of their lives. This included and was supported by successful hapū economies based on collectively owned whānau and hapū land (Petrie 2006). Furthermore, settlers remained somewhat dependent on Māori for trade and hospitality (Binney et al. 2015). This was rapidly changing, however, and within a few decades, the balance of power had flipped entirely. Three main factors indicate the shift in power from Māori to

Pākehā in the 1850s. The first was the establishment of Aotearoa New Zealand's "first responsible ministry", which governed all internal affairs except native affairs (Petrie 2006, 255; Binney et al. 2015). The consequences were that the public (read Pākehā) now had a more direct line of influence over governance than when the Colonial Office had managed affairs via Governors (Petrie 2006). Pākehā were not interested in appeasing or supporting Māori interests. The second factor was the exponential growth of the Pākehā population. Settler numbers had increased steadily since 1841, eventually overtaking the slowly declining Māori population in 1858 (O'Malley 2019). Finally, and as a result of the previous two factors, the booming Māori economy began to decline in the mid-1850s. This happened for a number of reasons, including a decline in government support for loans, the continued loss of land, and Pākehā hostility to Māori economic success (Petrie 2006). As power began to shift, tensions grew between Māori and the settler-state/society, eventually escalating to war.

The battles fought between 1845 and 1872—collectively referred to as the New Zealand Wars—perfectly illustrate Wolfe's point about the role of unregulated settler violence in "consummating" the "theoretical stage of territorial sovereignty" asserted through the doctrine of discovery (Wolfe 2006, 392-393). In his book *The New Zealand Wars: Ngā Pakanga o Aotearoa*, historian Vincent O'Malley gives a thorough account of the battles that ultimately led to the decimation of Māori sovereignty. His account of the "Wairau incident" below provides an illustrative example of how settler entitlement, the 'discovery mindset' of capitalists, and the complacency of the settler-state worked together to displace Māori from their land.

According to O'Malley, after pleading with Crown officials (to no avail) to stop the illegal survey of land in Wairau, Ngāti Toa rangatira Te Rauparaha and Te Rangihaeata set fire to the surveyors' huts and asked them to leave the area. This caused outrage among the settlers of Nelson, where "nearly fifty special constables were hurriedly sworn" and subsequently dispatched to arrest the Ngāti Toa rangatira (O'Malley 2019, 61). The actions of this "settler commando" party—including a fight which they lost—were not endorsed by then Governor Robert FitzRoy, who pointed out that Ngāti Toa had been provoked by the illegal land survey (O'Malley 2019, 62). Despite all of this, four years later, Governor Grey reversed FitzRoy's decision, insisting that the lands at Wairau be sold to the Crown as punishment for those killed in the earlier fight. While perhaps not directly comparable to "the murderous activities of the frontier rabble" that Wolfe (2006, 392) referred to, the fact remains that alienation of Māori land was achieved through the combined forces of illegal capitalist acquisition and the retroactive endorsement of the settler-state.

Legislation passed during the wars had the effect of further alienating Māori land, and this continued well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Rather than a retroactive state response to ill-gotten land acquisition, the commodification of Māori land was now deliberately and strategically facilitated

through the Native Land Court. The Native Land Acts of 1862 and 1865, which established the Land Court, issued individual titles to collectively owned Māori land and opened up the opportunity for Māori to sell directly to settlers (Binney et al. 2015). While the Land Court facilitated the individualisation and sale of Māori land, it failed to prevent the land speculation that occurred outside it. The pressing need for settlers to acquire land led to dubious transactions whereby money was advanced to the likely, yet unapproved, owners of Māori title, affording them the financial means to go through the Land Court. Once the title was secured, the advance was considered payment for some of the land under the newly individualised title. Dealings outside the Court were considered "'void' but not illegal" and were rarely followed up on (Binney et al. 2015, 254). The economic (not to mention social and cultural) devastation of the land wars meant that Māori were under immense pressure to sell parts of their land to develop what they had left. Thus, the formal enclosure of land forced Māori into the capitalist mode and relations of production.

No longer dependent on Māori for survival and with the power of both state and capital on their side, by the end of the New Zealand Wars, Pākehā well and truly had the upper hand in determining life for Māori, including their economies. Raupatu, or land confiscation, during and after the wars, along with the privatisation and sale of collective Māori land through the Native Land Court, put an end to active (at least in the combative sense) Māori resistance in this initial, brutal phase of colonisation. Māori would have to find new ways of asserting rangatiratanga in an actively hostile settler state. In terms of economic wellbeing, the initial period of colonisation—marked by the aggressive enclosure of land—saw Māori go from agents of economic prosperity to what has been described as "'an almost landless proletariat'" (*The Tainui Report* cited in Binney et al. 2015). Despite the oppositional power of state and capital, rangatiratanga persisted in rural communities where the tikanga of manaakitanga and whanaungatanga continued to guide economic organisation.

### *Primitive accumulation: proletarianisation*

After the New Zealand Wars, and continuing into the first half of the 20th century, Māori and Pākehā continued to live separately, and Māori remained a largely rural population. Māori historian Aroha Harris (Te Rarawa, Ngāpuhi) describes this as a time of survival and adaptation. Having lost the most productive areas of land, Māori were forced onto the labour market, working as labourers on farms, shearers, in forestry, or as gum-diggers. In some areas, such as Rotorua, Māori-led tourism industries developed. The seasonal nature of much of the work available to Māori meant that many men spent half their time away from home but would return to take part in maintaining hapū and iwi-based community life. Education was valued, and many made the most of the Native Schools, but children often had to cut their education short to work on whānau farms or earn a wage. Some also pursued higher education and worked for universities or in Parliament. From a social perspective, Harris

recounts that Māori adapted to new ways of life in rural settlements by centring community organisation around marae, schools, and churches. Politically, Māori continued to find ways of asserting rangatiratanga, either in state-sanctioned ways (e.g. in Parliament, regional Māori Councils and Māori Land Councils) or in opposition to the state (the Kingitanga and Kotahitanga movements) (Hill 2004; Binney et al. 2015). The two world wars had a somewhat uniting effect on the two populations. While many Māori men fought alongside Pākehā, back home, Māori Councils and organisations proved themselves useful to the government in their contribution to the war effort. Harris (2015) notes that community councils operating in the war years became an important bridge between the government and rural Māori. This was significant given that government policy toward Māori had, in very recent history, been relatively hostile.

According to Easton (2020, Ch 15), the New Zealand economy experienced a "long depression" between 1880 and the mid-1890s following a collapse in the international wool market. This increased the national debt as the government made efforts to support the growing pastoral economy. During this time, a "dual economy" emerged in which the government and banks supported rural Pākehā with loans and mortgages that Māori were denied access to (Binney et al. 2015). Binney and colleagues argue that the government's apparent indifference to Māori economic development was based on the misplaced assumption that Māori could rely on a subsistence economy supplemented by wage labour. As a result, Māori farms and communities struggled to develop what little land they had left. Compounding this issue, important infrastructure such as roads and bridges, which connected the rural economy to markets, often missed predominantly Māori communities (Binney et al. 2015). Despite the best efforts of Apirana Ngata, who had made significant inroads for Māori development in Parliament in the 1920s and 30s, many rural Māori economies never recovered from the impact of the New Zealand Wars (O'Malley 2019; Harris 2015). By the end of the Second World War, the rural Māori economy could no longer sustain the Māori population (Harris 2015; Easton 2020).

### *Urbanisation*

Māori urbanisation in the post-World War Two period has been described as the "second great Māori migration" because Māori went from being predominantly rural to a largely urban population in the space of a couple of decades (Easton 2020, Ch36). The experience of widespread rural poverty made the promise of employment offered in the city all the more enticing, particularly for families and young people. Urbanisation was actively supported by the government, which at this stage had adopted a policy of integration (although some commentators describe it more as assimilationist). Government grants assisted in the relocation of Māori families. However, given that this often meant being placed in predominantly Pākehā neighbourhoods where they were more likely to face racism, many whānau decided to move on their own terms (Harris 2015). Instead of conforming to the infamous 'pepper-

potting' strategy promoted by the government, Māori opted to live in areas with a high Māori population (Harris 2015; Williams 2015). This was a time of significant change for Māori, not just in terms of location but also in cultural identity. While great importance was placed on maintaining the ties between haukāinga and whānau in the city, a new urban identity emerged (Williams 2015). Dance halls, cultural clubs, and urban marae became important sites of cultural connection that mitigated the pressure to assimilate fully into a Pākehā way of life (Harris 2015). Over time, however, connections 'back home' weakened, and urban Māori increasingly turned to urban Māori organisations for support in times of need rather than relying on the iwi and hapū support systems they had left behind (Rangiheuea 2011).

Arguing from a Marxist perspective, Evan Poata-Smith (Ngāti Kahu, Te Rarawa) emphasises the role of capitalist relations in urban Māori migration. He writes:

The compulsion for Maori to sell their labour power for a wage (induced by the destruction of the traditional economy) combined with the demand for labour from the expanding manufacturing sector to cause a massive rural to urban migration of Maori [sic]. (Poata-Smith 1997).

While the loss of land and traditional economies may have initiated the process of proletarianisation in the late 19th century, the incorporation of Māori into the urban workforce entrenched the capitalist relations in a way that would reproduce Māori as low-wage earners. While employment was high in the post-war boom, Māori were typically employed in 'blue-collar' work in the manufacturing, mining, transport, and construction industries (Poata-Smith 1997). Furthermore, as Poata-Smith (2013) points out, racism within the labour market meant that Māori were the first to be laid off when the country entered a prolonged economic crisis in the early 1970s.

The experience of racial discrimination coupled with a rise in global class conflict in the late 1960s led to an upsurge in Māori political protest. In a book chapter titled "The Evolution of Contemporary Maori Protest", Poata-Smith (1996) traces the rise and fall of Māori protest from the 1960s to the 1980s. He explains that Māori activists joined Pākehā in many of the popular movements of the 1960s and 1970s, including the anti-apartheid, woman's liberation, and trade union movements (see also Harris 2004; Hill 2009). He argues that Māori identified strongly with class struggle; indeed, many in the union movement saw the contradiction between labour and capital as the primary driver of inequality. Others, however, became frustrated with the seeming ignorance of many Pākehā to the history of colonisation. For example, the activist group Ngā Tamatoa, which formed in the early 70s, saw racism as the driver of inequality and "the racist institutions and values of society" as the enemy of Māori self-determination (Poata-Smith 1996, 102). While initially influenced by the revolutionary

orientation and militancy of the Black Power movement in the United States, Poata-Smith argues that the more conservative, university-educated members led the group in a different direction. He explains that there was "a belief that New Zealand capitalism coupled with the parliamentary political system could be cleansed of racism" (Poata-Smith 1996, 102). While Māori activists from various backgrounds united in the land rights movement from 1975 to 1978, by the 1980s, the international decline of the worker's movement, the rise of the New Right and the "logic of identity politics" drew this period of Māori protest to a close.

### *Treaty settlements and the neoliberal turn*

The government's decision to finally address its breach of the Treaty has been attributed to a desire to placate the intensification of Māori protest in the 1960s and 1970s (Ward 2015; Poata-Smith 1996). The passing of the Treaty of Waitangi Act in 1975 saw the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal, an independent commission of inquiry that could investigate Crown breaches of the Treaty that occurred after the passing of the Act. However, after continued protest, including land occupations and Waitangi Day protests, the Crown passed an Amendment Act allowing the Tribunal to hear claims dating back to 1840 (Ward 2015; Poata-Smith 1996). Since then, the Tribunal has heard thousands of claims, and by 2018, 73 settlements worth a combined total of \$2.24 billion had been passed into law (Te Tai n.d.).

The settlement process, including financial redress, alongside the implementation of neoliberal economic reform, has influenced the current trajectory of Māori economies. The Treaty settlements coincided with a new focus on Māori-led economic development. In 1984 the Fourth Labour Government organised the first Hui Taumata, an economic summit for Māori leaders to come together to discuss the future of Māori economic development. The consensus among attending rangatira and economic leaders was that the welfare state had failed Māori, and it was time for Māori to determine their own economic futures (Hill 2010). They believed that if Māori were well-resourced and politically empowered, within a decade, "welfarist funding to assist Maori to reach parity with pakeha would no longer be needed [sic]" (Hill 2010, 203). The state viewed Treaty settlements as an opportunity to kick-start a new era of Māori economic development. In this instance, the desire of Māori for self-determination aligned with the government's neoliberal policies of devolution, economic independence, and the rollback of state intervention in the market. The new-forged relationship between pre- and post-settlement iwi and the state has been the focus of sustained criticism from many angles. In the next section, where I discuss perspectives on the contemporary Māori economy/economies, I will draw attention to how these arguments relate to Coulthard's critique of the politics of recognition.



This historical account has demonstrated the various ways the power of the state and capital have reinforced each other to dispossess Māori from their land and modes of life. The dynamics of settler-capitalism—primitive accumulation, the doctrine of discovery, and more recently, the politics of recognition—have dramatically shaped Māori economies and, therefore, Māori lives. While Māori resistance and the assertion of rangatiratanga have been consistent, albeit, through various means, it is difficult to overstate the impact of settler capitalism in the constraint of rangatiratanga.

## Perspectives on the contemporary Māori economy/economies

Māori economy/economies have become a topic of prolific research across a range of institutions and disciplines, including business schools, government institutions, and the social sciences. Particular ways of framing Māori economy/economies differ between these areas of research. There is discursive power in framing economic activity because the things that are included (and excluded) from definitions influence what is conceived of as possible, especially in terms of the capacity of economy/economies to transform lives (Gibson-Graham 1996; 2006, Bargh 2012; Amoamo et al. 2018). For example, normative or classical definitions of the economy tend to focus on wage labour, commodity markets, and capitalist enterprise, and therefore the transformative potential of the economy is limited to what can be achieved under capitalism. As I have argued earlier, the power of capital and the state reinforce each other to shape the economy; this extends to the way the economy is framed.

For example, the private economic consultancy, Business and Economic Research Ltd (BERL) has become a major influence in framing Māori economies. Since 2012 the government, in partnership with the Reserve Bank of New Zealand and Westpac, have commissioned BERL to produce extensive reports on the Māori economy; these reports then go on to inform economic policy (Ganesh et al. 2012; 2015; 2021). In these reports, the transformative potential of the Māori economy is attached to its propensity towards growth. Following the neoliberal logic of trickle-down economics, these reports assume that as the Māori economy grows, the wellbeing of all Māori will increase. The neoliberal solutions to Māori economic deprivation outlined in these reports are consistent with the government's approach to Māori development since 1984. Instead of a focus on addressing the colonial determinants of Māori poverty (land alienation and the social reproduction of a Māori proletariat), this approach places the responsibility of ensuring Māori wellbeing on the ability of Māori individuals, groups, and organisations to succeed in the market. The fact that the government contract businesses like BERL to produce research indicates the dual influence of state and capital in informing Māori economies.

While the reports coming out of BERL are influential in informing popular understandings of the Māori economy—such as those presented in news articles (Kowhai 2022)—I am more interested in the other sites of discursive power that frame Māori economy/economies along more emancipatory lines. Below I outline some of the arguments coming out of the social sciences. In particular, I focus on critiques of settler capitalism and its influence on present-day Māori economy/economies and discourse on the transformative potential of existing and emerging Māori economies.

### *Critiques of settler-capitalism in Māori economy/economies literature*

A review of Māori economy/economies literature indicates a strong critique of the dynamics of settler capitalism. While not everyone uses the terms 'primitive accumulation', 'doctrine of discovery', and 'politics of recognition', their arguments follow the same logic I outlined in both the first chapter and the historical section of the current chapter. That is, the state and owners of capital reinforce each other's power to produce and reproduce settler capitalism. It is argued, for example, that land alienation in the 19th and 20th centuries—which decimated traditional Māori economies and collective land ownership—initiated a process that has led to the individualistic way many Māori operate in the economy today (Kake 2020; Barber 2020). Entrenched Māori poverty and the pervasive inequality between Māori and Pākehā have also been traced back to the initial phase of land alienation and the assimilation of Māori in the low-wage labour in the mid-20th century (Durie 2003; Poata-Smith 1997; Poata-Smith 2013; van Meijl 2020). Others have linked the pervasive logic of European superiority, enshrined in the doctrine of discovery and continued through colonial discovery rhetoric, to discrimination against Māori in employment and housing and the reproduction of low socio-economic status (Mutu 2021; Borell et al. 2018). It has also been demonstrated that the doctrine of discovery continues to influence the Crown's response to Treaty claims regarding natural resources (Ruru 2010). What interests me most, however, are the discussions that indicate how the politics of recognition have played out in Aotearoa New Zealand, and, notably, how they are shaping the direction of Māori economy/economies.

According to Coulthard (2014, 3), the politics of recognition employed by the settler-colonial state aim to "reconcile Indigenous assertions of nationhood with settler-state sovereignty". By making minor concessions to Indigenous autonomy through the devolution of limited forms of governance, the return of some areas of land, and the recognition of a distinctive Indigenous identity, the state hopes to appease Indigenous quests for self-determination. Rejecting the politics of recognition, Coulthard argues that they have only served to entrench settler-capitalist power by further subsuming Indigenous lands and peoples into capitalist mode and relations of production. Furthermore, he suggests that the self-determination efforts of Indigenous leaders who engage in the politics of recognition have failed. Similar arguments have been made by academics, both Māori and non-Māori,

in relation to the Treaty settlement process and the pursuit of neoliberal economies by some of the rangatira and leaders at the forefront of the state-Māori political relationship.

The combined influence of financial redress through Treaty settlement and the introduction of neoliberal economic reform has had an inconsistent impact on Māori economies and Māori wellbeing. Dominic O'Sullivan has called this the "neoliberal paradox" (2018, 243). He explains that the ability of Māori to challenge the sale of state assets which could be claimed through the Waitangi Tribunal, coupled with settlement redress, increased the Māori asset base from NZ \$9.4 billion in 2001 to NZ\$36.9 billion in 2010. This has contributed significantly to what is now celebrated as a booming Māori economy. However, O'Sullivan also notes that the effects of neoliberalism (including high levels of unemployment and benefit cuts) had a disproportionately negative effect on Māori wellbeing. Despite this, he argues that a new relationship has been forged between Māori and the state since the neoliberal turn and has been one "where agency is privileged over subservience and perpetual victimhood" (O'Sullivan 2018, 242).

On the other hand, Simon Barber (2020) argues that the states relationship with Māori throughout the settlement process has only continued to impinge on the rangatiratanga of Māori. Indeed, many have argued that the state has had too much power in determining iwi economies. They highlight the coercive approach of the Crown in demanding the creation of post-settlement governance entities (henceforth PSGE)—modelled on the neoliberal principles of individualised wealth and market competition—as a pre-requisite for settlement (Bargh 2018, Barber 2020, Bell 2018). Others have criticised the preference of the Crown (and its ability to enforce this preference ) to settle only with iwi, especially considering that pre-colonisation, hapū were the primary economic unit (Kake 2020). Barber (2020) argues that not only has the settlements process continued the legacy of settler-capitalist colonisation, but in adopting the structure of PSGEs iwi themselves (he uses Ngāi Tahu as an example) become agents of colonisation: "The tribal corporation, then, has been a co-construction of the neoliberal state and an emergent neoliberal Māori elite" (Barber 2020,243). He argues that this co-construction has continued the settler-capitalist project of turning "tangata whenua into property and labour" (Barber 2020, 230).

Critiques of 'Māori elitism' and the growing inequality within Māori communities have been made since the neoliberal turn. Poata-Smith (1996; 1997) argues that the government's commitment to biculturalism in the 1980s suited middle-class Māori as it expanded employment opportunities, whereas its neoliberal policies impacted working-class Māori in the other direction (rising unemployment). He argues that this dynamic produced a group of "tribal executives and corporate warriors" who benefitted from exclusive government political recognition (Poata-Smith 1996, 98). In her Bruce Jesson memorial lecture, Annette Sykes (2010) criticised the Iwi Chair Forum for its lack of

transparency in economic decision-making, calling its members a Māori elite. Margaret Mutu has a somewhat more favourable view of the Iwi Chairs Forum, pointing to the foundational intention for it to be a forum where iwi can discuss options 'to properly exercise our *mana* and *tino rangatiratanga* to maximise the benefits of settlements" (2021,279). She emphasises that the founding members agreed that any Crown involvement should be limited and only on their (iwi members) terms. She points out that one of the successes of the Forum has been the establishment of Matike Mai, which has gained traction both here and internationally. However, she laments that "Government ministers, bureaucrats, and *kūpapa* are shameless in their attempts to infiltrate and influence the work and decision of the Forum" and that this has made the initial commitment to limiting Crown involvement difficult (Mutu 2021, 280).

Many of the critiques above highlight the colonial tendency of the Crown to reinforce the dynamics of settler-capitalism even while giving the impression of meeting Māori demands for recognition. The enforcement of PSGEs as an economic structure has required iwi to structure their economies in line with neoliberal principles. Furthermore, the neoliberal paradox, which sees the economic growth of iwi coincide with increased levels of Māori poverty, has given rise to what some describe as a Māori elite. While agreeing that neoliberalism has produced inequality within Māori economies, Maria Bargh argues that the situation is not as simple as the arguments above make out. She writes: "There is not simply a group of elite Māori recognised by the Crown as economic actors, indoctrinated in neoliberal thought and a marginalised underclass of Māori resistance" (Bargh 2018, 294). Instead, she highlights the diversity of economic practices employed by Māori since the neoliberal turn and the multiple roles played by iwi leaders. I turn now to a more positive framing of Māori economic development as I explore literature relating to the transformative potential of Māori economies.

### *Explorations of the transformative potential of Māori economies*

In her article "Spatial Justice—Decolonising Our Cities and Settlements", Jade Kake argues that some Māori economies have survived despite the massive scale of land alienation facilitated by settler capitalism. She explains that "Māori social and political structures, and accompanying culturally based practices of reciprocity, have, to varying degrees, been maintained parallel to, and outside of, the capitalist economy from 1840 through to the present day" (Kake 2020). Similar arguments have been made by Māori studies and diverse economies scholar Maria Bargh (2012, 277), who argues that *tikanga* practices of *mana*, *utu*, *kaitiakitanga*, and *whakapapa* have long acted as "ethical coordinates" for Māori economies to ensure the wellbeing of people and planet. Both authors argue that these long-standing cultural practices are at the heart of the transformative potential of Māori economies. As indicated in the previous chapter, the argument that diverse Māori economies continue to exist

despite settler capitalism provides a point of departure for discussing the transformative potential of Māori economies.

Responding to arguments about the politics of recognition (outlined above), Bargh argues that “critiques of neoliberal policies and practices must be accompanied by an exploration of those areas of a diverse economy that are forging other alternative neoliberal or non-neoliberal worlds” (2018, 294). She argues against the assumption that all iwi enterprise is facilitated through a neoliberal capitalist market, pointing out that iwi leaders inhabit multiple roles in the economy and simultaneously pursue various economic strategies. Drawing on Gibson-Graham, she argues against the pessimism of Leftist perceptions that capitalism is all-encompassing – suggesting that this attitude often leads to political paralysis. She asserts that:

instead of being fixated on a particular form of power from which leftists are excluded, a more productive orientation is to look for the places where people and communities are already engaged in multiple roles with multiple possibilities for political and economic transformation (Bargh 2018, 300).

She points out that the Iwi Chairs Forum, which is often subject to Leftist critique (as indicated above), is involved in a variety of economic activities that “promote labour, enterprises, transactions, property and finance that are non-capitalist or alternative capitalist” (Bargh 2018, 301). Citing the iwi enterprises associated with the Waikato River Settlement as an example, she explains that the members of the Iwi Chairs Forum responsible for negotiating the terms of the settlement made efforts to provide for the restoration of important taonga. For example, the settlement allowed for the establishment of five “River Trusts” which in turn have facilitated the building of a native tree nursery and the restoration of native fresh-water species (Bargh 2018, 301). In this instance, political and economic recognition from the state via Treaty settlements, instead of pulling natural resources further into the capitalist mode of production, as Coulthard emphasises, has facilitated the restoration of taonga and enabled mana whenua to fulfil their obligation as kaitiaki. She does not claim that political and economic recognition from the state amounts to rangatiratanga for Māori. She simply draws attention to the positive, non-capitalist aspects of iwi enterprises which are sometimes overlooked by those who critique recognition politics.

Elsewhere, Bargh (2012, 271) has argued that Māori enterprises contribute to another “possible world” beyond capitalism. Investigating Māori-owned enterprises involved in the production of geothermal energy, Bargh argues that the ethical coordinates named above facilitate an economy in which surplus is distributed to marae, the elderly, and through scholarships. Further to this, recognising that the surplus consumed by humans is often provided by nature, some of the geothermal enterprises foster a reciprocal relationship with the land by engaging in restoration

practices. Similar observations have been made by Maria Amoamo, Katharina Ruckstuhl, and Diane Ruwhiu (2018) in their case study research of an eco-tourism business that is collectively owned by a regional Māori community. Their case study challenges "capitalocentric understandings of tourism" by highlighting that the business employs the practice of redistributing profit to enhance ecological restoration and that this stands in "stark contrast to the economic rationality of individual self-interest and competition" (Amoamo et al. 2018,490).

This chapter has taken a closer look at Māori economies, the dynamics of settler-capitalism that have shaped them, and the transformative potential of Māori economies as sites in which the rangatiratanga sphere can be built. In the next chapter, I take another step towards understanding how Māori economies relate to rangatiratanga. I turn now to a presentation of my interview-based research with kaimahi and leaders in Māori economies.

## Chapter Three: The role of Māori economies in restoring rangatiratanga

In this chapter, I present the findings from a thematic analysis of interviews with eight people who either work in or are key informants on Māori economies. The purpose of this research was to get a better understanding of the nuances of Māori economies and how they relate to rangatiratanga. Speaking directly with people allows the opportunity to gain insights that may not be accessible in the literature. In this chapter, I outline my methodological approach to the interviews and the qualitative data analysis I used. I then present participant profiles to indicate the varied backgrounds this research draws on. Finally, I move on to an in-depth discussion of the themes I constructed using thematic analysis. The main research question guiding the thematic analysis asked, ‘what role do Māori economies play in restoring rangatiratanga?’

### Methodology

#### *Approach to interviews*

I was interested in speaking with people who occupied various roles within Māori economies to find out their perspectives on rangatiratanga in relation to their work. I conducted semi-structured, informal interviews because I wanted my conversations with participants to take a natural course in which participants would talk about what was most important to them. There were, however, some specific things I wanted to cover. I wanted to know:

- What they considered to be the core purpose of their organisation.
- If there were any barriers to fulfilling this purpose.
- The kinds of things that facilitated good outcomes in their mahi.
- What rangatiratanga meant to them both generally and in relation to their mahi.

While my broader interests lie in the relationship between settler-capitalism and Māori economies, I did not specifically ask questions about capitalism or the state, based on the assumption that people do not necessarily frame their work in relation to settler capitalism. As it happened, discussions around capitalism and the state arose naturally in some interviews but not in others.

Participants were initially recruited based on the following selection criteria. They had to work in or be involved with organisations that were:

- Māori-led (based on self-identified Māori leadership and presence of Māori kaupapa e.g. tino rangatiratanga).
- Non-profit.

My rationale for these criteria is as follows:

- Māori are best positioned to speak into matters of Māori economy and Māori economic experience because there is less room for cultural misinterpretation. This is consistent with the approach of grounded normativity outlined by Coulthard (2014). While I was open to talking with non-Māori (and did), I saw it as important that the overall organisation had strong Māori leadership.
- I was particularly interested in understanding what motivated economic activity if not profit. While many for-profit organisations have social impact policies and values, it can be difficult to separate these from the profit motive and to determine if they would be retained in situations where they compromised profit.

Midway through the interviews, I realised that some of the people I had interviewed contributed as 'key informants' on Māori economies as well as representatives of their organisation as initially intended. Seeing the value in these conversations, I opened my selection criteria to include key informants on Māori economies.

The selection criteria for key informants are as follows. Participants needed to:

- Identify as Māori
- Have notable experience researching topics related to Māori economies or working in Māori economies.

Expanding the selection criteria proved valuable, enabling me to speak to people with a working concept of the Māori economy (this was not always the case for participants recruited earlier, who did not frame their mahi in terms of Māori economies). This second group did not strictly meet the earlier non-profit criteria because their non-profit work was funded through commercial companies. These groups are represented more accurately by the term 'social enterprise', that is, "a business or



entity that aims for social, cultural and/or environmental impact alongside revenue generation” (MBIE 2021). While the second group of participants had much to contribute to the topic of non-profit motivations within Māori economies, their perspectives on rangatiratanga in the capitalist sphere were also valuable.

### *Analytic approach: thematic analysis*

I have drawn on *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide For Beginners* by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke to inform my approach to thematic analysis (2013). As outlined by Braun and Clarke, thematic analysis of interview data involves a three-stage process. The first stage is data familiarisation. This involves reading the interview transcripts several times to gain familiarity with the data. During this stage, I took brief notes about things that stood out to me. The second stage, 'coding', involves identifying aspects of the data related to my research questions. According to Braun and Clarke, “a code is a word or brief phrase that captures the essence of why you think a particular bit of data may be useful” (2013, 207). Specifically, I used ‘complete coding’ (as opposed to ‘selective coding’) as I aimed “to identify anything and everything of interest or relevance to answering [my] research question, within [my] entire dataset” (Braun and Clarke, 2013, 206), as opposed to selecting only parts of the data to analyse based on pre-chosen criteria. The final stage involves identifying and naming themes. This process included grouping codes into ‘candidate themes’ or deciding that a code could be ‘promoted’ to a theme. Braun and Clarke indicate that “A good code will capture one idea; a theme has a central organising concept but will contain lots of different ideas or aspects related to the central organising concept (each of those might be a code)” (Braun and Clarke, 2013, 224). They also emphasised that themes do not 'emerge from the data' but are informed by the theoretical orientation and bias of the researcher.

## Participant profiles

I spoke to eight people, six of whom identify as Māori and two who do not. I include participant profiles below to give a sense of the varied backgrounds and contexts that form the basis of this research. These profiles are based on information gathered from the interviews themselves or from publicly available information on organisation websites. Participants have had the opportunity to review them for accuracy.

### ***The Kai Ika Project***

The Kai Ika Project collects unwanted fish heads and frames from fishing companies and clubs in Tāmaki Makaurau and then redistributes them through the community networks established through

Papatūānuku Kōkiri marae. It is a non-profit organisation in that the profit from its limited commercial activity goes back into the project. I spoke with members from LegaSea (a non-profit organisation dedicated to restoring the abundance, biodiversity and health of New Zealand's marine environment) and Papatūānuku Kōkiri marae, two of the founding partners of the Kai Ika Project.

### ***Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae***

Papatūānuku Kōkiri marae began as an Incorporated Society founded in the 1970s by Mere Knight and friends, with the support of mana whenua (Tainui). Today the marae operates out of a trust dedicated to protecting the "wellbeing of the whenua, kaupapa, and assets of Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae" (PKM 2022). The marae is home to an enormous garden cultivated based on the Hua Parakore principles of whakapapa, wairua, mana, maramatanga, te ao tūroa, and mauri. It is also the main centre for fish distribution through the Kai Ika Project.

### ***Participants***

Scott Macindoe: LegaSea – Support Crew

Dallas Abel: LegaSea - Kai Ika project coordinator

Valerie Teraitua (Ngāti Whātua Ki Kaipara, Ngāpuhi, Rarotonga): Papatūānuku Kōkiri Marae - Kaiwhakahaere Matua | CEO

### ***Whenua Warrior***

Whenua Warrior is a charitable organisation that facilitates various gardening projects in South Auckland. Founded by Kelly Francis with the support of friends, Whenua Warrior addresses food insecurity and promotes food sovereignty by building garden boxes and empowering people to grow their own food. The organisation is based on the gardening principles known as Hua Parakore, which centre on care for whenua and whānau and promotes the mātauranga passed down from tūpuna. Whenua Warrior operates out of a trust set up to receive funding from public and private sponsors and donors.

### ***Participant***

Kelly Francis (Ngāti Wharara, Ngāti Korokoro and Te Poukākā): Whenua Warrior - Founder and Kaimahi

### ***Matakohe Architecture + Urbanism***

Matakohe Architecture + Urbanism is a design studio based in Whāngarei. It is a private company with a not-for-profit company attached. Matakohe works on various civic, housing, and kāinga projects

around Northland. They also engage in non-profit mahi for the hapū of Whāngārei, including environmental protection and Vision Mātauranga projects.

#### *Participants/Key Informants*

Jade Kake (Ngāpuhi - Ngāti Hau me Te Parawhau; Te Whakatōhea, Te Arawa): Matakōhe – Director, Architectural & Urban Designer

Nicki Wakefield (Ngāpuhi, Ngāi Tahu, Te Whakatōhea, Te Arawa): Matakōhe – Researcher, GIS Analyst, Facilitator

#### ***Independent key informant***

Manu Caddie (Ngāti Pūkenga, Ngāti Hauā): Entrepreneur and co-founder of Rua Bioscience, Hikurangi Enterprises and Hikurangi Bioactives Limited Partnership.

Manu was recruited as a key informant on Māori economies due to his experience in rural Māori economic development. I was also interested in Manu's background as an anarchist organiser and fan of Marx and how he reconciled that with founding a company worth \$100m on the day it was listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange (NZX).

#### ***Independent key informant***

Dr Matthew Scobie (Kāi Tahu – Kāti Huirapa, Pākehā): Academic

Matthew was recruited as a key informant on Māori economies because of his academic background in Indigenous development and diverse economies, as well as his PhD research which explored relationships of accountability between Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu the organisation, and Ngāi Tahu the iwi.

Notably, I did not speak to anyone who represented corporate iwi entities such as PSGEs. While Matthew had a great deal of valuable information to share regarding iwi-level economies and politics, he contributed as an academic, and his views should not be regarded as the perspective of Ngāi Tahu. It is likely that the lack of representation at an iwi level has skewed the interview data. There is a strong critique of the role of iwi in treaty settlements, for instance. An iwi perspective on this issue would have been valuable to the research.

While my interviews included speaking with non-Māori who worked alongside Māori, my analysis has privileged Māori voices. One of the reasons for this is that in the analysis, I tended to focus on themes to do with rangatiratanga, a topic that I did not cover with the non-Māori participants. Interviews with

non-Māori were valued and centred around the purpose, scope, and functioning of the projects they were involved with. While their contributions feature, they do not account for the bulk of the data presented below.

## Thematic analysis

### *Mana whenua is paramount*

‘Mana whenua is paramount’ is an overarching theme capturing the view held by participants that mana whenua have, or ought to have, authority over what happens in their rohe. Mana whenua is understood both as the power and authority people have *over* land (Mead 2016) as well as the power and authority *of* the land herself, which extends to the people occupying specific areas (Mutu 2021). The concept thus goes beyond the political and economic implications of land ownership, occupation, or use. It includes the cultural or spiritual dimension informed by whakapapa and underpinned by an obligation to uphold the mana of the whenua. Notably, mana whenua status is usually attached to hapū and whānau groups rather than iwi (Mutu 2021). However, there are instances where mana whenua over a particular rohe or resource has been claimed at an iwi level (Mead 2016). The mana whenua status of a group, whether whānau, hapū, or iwi, can and has been contested. While "determining mana whenua interests has long been at the forefront of iwi dynamics", Mead emphasises the particular struggles that have arisen during treaty settlement negotiations where more than one iwi or hapū claim mana whenua status in relation to particular land or resources (Haami Piripi cited in Mead 2016, 227). As will be demonstrated, mana whenua status and whether it is upheld carries important implications within Māori economies.

The overarching theme ‘mana whenua is paramount’ was expressed by participants in three ways which I have identified with the following three themes: ‘Iwi dominance’ communicates the idea that the economic power held by iwi constrains the rangatiratanga of smaller mana whenua groups; ‘mana whenua consciousness’ captures the idea that the politicisation of mana whenua leads to the assertion of rangatiratanga over their land and resources in the face of iwi dominance; ‘mana whenua in the urban context’ relates to the cultural and economic significance of mana whenua how this impacts and is impacted by urban Māori economies. Linking these three themes is the idea that colonisation has interrupted or otherwise impacted the authority of mana whenua.

### *Iwi dominance*

‘Iwi dominance’ communicates the idea that the economic power held by iwi constrains the rangatiratanga of smaller mana whenua groups such as hapū and whānau. The following extracts, from Jade and Manu illustrate how participants problematised iwi dominance. Jade argued that:

[...] iwi had no economic function pre-colonisation and in early contact. And so it's kind of perverse that they're now being vested as the main economic entity. And in some areas, it's more problematic than others. You can see why Ngāpuhi is probably the most problematic because we're the largest. And some of our hapū could be iwi in their own right [...] Whereas in other areas, it's less of an issue because the scale is different. And maybe the relationships are different. But I think the big one is scale.

In the extract above Jade problematised iwi economic dominance in the context of Treaty settlements. She went on to argue that iwi dominance also occurs with Crown funding outside of treaty settlements. She said:

So we're seeing a stronger role for iwi, which is problematic in somewhere like Ngāpuhi where we are very hapū-centric. And so if the decisions about funding are being made from Kaikohe (where Te Rūnanga-Ā-Iwi-Ō-Ngāpuhi is based), will that disadvantage the hapū of Whangārei, for example? There's a potential equity issue there actually. (Jade Kake)

Similarly, Manu problematised iwi dominance in post-settlement iwi-hapū organising. He explained:

So Ngāti Porou is the iwi, and all of the 54 hapū within Ngāti Porou were encouraged and supported to think about the post-settlement world. But the final structure seemed fairly predetermined, probably by the iwi entity, around sort of giving them the mandate to continue being the iwi entity [...] there's good arguments as to why that makes sense in terms of economies of scale and iwi assets and things. But like any sort of large organisation that's trying to represent disparate interests, some people felt railroaded in that process, and assets that really belong to the hapū or whoever, Māori landowners, were being captured by the iwi entity. But [it was] in that context, or through that process, both before and after settlement, that hapū started getting more organised and into clusters. (Manu Caddie)

Implicit in the terms 'vested', 'predetermined', 'problematic', and 'railroaded' is the observation that the economic role of iwi has developed with limited participation and consent of the hapū and whānau who make up the iwi. Elsewhere, participants noted that the Crown had an active role not only in mandating iwi as the primary economic unit through the construction of PSGEs but also in determining which hapū were counted as part of the iwi. Jade's observation above is consistent with the historical evidence on social and economic groupings. Historian Atholl Anderson (2015) describes hapū as "the main operational unit" and notes that hapū land and assets (such as waka, tools etc.) were held

collectively under rangatira. He points out that while it was beneficial for hapū to join forces at times for food-gathering exercises or warfare, the rangatiratanga of each hapū was fiercely defended. Furthermore, Nicki pointed out in the interview that "those larger iwi alliances only occurred amongst the willing hapū" and said that alliances were "pretty fluid". The construction of iwi as the main economic unit not only gives iwi the unprecedented mandate to determine economies based on hapū and whānau land but also fixes in place the fluid relationship between whānau, hapū and iwi. Participants see both these things as impinging on the rangatiratanga and mana whenua of hapū and whānau.

Jade and Manu both referred to the scale of iwi, but they talked about it in different ways. While Manu suggested that the ability of iwi to create "economies of scale" could be useful, Jade saw this practice as potentially problematic, arguing that iwi (particularly large iwi) did not have an economic role pre-colonisation. As elaborated below, Matthew also emphasised the positive aspects of large-scale iwi economics and, referring to Matike Mai, argued that operating *within* capitalism, they can help build the rangatiratanga sphere *against* and *beyond* it. So, while most participants problematised the political implications of iwi dominance, some saw economic advantages to iwi economies of scale. As will be illustrated throughout this chapter, complexities like these reflect the nuances of Māori economies in relation to rangatiratanga.

### *Mana whenua consciousness*

The theme mana whenua consciousness is derived from the Marxist idea of class consciousness. It alludes to the awareness that mana whenua have of their power and authority (mana) in relation to their land and resources; it is an awareness that informs the politics of smaller mana whenua groups and, ultimately, their assertion of rangatiratanga when it is threatened by other entities such as the Crown and iwi. Participants referred to examples both past and present where mana whenua groups such as marae and hapū asserted rangatiratanga in relation to the political and economic organisation of iwi. Some participants emphasised the external politicising nature of the treaty settlement process, while others emphasised the inherent and enduring nature of mana whenua groups as political entities.

Matthew and Manu talked about the politicising effect that the creation and operation of PSGEs have had on hapū and marae. In a conversation about the corporatisation of iwi, Matthew described the division of Ngāi Tahu's PSGE into the 'office', which has many Ngāi Tahu staff members, and the 'holding company' made up predominantly of Pākehā, overseen by the board made up of Ngāi Tahu representatives. He explained that typically each year, the board writes a letter of expectation setting out their expectations, but other than that, they tend to "let Pākehā run the corporation". One

of the ways profit maximisation is achieved, Matthew explained, is through the sale of land. Referencing Barber, Matthew pointed out the contradiction of transforming whenua into land (a commodity to be sold) because this further alienated whenua Māori. He pointed out that "part of the settlement is increasing the tribal footprint". The following exchange illustrates how this contradiction has given rise to the assertion of rangatiratanga by mana whenua over the corporate function of the iwi:

*Matthew:* And now the tribe is going, 'oh, that's [the sale of iwi land] not good. How do we stop that from happening?' So as the tribe is getting bigger, now, the iwi they're starting to assert more authority over the corporation.

*Danielle:* How does that look?

*Matthew:* Just more detail in those letters of expectation demanding more employment within the iwi. So it's becoming more likely now that chairs, executives, and board members are Ngāi Tahu or Māori people, and it's about opening up opportunities to use the corporation now to advance the mana motuhake of the individual marae.

Here Matthew implies that the mana motuhake of marae is not well understood or prioritised by non-Māori working in the holding company and that iwi members are now demanding more Ngāi Tahu representation. Interestingly, he attributed this new assertion of authority and demand for accountability to the increased cultural capacity of iwi members made possible by the increased money flow from the corporation. He argued that "as you use the money from the corporation to rebuild the culture of the iwi, the culture of the iwi starts to go, what the hell is this? This isn't us. How do we transform?" The politicisation of Ngāi Tahu mana whenua through the operation of the PSGE resonates with Manu's whakaaro mentioned above in which he pointed out that it was during the post-settlement discussions for Ngāti Porou that hapū started getting organised into clusters. This suggests that while treaty settlements have given rise to iwi dominance, they have also had a politicising effect on mana whenua that may not otherwise have happened.

In contrast, Nicki suggests that hapū resistance to iwi-level political organisation is not new, but an inherent feature of northern Māori identity claiming that "hapū rangatiratanga [is] a major part of our DNA". Here, Nicki emphasises the inherent and enduring political nature of hapū as mana whenua. The hapū-centrism of the north is perhaps reflected in the different ways Nicki and Jade (both based in Whangārei) operate within the Māori economy compared to other participants. At Matakōhe, Jade and Nicki make a special effort to ensure their work is held accountable to hapū-rangatiratanga. In contrast, Manu explained that the mahi he is involved with operates predominantly

“outside of the iwi-hapū structure” so that kaimahi can “make commercial decisions quickly”. He added, “we wanted to support what the iwi and hapū aspirations were, [we are] just doing it parallel, sort of alongside”. While participants were united in the perspective that the rangatiratanga of mana whenua is important to consider in Māori economies, they had different strategies for achieving it.

#### *Mana whenua in the urban context*

‘Mana whenua in the urban context’ is a theme that captures the participants’ view that the rangatiratanga of mana whenua ought to be upheld in urban centres where assertions of pan-tribal identities are strongest. This theme explores how the cultural and economic significance of mana whenua impacts and is impacted by urban Māori economies. As a result of urbanisation, many Māori live outside of their traditional rohe on the alienated lands of urban mana whenua. This raises particular issues around rangatiratanga and Māori economies. Since Māori began urbanising in the mid-twentieth century, a strong pan-tribal identity has developed in urban centres (King et al. 2018). Identifying a need to meet the economic and social needs of Māori who had become disconnected from their iwi, urban Māori authorities began to assert themselves in political and economic forums. They claimed rangatiratanga rights under Article Two of te Tiriti and insisted that they receive a portion of treaty settlement money given that they were already set up to meet the needs of urban Māori. While the Waitangi Tribunal backed this claim, it received little traction with iwi PSGEs or the Crown (Rangiheuea 2011).

While participants held different perspectives on the validity of pan-tribal identities, they agreed that mana whenua authority ought to be upheld. For example, in describing the relationship between mana whenua and Papatūānuku Kōkiri marae in Manakau, Val explained that:

[...] a lot of the people that came [to the marae] from outside of Tāmaki to look for work. So Nanny Mere [the founder] was from Ngāti Porou—we had the support of mana whenua, Tainui—and then everybody else was from Ngāti Hine, Ngāpuhi, and other places across Aotearoa. And so, we uphold the tikanga and the values of Tainui. [...] But Papatūānuku Kōkiri marae is a pan-tribal marae; it's for everyone.

In her korero, Val shared that Nanny Mere founded the marae with the support of mana whenua, to help Māori who had “lost their identity [and] tikanga”. She specified that the marae was built on land leased from the Council. This suggests that even though this land had already been alienated, it was still necessary to gain mana whenua consent to build a marae there. One possible explanation for this value is that mana whenua status has a spiritual element. Mutu (2021,270) argues that “Vesting Western legal title in another person does not remove mana whenua from a whānau and the



responsibilities of the whānau and the hapū to uphold mana whenua and prevent desecration and despoliation of their lands”. In this case, Papatūānuku Kōkiri marae maintains a reciprocal relationship with Tainui which honours the enduring obligations of mana whenua.

Jade had a somewhat different perspective as she problematised the concept of a pan-tribal identity. She asserted that:

[...] even though so many of us are urbanised, I just don't think a pan-Māori identity has much validity. And the idea of being new kind of urban tribes or whatever, I just don't think that has validity either. Because I think as Māori, what makes us Māori is being hapū-centric, being part of this whānau, hapū, iwi structure, our emphasis on whakapapa, that connects us to other people and to place. And so if you sort of take that away, I don't know what's left. [...] And so I guess I find it worrying when people think the answer is be more urban. Whereas I think actually, the answer is to become more hapū-centric, connect back to your whakapapa. That doesn't mean you have to be physically located there, necessarily.

Notably, Jade emphasised hapū-centrism as preferable to pan-tribalism. This is particularly interesting given that the assertion of pan-tribal identity and rangatiratanga by urban Māori authorities is typically asserted in relation to iwi and not hapū. While it seems that both perspectives critique iwi dominance, Jade was wary of the tendency within urban settings to construct homogenised forms of Māori identity (both individual and collective), separate from whenua and hapū-based forms of collective identity. However, she conceded that there is a place for urban Māori organisations to provide for urban Māori as long as they “come under the korowai of mana whenua”.

Despite the difference of opinion regarding pan-tribalism, Val and Jade both agree that mana whenua status is just as applicable in urban contexts as elsewhere. They also both see the value in urban Māori collaborating with mana whenua on projects that improve the wellbeing of whānau Māori in the city.

The paramount importance of mana whenua came across strongly in the interview data. Participants generally problematised iwi dominance due to the tendency of iwi to constrain the rangatiratanga of smaller mana whenua groups. Some, however, saw the value of iwi economies of scale that could be turned towards the cultural and economic development of the iwi and, in some cases, enable smaller mana whenua groups to assert rangatiratanga within the iwi economic entity. Participants also emphasised the importance of the authority of mana whenua in urban contexts, even when there was disagreement as to the legitimacy of pan-Māori identities. These findings suggest that dismissing new cultural formations, such as corporate iwi and urban pan-tribal groups, is perhaps too simple. The participants made clear that there is political will within Māori economies to assert

rangatiratanga at all levels of social and economic formation. We may yet see a return to more hapū-centric economies if hapū continue to assert themselves in the face of iwi dominance. Furthermore, given that iwi are currently the primary entity for transferring resources from the Crown to mana whenua, large-scale iwi economies may well be an important stepping stone toward rangatiratanga.

### *The rangatiratanga paradox*

Nancy Postero and Nicole Fabricant point to the paradox at the heart of Indigenous self-determination efforts, saying, "indigenous actors must negotiate their self-determination with the states whose essential characteristic is exerting territorial sovereignty" (2019, 95). The same can be said for the assertion or restoration of rangatiratanga within Māori economies. I would only add that in Māori economies, rangatiratanga must be negotiated with the state *and* within the capitalist market, both of which are designed to constrain rangatiratanga. 'The rangatiratanga paradox' is an overarching theme which captures this point in the interview data. The following four themes fit within this overarching theme: 'rangatiratanga work' denotes the idea that participants see their work as supporting or asserting rangatiratanga; 'it's not about the money, but money is essential' captures the irony that non-profit entities spend much time figuring out ways to access money, and 'negotiating rangatiratanga with the state' and 'negotiating rangatiratanga in the market' express the idea that to achieve effective outcomes in rangatiratanga work, participants had to make certain compromises in relation to both the state and capitalist market forces. Collectively, these themes demonstrate the paradox at the heart of the Māori economies; in negotiating with the state and in the market, some pathways towards rangatiratanga must be sacrificed to pursue others. As demonstrated below, there are multiple pathways to pursue and various roadblocks along the way.

### *Rangatiratanga mahi*

The theme 'rangatiratanga mahi' demonstrates the idea that participants tended to articulate their mahi in terms of the assertion or restoration of rangatiratanga. Some participants made this explicit: "everything that we're doing as a practice [...] needs to be about enhancing hapū rangatiratanga" (Jade), "tino rangatiratanga to me is what we're doing. [...] we've just been walking it out, just been doing it" (Val). Others linked their mahi to broader concepts of rangatiratanga, such as not having to depend on the government for grants or welfare or the market for housing and food. Others talked about their efforts to "bring the talent back home" (Nicki) by providing work opportunities for whānau that coincided with strengthening the cultural networks of hapū. The South Auckland participants emphasised that their mahi was directed towards all people in their community, not just Māori. They argued that fostering and promoting mātauranga Māori, particularly in gardening projects, helps to break down the barriers between Māori and non-Māori and normalised Māori

values pertaining to sustainability, reciprocity, and kaitiakitanga. This, in turn, would protect future generations of Māori. Whether directly or indirectly linked, participants had no trouble linking their mahi to concepts of rangatiratanga. The examples below demonstrate some of the different elements of rangatiratanga pursued in Māori economies.

Jade gives an example of how Matakoho is directly involved in restoring rangatiratanga over housing and kāinga projects to hapū and iwi. The desire to enhance rangatiratanga influences all their decisions, including deciding what clients to take on. She explained:

Everything that we're doing as a practice [...] needs to be about enhancing hapū rangatiratanga. And so, really, it should be people who whakapapa there doing that work wherever possible. So, for Matakoho, that's part of our approach. You know, we won't just take on anything; we've got our preference to do work where we've got direct whakapapa.

Further in the interview, Jade mentioned that there are times when Matakoho will accept work on projects where they have no whakapapa connection. In these instances, they encourage their clients to reach out to their uri but often find that “they might not know who their skilled people are”. In these cases, Matakoho offers to “umbrella and support” budding architects who share whakapapa with the clients in an effort to upskill people to support their iwi or hapū and thus build the capacity for rangatiratanga over housing projects. Although Jade framed this practice as an assertion of rangatiratanga, it could be argued that the boundaries Matakoho places on who they work with is also an anti-capitalist value. Rather than being driven by profit maximisation motives, Matakoho is motivated to maximise opportunities for iwi and hapū to take control of housing projects. In some cases, this includes the ability of iwi to subsidise housing, making it more affordable for their uri, who are excluded by market prices.

Kelly of Whenua Warrior spoke about indirect methods of advancing rangatiratanga through her mahi. Kelly's articulation of rangatiratanga was about ensuring the wellbeing of future generations: “I feel like the way we need to be going is thinking about how it is that our impact will still benefit positively for the whenua and the people in 800 years when we're dust.” For her, this involved addressing food insecurity by building peoples' capacity for food sovereignty. Kelly's approach to rangatiratanga is quite different to Jade's. Instead of focusing on upskilling Māori to work in the service of their hapū or iwi, Kelly wanted to promote mātauranga informed gardening practices to ensure it becomes a normal way of life not just for urban Māori but for everyone. She envisioned a world where mātauranga Māori flourishes and informs all aspects of life, including no longer having to rely on supermarkets. Articulating this vision, she said:

The dream is that we go from a charity, to a movement, to a lifestyle, to telling stories when I'm 86 years old at a Kohanga Reo, plaiting hair going, "did you know we used to have to go to a supermarket back in my day?"

The practical manifestation of this dream is lived out through various gardening projects in which Whenua Warrior provides plant-box gardens for families in South Auckland. However, it is not just the material aspects that Kelly considered important; she explains:

It's not this vegetable plant that I'm planting in this garden for this one family now; it is the information that I give with the one vegetable plant being planted inside that one garden which is for this one family, for this one group of eight people. And really, it all comes down to educating that person and empowering that person so much that they can then teach the next lot of people. Because the reality is that [name] great, great, great-grandchildren might eventually be feeding my great, great, great-grandchildren. So, what can I teach [name] so that his great, great, great-grandchildren will feed mine?

The cross-cultural and inter-generational reciprocity that Kelly spoke of here is deeply connected to her rangatiratanga work. While Jade's work is more explicitly directed towards rangatiratanga, Kelly works toward a broader rangatiratanga goal of ensuring the wellbeing of generations to come through the normalisation of gardening as a way of life informed by mātauranga Māori.

*It's not about the money...but money is essential*

The theme 'it's not about the money, but money is essential' expresses the ambiguous role that money and profit play in non-profit entities and social enterprises. Many participants said things like: "It's never been about the pūtea" (Val), or "most of them didn't do it to make any money; they really wanted to support the kaupapa" (Manu), or "this company had a very specific kaupapa and vision and purpose [...] beyond making money for shareholders" (Manu). However, participants also identified that limited access to money or finance was one of the most significant barriers to continuing rangatiratanga mahi. This was illustrated by comments such as: "But it all comes down to the money - no money, no Kai Ika" (Scott), or "we couldn't raise enough money from the community [...] to do in the company what we needed to be done" (Manu), or "so the whole thing is to be able to do more [distribute fish-frames to whānau], but in order to do that, we need that resource, that money" (Dallas). Ironically, it seems that to avoid being driven by profit, considerable time, effort, and skill need to be dedicated to *accessing* money.

The overrepresentation of Māori in low-socioeconomic indices significantly impacts overall health and mortality rates (Blakely et al. 2007). Access to money and resources like housing and food

is, quite literally, a matter of life and death. Unsurprisingly, economic deprivation in Māori communities was a key feature of the interview data, with all participants alluding to it at least once. Geographic differences influenced the particular aspects of economic deprivation that participants focused on. For example, in rural communities, unemployment was named as a pressing issue, while food and housing insecurity were emphasised in urban areas. These differences shaped the particular issues that rangatiratanga mahi was oriented toward in each area; these, in turn, influenced the type of economic entity participants were involved with. Economic entities included charities operating on a shoestring budget provided for by public and private sponsors, not-for-profit organisations attached to commercial companies but also eligible for government funding, and a community trust attached to a multi-million-dollar enterprise listed on the New Zealand stock exchange (NZX). Participants differed in attitudes toward money, government funding, privatisation, and employment.

Attitudes towards money varied among participants. Some commented on the potential for money to corrupt people's motives or intentions. For example, Matthew asked:

Can we use money to build mana? I'm still hopeful that we can. But you can go too far, right? And that becomes your identity, and that becomes the mana, and so mana diminishes, and money replaces that. And we don't want that to happen.

Val had similar concerns, saying:

[...] we can look at examples of where money has overtaken people's hearts and minds, you know, when it comes to delivery, but that's because they got government contracts.

For Val, money was less important than fulfilling the kaupapa of care for people and the environment. Indeed, all of the Kai Ika participants had a sense of pride that they could run "on the smell of an oily rag" (Val; Dallas) or could "just make it happen" (Scott) when they were strapped for cash. Manu, on the other hand, asserted: "I'm not ashamed that we did rely on private capital and filthy capitalists to get us going," and pointed out that access to flows of capital would make life "less gruelling" for his community. He and Jade saw access to large-scale "capital" (Manu) or "finance" (Jade) as one of the most critical factors in rangatiratanga mahi. This is likely because the economies Jade and Manu are involved in (housing and rural economic development respectively) operate on a much larger economic scale than the food distribution economy Kai Ika facilitates. While all participants conceded that money made their work possible, the scale of their operations appears to influence their attitude toward money.

Similarly, there were different attitudes regarding government funding. Jade and Nicki saw it as essential to their work and were reasonably happy to go through the process of applying for it. Jade said:

No, they've [the government] been very enabling and supportive. But I have to say that I'm me and my cousin is who she is, and we've got some skills that we've been able to bring to this process. So, I don't know if that's typical. I would say they've been really enabling and allowed us to do it (their funded projects) the way we wanted to do it instead of forcing us into a process that they've decided was the right process.

In contrast, Manu said, "I'm kind of proud that we didn't have to rely on government". While he conceded that government funding could have been "handy", he valued the independence from the government "calling the shots". Scott also preferred to keep the government at arm's length. He explained:

We're starting to get in amongst the Ministry for Primary [Industries], and the Ministry for the Environment, and the Ministry of Social Development. But I have to say, I tried to avoid that engagement, that contact. What I do know is that it's bloody hard work and the funding burden, the accountability, and the reconciling and the governance and all the rules and paperwork and so forth, you sort of sometimes just have to wonder whether or not you can go there. And the money we do get is pretty small.

Although Kai Ika eventually received government funding, they chose not to until they had established "proof of concept" (Scott) and a sense of autonomy over the project. It appears that participants' attitudes towards government funding depended at least partially on their ability to retain rangatiratanga over their mahi.

Participants also had different attitudes towards privatisation. Matthew and Jade both problematised the privatisation of whenua Māori. Matthew pointed to the "contradiction" that arises when "whenua has—through the property company, through the holdings company—been transformed into an asset and then packaged and sold off", arguing that "mana whenua needs whenua". Similarly, Jade insisted that "we need to have more collectively owned land, not less" and "collective housing more aligns with my values and where I think we should be going with housing". Jade regarded holding on to whenua Māori as of paramount importance and argued that "we've got a responsibility to all of those who whakapapa there, and responsibility to do something that is of collective benefit". Rather than selling collective land to raise finance Jade argued that there needs to be "finance reform" around whenua Māori so that it is less difficult to raise finance for development.

On the other hand, Matthew pointed out that Ngāi Tahu had “improved the material conditions of a lot of people within capitalism”. He argued that rangatira “have the urgency and the accountability as tribal leaders to advance the welfare of their people,” which had required “some funding which has been generated through the capitalist mode of production”, including the sale of Ngāi Tahu land. While both agree tribal assets or wealth should be used for the collective good, Jade wanted to reform the financial system, whereas Matthew saw opportunities within capitalism.

There were also differences in how participants viewed paid employment versus subsistence lifestyles operating outside the labour market. Manu posited job creation as one of the primary goals of his mahi in Rutatōria, an area with high unemployment and home to one of the “poorest communities in the country” (Manu). He conveyed that the lack of economic diversity in the area has left people with few options. He argued that:

No one really likes forestry or farming, but [we're] sort of stuck with them, and it's difficult to find alternatives—low population, low-skilled population, significant subsistence lifestyle still sort of relying on hunting and fishing to feed the family [...] it's a lifestyle that a lot of people like, but there is a lot of government support for benefits and things as well. So, it's not a self-sufficient system economy in that sense.

In contrast, Kelly saw wage labour as something that robbed people of the time they could have spent in direct food production. Instead, she promoted subsistence as an alternative lifestyle. She argued that:

[...] time is your biggest commodity, really. Something that you have an endless amount of until you have found the end of your time. You know, and within that time, you've got people who will pay you to do something for that time, but in the back of your mind, or in the middle of your puku, you're actually going, fuck this shit! You know, I don't want to do all this to get money to buy food. I just want to go straight from hungry to food. And I don't want to get up at six o'clock in the morning, get ready, be at work by 8.59, sit there for eight hours, do some shit for that man, who's paying me 20 bucks an hour, and he's getting paid like 250 dollars an hour, you know, it makes no sense. All to get paid once a week, which will then mean I can once a week go to the supermarket because that's all I've got time for now. Really, we should just scrap all of that shit. And then go from hungry to garden, fishing, hunting, milking a fucking cow.

Admittedly, the economic exploitation Kelly alludes to here is not directly comparable to the employment solutions suggested by Manu. He intends to create well-paid and meaningful

employment that will allow skilled people to stay in the area (or come back home) rather than seek work elsewhere. The difference lies in the value placed on subsistence economies and the role they may play in freeing people from market and government dependence.

Elements of the contrasting attitudes toward money, government funding, privatisation, and employment sometimes co-existed within the same entities and contributed to the ambiguous relationship participants had with money and funding. All participants at some stage made it clear that their primary motive involved promoting the wellbeing and autonomy of Māori, however, they also all conceded that accessing money through various means was what made rangatiratanga mahi possible. In order to obtain the resources they needed for rangatiratanga work, participants had to make certain compromises in their work, negotiating rangatiratanga with the state and in the market.

### *Negotiating rangatiratanga with the state*

As indicated above, there were mixed attitudes regarding the state's role in Māori economies. Those who pursued the government funding pathway encountered the power of the state to place limitations on their rangatiratanga. Consequently, accessing government funding involved careful consideration of when and how rangatiratanga was asserted or relinquished. The following examples demonstrate two different approaches to negotiating rangatiratanga with the state.

As indicated in the discussion above, Scott was reluctant to apply for government funding for Kai Ika because he thought the money was not worth the trouble involved in applying. Corroborating this sentiment, Val emphasised the need to remain independent from the government; she said:

We're not dependent on the government. I mean, we've done everything on the smell of an oily rag. And so that's tino rangatiratanga to us. And so we want our own mana, we want to be able to be accountable to our own selves, because sometimes we do the mahi, right, and you've got to do a 60-page report for this amount of pūtea.

Val's comment highlights the value Kai Ika and Papatūānuku Kōkiri marae place on maintaining rangatiratanga over their mahi. While they eventually did accept government funding, they were not dependent on it for survival and therefore had greater negotiating power in relation to the state. In order to "earn the respect of the mainstream grant funders" (Scott), such as the aforementioned government ministries, Scott explained they had to go through an "extended proof of concept". This involved channelling funding from the sponsors—who were already donating to LegaSea—into the Kai Ika Project. While Scott mentioned that not all the LegaSea sponsors had a clear idea of what they were funding, he was confident that the Kai Ika Project was now recognised as something worth putting money into.



The Kai Ika Project has indeed been successful, attracting the attention of both the media and the Prime Minister. Recounting the story, Val said:

We'd met the Prime Minister's husband before that because he came and did a story on Kai Ika. And so, when we arrived [at a community event] - what's his name? What's her husband's name? Clarke! Clarke walks up with her and goes, 'Hun!, Hun! This is the guy I was telling you about, Lionel, Kai Ika'".

Although it was not part of their official strategy, networking with the Prime Minister's husband seems to have been an effective negotiation tactic for Kai Ika in attracting funding. Notably, the success of the Kai Ika Project, which has now attracted substantial funding, has maintained its autonomy. This was evidenced by Dallas, who said:

We have had organisations approach us with substantial amounts of money, wanting us to essentially change slightly and for them to take over and go down different avenues that we don't particularly believe in. So, it's a bit of a bitter pill to swallow, saying no to money [...] We know what we want, the marae, they know what we want. So sometimes we do have to decline people's offers which is tough, but we don't want to change our kaupapa. We want to feed communities, address food insecurity and keep it as basic as we can. Yeah, that's where we thrive, in the simplicity of what we do. We pick up fish and share them.

From this strong commitment to autonomy, the Kai Ika Project is now in the position to accept government funding without fear of losing autonomy over their mahi. It may have meant starting out humbly, but Scott was adamant that "in hindsight – I don't think it could have happened from a bureaucratic space or a regulatory place ... 'you will now utilise more of your fish', I just don't think that was possible." In this regard, negotiating rangatiratanga with the state meant delaying the funding relationship, even when money was thin on the ground until the project was in a stronger position to protect its autonomy.

Other negotiations of rangatiratanga with the state centre around the question of sovereignty. For example, one of the main ways that the government transfers money to Māori is through treaty settlements. Nicki highlighted the compromised position held by pre-settlement iwi who needed money; she asked:

Can we hold out and not sign away our sovereignty? Or have that clause that there's no comebacks; this is full and final settlement of all the Crown's historical breaches of te Tiriti from 1840 to 1992. That breaks my mind trying to think that signing a piece of paper says that

we agree that this was the full and final settlement for all that occurred in that timeframe. To me, that's just devious [...]. And so that's the compromise. And every other tribe has had to grapple with that in their own way as they approached their settlements. And will continue to do. But to me, that's the big ethical dilemma with the treaty settlements system. Especially now we've got that stage one finding that acknowledges that those rangatira had no intention of relinquishing sovereignty to anything other than themselves. If anything, they thought they were protecting the sovereignty by forming an alliance with the Crown. So yeah, in my mind, we can push that aside. A lot of people are still hoping and praying for that day to come where we will have our treaty settlement and our PSGE, and it'll be well-resourced. I feel like we need to make as many gains as we can outside of the treaty settlement regime.

Here Nicki draws attention to a major dilemma at the heart of Māori economies. In settling, iwi compromise their assertion of tino rangatiratanga, but in 'holding out' as Ngāpuhi have, they relinquish an important and much-needed opportunity to acquire the resources needed to fund the rangatiratanga sphere.

Despite seeking funding pathways outside treaty settlements, Nicki indicated that the Crown had other means of asserting sovereignty in Māori economies. For example, her rangatiratanga mahi in the not-for-profit company set up through Matakōhe is funded through a government contract. However, as Nicki pointed out, this presented another issue. She explained:

Any contract coming out of Crown funding, there's always gonna have that, 'the Sovereign Right and authority of New Zealand, you know, grants you this', you know, it's language like that, and it's usually on page one of your contract. And it's right there, so it's quite affronting really [...], so I don't know what the answer to that is. But it's kind of like knowing that even though we're delivering this [the project] in our own way, in our own tikanga, we still are subscribing and fitting into the requirements of the fund bubble. So, we're acknowledging that the Queen is the Sovereign Right in New Zealand. I really don't know how to reconcile that with my position.

Symbolically relinquishing rangatiratanga was a sticking point for Nicki, who went to great lengths to ensure that her rangatiratanga mahi progressed projects "by, for, and with the hapū of Whangārei". She explained:

If there's support for the kaupapa, and the kaupapa has strong accountability to the uri, who it wouldn't exist without the support of—if the kaupapa is Matakōhe and the project is cultural design input into a civic building here in Whangārei—within that project there has to be a pathway for accountability to those tribes that it's riding on the mana of.

While Nicki struggled to reconcile acknowledging Crown sovereignty with her staunch position on tino rangatiratanga, she weighed this carefully against the increased capacity funding gave her to advance the rangatiratanga of the hapū of Whangārei through various projects. All negotiations cost something; in this case, Nicki prioritised the practical and material aspects of rangatiratanga mahi over the conceptual and symbolic manifestation of Crown sovereignty.

### *Negotiating rangatiratanga in the market*

The state is not the only site of power constraining rangatiratanga; under settler capitalism, those who own capital have the power to shape economies in ways that undermine collective wellbeing. However, there are also ways that capital can be accumulated and distributed in a way that enhances collective wellbeing. While none of the participants were directly opposed to operating commercially in the capitalist market, most emphasised the social orientation or non-profit aspects of the entities that housed their rangatiratanga mahi. Two participants, however, had much to say about the advancement of rangatiratanga through entities that operated in the capitalist market. While they noted that operating this way placed certain limitations on rangatiratanga, they were optimistic that it had the overall effect of advancing rangatiratanga mahi. In other words, they felt comfortable negotiating rangatiratanga in the capitalist market.

The rangatiratanga work that Manu is involved with is creating meaningful, well-paid employment in Ruatōria, an area with high levels of unemployment. To do this, considerable amounts of money need to be directed towards economic development. The major project that Manu is part of is establishing a pharmaceutical cannabis company. Neither the government nor iwi provided funding for the project, partly because it is a high-risk venture and partly because they did not want to fund something associated with cannabis, even if it was legal and for therapeutic purposes. Because of this, Manu said, they were “stuck with private capital”. The initial intention was to set up a community-owned company to invest in the cannabis company as a way of “building local support and accountability in the [cannabis] company”. However, Manu mentioned:

We were naive in the start around thinking how much capital we’d need to make this thing happen [...] And then it came to okay, we’re going to need another 20 million, so where are we gonna find that from? And that’s when we decided to list on the NZX. And that was quite a big deal. It was something that I didn’t think we were ever going to contemplate. And it’s a total sort of giving away all ownership and control of the thing really [...] So we were the first Māori founded company to do that [...] because most want to hold on to their companies [...]

so when we went to listing, there were a number of questions and concerns and people feeling like we were selling out.

Establishing a pharmaceutical cannabis company in a small, rural community is no mean feat. Indeed, Manu argued that setting up in Ruatōria showed some anti-capitalist sentiment because it would have been much more efficient to establish it elsewhere.

Despite having to relinquish control over the cannabis company, Manu was pleased with the advances in rangatiratanga that were made possible through the listing; he explained:

[...] the other part of listing was sort of this limited partnership that we set up through the listing process. It ends up with an equivalent—[it] depends on the price of the shares at the time of sale—but it's somewhere probably between seven and nine million dollars that didn't exist before. When shares are sold by that partnership [it] can be reinvested in the kanuka factory or the house building or the kai production thing. And so, there's quite a lot of cash that we've created that can flow back into those other activities. So, in terms of rangatiratanga, we saw it as, again, stuff like housing and food and things rather than being dependent on the government for housing or the housing market.

Manu demonstrated that the power of capital can—at least partially—be redistributed to meet collective needs and enable important rangatiratanga mahi.

Matthew highlighted the capacity of iwi-economies to improve the wellbeing of whānau Māori within capitalism. His examples included kaumatua pensions, housing developments, reo revitalisation, university scholarships, school grants, and clothing grants. He suggested that this went some way toward "filling all the gaps that neoliberalism has left". He went on to argue that capital accumulated by the iwi can also be used to advance rangatiratanga against and beyond settler capitalism. "My optimistic take", he reasoned, "is that we can build money to build mana outside of capitalism [...] we can now use that capital—so it's like 1.6 billion now—to fund building the rangatiratanga sphere". Backing up his claim, he pointed to the settlement-funded legal teams currently fighting in court for rangatiratanga over water.

Furthermore, Matthew pointed out that it had only taken twenty years after settlement for Ngāi Tahu to become a formidable economic presence that could take economic risks (read, engage in non-profit work). He asserted that:

It's also arguable that we can take risks now because we have money. And if you take these big risks that we're starting to talk about, when you get your 100 million at the start, and things go wrong, then there's not much leeway in those post-governance settlement entities.

Like the Kai Ika example, this is another instance in which taking the time to accumulate money has led to greater negotiating power in Māori economies. In this case, it has also helped that there is now more Ngāi Tahu representation in the PSGE office, including, Matthew pointed out, executives that "live in our villages" and "executives [who] actually have tikanga and kawa". Being in touch with mana whenua, both in a local and a cultural sense, helps Ngāi Tahu rangatira prioritise the needs of their people above the capitalist impulse for profit maximisation.

The paradox at the heart of the Māori economies is that in negotiating with the state and in the market some pathways toward rangatiratanga must be sacrificed in the pursuit of others. While participants demonstrated their commitment to rangatiratanga by prioritising the wellbeing of their communities, whānau, hapū, and iwi, they did so by following quite different pathways within Māori economies. For some, this meant relying on established mainstream funding from the government. For others, it meant tapping into private capital to break down the colonial legacy that has undermined rural Māori economic development. Some entities in the Māori economy have enough social support to operate for a time on very little money, while others require the vast sums made available by the state or private investors. Each pathway has different limitations, but all are oriented towards rangatiratanga.

### *Saliency analysis*

The idea of returning alienated land to Māori was an issue that came up in three of the interviews. Jade and Kelly spoke about it directly, and Matthew alluded to it. As there was insufficient interview data on this topic to construct a theme, I have employed an approach called saliency analysis, "which captures the point that something in data can be important without appearing very frequently" (Braun and Clarke 2013, 224). The return of Māori land is an important idea in this thesis, given the impact land alienation has had on Māori economies. It is, therefore, important to note that the topic came up in the interviews. Jade spoke about it in terms of decolonisation, suggesting that meaningful decolonisation would have to include the return of land. Whenua Warrior is based at Ihumātao and Kelly participated in the blockade and has been involved in land protection there for several years. She spoke briefly of needing to protect the whenua from the government and multi-billion-dollar corporations. Finally, in relation to the sale of iwi land by Ngāi Tahu Holding Company, Matthew asserted, "tangata whenua needs whenua". While occurring infrequently, these are important features of the data.

By interviewing participants in Māori economies, I gained insights I could not have accessed through the literature on Māori economies and rangatiratanga. While my analysis was shaped by the theory

and literature outlined in the previous two chapters, it turned out that my research findings also complicated some of the arguments addressed in those chapters. I now turn to a discussion of the arguments and findings presented thus far to answer the thesis question, 'can the rangatiratanga sphere be built under settler-capitalism?'

## Chapter Four: Can the rangatiratanga sphere be built within settler capitalism?

I began this thesis with the assertion that the dynamics of settler colonialism, of which capitalism is a dominant feature, continue to constrain the ability of Māori to assert tino rangatiratanga. I argue, therefore, that for rangatiratanga to be fully restored, the constitutional transformation envisioned by Matike Mai must be accompanied by a radical transformation of the capitalist economy. The dual aim of this thesis has been to draw attention to how settler capitalism has shaped Māori economies and to explore the role of Māori economies in restoring rangatiratanga. Grounding myself in Indigenous Marxism, I provided a historical overview that demonstrated the particular ways in which the dynamics of settler capitalism—primitive accumulation, the doctrine of discovery, and the politics of recognition—have radically reshaped Māori economies. This reshaping has ultimately led to a disproportionate number of Māori who are financially dependent on the state or exploited in the labour market. However, resistance to the forces of settler capitalism has also been a consistent feature of Māori society. For example, despite the overwhelmingly negative impacts of settler capitalism, diverse Māori economies—including ones that operate outside of capitalism—have persisted over time and are already contributing to the project of building 'another possible world'. Among other things, building the rangatiratanga sphere is a political and economic project. Māori economies contribute to this project through their capacity to advance rangatiratanga and to transform economic relations in an anti-capitalist (or at least non-capitalist) direction. However, their capacity depends on the extent to which their projects and economic entities are informed by the rangatiratanga (power) and social power points of the Aotearoa Socialist Compass.

### Argument Overview

In this chapter, I answer the thesis question: "can the rangatiratanga sphere be built within settler capitalism?" In short, the answer is yes—but only to an extent. Many things can be done within settler-capitalism to advance rangatiratanga both in terms of:

- Restoring Māori sovereignty over lands, villages, and all treasured possessions.
- Restoring the *capacity* of rangatira and other leaders to ensure the wellbeing of their people and the land.

Currently, both aspects of rangatiratanga must be negotiated with the state and/or in the capitalist market with the owners and/or controllers of capital. This is what I have referred to as the rangatiratanga paradox, as rangatiratanga is both asserted in and limited by these negotiations. While I argue that the rangatiratanga sphere (in which tino rangatiratanga is constitutionally restored) can begin to be built in the current context of settler-capitalism, it will take a significant shift in economic power (as defined by Wright) to restore rangatiratanga in a meaningful way that ensures the wellbeing of *all* Māori. In terms of the role of Māori economies, the *extent* to which rangatiratanga can be asserted by the groups that make up the rangatiratanga sphere (iwi, hapū, and various other Māori organisations) will depend on the *capacity* for rangatira, leaders, and 'the people' to subordinate state power and economic power, to tino rangatiratanga (power) and social power.

Below, I discuss the core arguments explored in the thesis thus far in relation to the research findings presented in chapter three. I draw several conclusions from this discussion, which will be communicated in the following three sections. The first section discusses the arguments surrounding the politics of recognition and capitalocentrism. Drawing on examples from my research findings, I conclude that the politics of recognition, while a useful analytical concept, does not fully account for the diversity of economic activity undertaken by iwi economies and does not address the agency of rangatira and economic leaders in their negotiations with the state and within the capitalist market. In the second section, I assess the arguments surrounding the transformative potential of diverse economies against Marxist and decolonial arguments about the power of settler capitalism in shaping Māori economies. Again, providing examples from my research findings, I conclude that while 'diverse economies' arguments are helpful because they highlight existing and possible non-capitalist economies, they do not sufficiently account for the power of settler capitalism to limit or block efforts towards the radical transformation of capitalism. In the third section, I present Wright's concepts of economic hybrids and sites of power, along with the concept of the ASC, as conceptual tools that can be used within Māori economies to help build the rangatiratanga sphere. I argue that these conceptual tools go some way towards resolving the tension between Indigenous Marxist concepts of power and diverse economies concepts of economic transformation. Finally, I conclude that Indigenous Marxism, diverse economies, and the ASC all have important theoretical contributions to building the rangatiratanga sphere.



## The politics of recognition and capitalocentricism

The politics of recognition described by Glen Coulthard help expose the contemporary nature of settler-capitalist domination. Arguing from a position of grounded normativity, Coulthard draws attention to the ways in which more and more Indigenous land and labour are pulled into the capitalist mode of production under the banner of Indigenous economic development. In rejecting the politics of recognition, Coulthard also argues that much of the self-determination work of Indigenous leaders (in Canada, at least) has failed. In Aotearoa New Zealand, Barber critiques the re-colonising role of post-settlement iwi (in other words, iwi who are politically and economically recognised by the state) in turning tangata whenua into property and labour. As Indigenous Marxists, both Poata-Smith and Barber problematise the complicit role of a 'Māori elite' in co-constructing a neoliberal economy that dispossesses Māori from land and exploits Māori labour. From an Indigenous Marxist point of view then, it is evident that the colonial politics of recognition are at work here in Aotearoa New Zealand.

I do not dispute the presence of the politics of recognition in the Crown-iwi relationship (particularly as it manifests in PSGEs). While I can not speak to the situation in Canada, I disagree that the politics of recognition have failed in Aotearoa as a political project aimed at restoring rangatiratanga. The rangatiratanga paradox means that kaimahi and economic leaders engaged in rangatiratanga mahi currently have little choice but to negotiate with the state and within the market. This will continue be the case as long as state power and economic power continue as dominant forces shaping Māori economies. In the interviews, Matthew pointed out that this may already be changing in some areas when he argued that Ngāi Tahu has already become a formidable presence in many economies. He gave the example of settlement money being deployed towards fighting for water rights in court. The introduction of tino rangatiratanga as a site of power contending with the state and owners/controllers of capital for political and economic influence within Māori economies may help to weaken the negotiating power of the settler capitalist state and eventually reduce the reliance of rangatira on the politics of recognition.

Furthermore, the increasing influence of rangatiratanga (power) in Māori economies has arguably been made possible, in part, through the politics of recognition. In the previous chapter, I drew on interview data from Manu and Matthew to argue that the settlement process has had a politicising effect on hapū and marae. In the interview, Matthew pointed out that Ngāi Tahu uri from various marae had begun to challenge the way that the Holding Company operated. They were particularly opposed to the sale of iwi land and the lack of iwi members in the Holding Company. Reflecting further on this, Matthew argued that profit from the capitalist undertakings of the Holding Company had contributed to the cultural revitalisation of the iwi in such a way that the iwi is now

growing in its capacity to challenge the capitalist nature of the Holding Company. While at present, much (but certainly not all) of the economic activity undertaken by Ngāi Tahu Holding Company is capitalist, it will be interesting to see how the increased participation of mana whenua in the corporation influences its economic orientation in future. Could the capitalist orientation of PSGEs (a product of the politics of recognition) operate as a temporary economic vehicle on the pathway to economic and constitutional transformation?

Matthew emphasises that the redistribution of iwi wealth goes some way toward filling all the gaps that neoliberalism has left. This corroborates the arguments made by Bargh and other diverse economies scholars who point to the non-capitalist activities that occur alongside, within, and beyond capitalist entities. While there is good reason to believe that the politics of recognition have sometimes worked against rangatiratanga, a capitalocentric Marxist critique of iwi economies obscures the non-capitalist mahi that goes on.

The concept of the politics of recognition does not fully account for the political process of negotiation that occurs between Māori economic leaders, the state and owners/controllers of capital. In some cases, negotiation is not so much about recognition as it is about increasing the capacity of economic leaders to restore rangatiratanga through other means. To use an example from the interviews, in accepting a contract from the government, Nicki was very aware that she was signing a document “acknowledging that the Queen is the Sovereign Right in New Zealand”. Although she struggled to reconcile this with her desire to see tino rangatiratanga restored to hapū, and all Māori, what ultimately drove her to accept the contract was the knowledge that the rangatiratanga mahi the contract would enable, would enhance the wellbeing of the hapū of Whangārei in the ‘here and now’.

Throughout this thesis, I have drawn together various strands of Leftist political economic theory, including Indigenous Marxist understandings of the politics of recognition, critiques of iwi corporatism from the Māori economy/economies literature, and arguments against capitalocentrism made by diverse economies scholars. Holding these arguments alongside the interviews from my research, I draw two conclusions. First, I agree with the diverse economies scholars and argue that Marxist capitalocentrism does indeed obscure the transformative potential of iwi economies. The risk of this pessimistic outlook is that it may prevent people who are supportive of the radical transformation of the capitalist economy from recognising iwi economies as a legitimate pathway to empowerment. Second, I suggest that the concept of the rangatiratanga paradox—in which rangatiratanga has to be negotiated with the state and in the market—accounts for the agency and self-awareness of Māori engaged in the politics of recognition that is sometimes overlooked in Marxist literature. Similarly, the danger of this oversight is the premature dismissal of potentially important pathways to a socially empowered rangatiratanga sphere.

## The power of settler-capitalism

Diverse economies scholars point to existing non-capitalist economies in the hope of empowering people to participate in creating another possible world. As indicated above, I agree with many of the arguments put forward by diverse economies scholars. In chapter one, however, I argued that while they draw attention to the multiple existing sites of transformative economic possibility, they do not adequately account for the sheer power of settler capitalism in constraining rangatiratanga. The strength of Indigenous Marxist critique is that it exposes the violent origins of settler capitalism and traces its power throughout history, noting where and how it constrains Indigenous modes of life. History, thus far, has been on the side of settler capitalism. While scholars such as Bargh and Kake are right to point to the persistence and resilience of non-capitalist Māori economies, it must be acknowledged that as long as state power and economic power dominate in their influence over economies, rangatiratanga will have to be negotiated.

The Indigenous Marxist account of history, presented in chapter two, made it clear that despite sustained Māori resistance to the forces of settler capitalism, many Māori still depend on the state (through government-funded benefits or contracts) and/or the exploitative labour market to meet wellbeing needs. Māori asserted rangatiratanga in various ways throughout history, including active resistance during the New Zealand Wars against both military power and capitalist land speculation, in parliament through the implementation of laws to help retain and develop collective Māori land, and through activism and protest against the racism and classism of state policy and Pākehā society. However, the crushing force of settler-capitalist power has impacted almost every area of Māori life. Large-scale land alienation, labour exploitation, government indifference to rural Māori poverty, racism in workplace hiring and firing, and the aggressive roll-out of neoliberal policy have contributed to the disproportionate representation of Māori low socioeconomic indices.

Given the power imbalance between Māori and the settler-capitalist state, it is not surprising that in the interviews, many participants discussed the difficult decisions they had to make negotiating rangatiratanga in their mahi. All of the Māori participants were committed to advancing rangatiratanga. While conceptions of rangatiratanga differed between participants, they all demonstrated the ways in which they advanced rangatiratanga through their mahi. For some, this involved restoring mātauranga and making it accessible to the wider community. For others, it simply meant providing good food, meaningful work, and accessible housing. Some participants connected their ideas of rangatiratanga to iwi and hapū politics, and others saw it more as the ability to retain

autonomy over their mahi. While it is clear that rangatiratanga is prioritised in many Māori economies, it is also evident that asserting rangatiratanga is not a straightforward process.

The rangatiratanga paradox shows that the power of settler capitalism still has a significant role in determining what is possible within Māori economies. Participants indicated that difficult decisions sometimes had to be made when negotiating rangatiratanga with the state or in the capitalist market. I have already mentioned Nicki's dilemma regarding signing government contracts, but others also had to make difficult decisions about receiving government money. For example, the leaders of the Kai Ika project initially decided not to receive government funding due to the laborious application process and the bureaucratic conditions placed on funding. This meant that they often had to operate "on the smell of an oily rag" until they could provide "proof of concept". However, once they had shown that the project had been successful in meeting food insecurity and reducing waste, they were in a better position to receive funding while protecting the autonomy of the project.

Some participants also had to negotiate rangatiratanga within the capitalist market. Manu spoke about the tough decision to list the cannabis company on the NZX because it meant relinquishing control of the company to private investors. While some of the investors have been very supportive of the company's commitment to the wellbeing of the community, typically, investors tend to be motivated by profit. While the decision to list on the NZX disappointed some people in the community, it has also provided significant revenue that has gone into community projects to enhance the wellbeing of the people. Matthew spoke about the need for Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu to pursue practices that would ensure economic growth. While, as indicated in the literature, this decision has been met with much criticism, Matthew points out that Ngāi Tahu are now in a position to help meet the wellbeing needs of the iwi.

Despite the pressures of government and the capitalist market, there is reason to believe that Māori economies are helping progress rangatiratanga in significant ways. Some of the kōrero in the interviews indicate practices that counter some of the effects of settler capitalism. For example, Nicki and Manu both spoke about how their mahi included providing work for skilled kaimahi to come 'back home'. Given their locations in Northland and Ruatōrea, respectively, this opportunity is significant for whānau who, since the 1950s, have had to seek work in the cities due to the constraints put on rural Māori economic development. Matthew's example of Ngāi Tahu "filling all the gaps that neoliberalism has left" reduces the tensions caused by the 'neoliberal paradox' O'Sullivan talked about. While some may argue that this tension would not have existed if iwi had not pursued neoliberal economics, it must be acknowledged that iwi would not have prevented the devastating impact of neoliberalism even if they had not complied with neoliberal government policy. As well as supplementing wellbeing needs, Matthew mentioned that Ngāi Tahu had used some of the settlement money to help pay for

the costly High Court case regarding the customary right to water. This represents a stark contrast to the situation in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when Māori relied on money advanced by prospective buyers to have their land title confirmed by the Native Land Court. While there is a long way to go before rangatiratanga can be asserted over the settler-capitalist state, these and other examples indicate that we are at least going in the right direction.

Taking a diverse economies approach to recruiting participants was helpful because it allowed me to speak with people engaged in capitalist and non-capitalist economic activity. It appears that in many areas, people have been able to progress rangatiratanga, both in the sense of asserting sovereignty over resources (for example, Matthew alluding to the court case regarding Māori customary rights to water), and by ensuring the wellbeing of people (for example, restoring mātauranga, and meeting housing, food, and employment needs). However, it is also evident that, in many cases, the power of the government and capitalists continues to limit the extent to which kaimahi and economic leaders can assert rangatiratanga. Rangatiratanga still has to be negotiated, and there are instances where it has to be relinquished (at least for a time). I conclude, therefore, that while diverse economies arguments are useful in highlighting existing and potential non-capitalist economies, they do not sufficiently account for the power of settler capitalism to limit or block efforts towards the radical transformation of capitalism.

## The Aotearoa Socialist Compass

So far, I have drawn three conclusions from my research.

- First, the Marxist tendency towards capitalocentrism does not recognise the non-capitalist transformative potential of iwi economies.
- The concept of the rangatiratanga paradox draws attention to the agency and self-awareness of rangatira and economic leaders who negotiate rangatiratanga with the state and in the market, and this is sometimes overlooked in Marxist arguments about the politics of recognition.
- Diverse economies arguments are useful in highlighting existing and potential non-capitalist economies. However, unlike Marxist perspectives, they do not sufficiently address the power of settler capitalism to limit or block efforts towards the radical transformation of capitalism.

I suggest that the seemingly contradictory positions of diverse economies and Indigenous Marxism can be resolved using Wright's concepts of hybrid economies and sites of power, as well as the ASC. The idea of hybrid economies fits with the diverse economies argument that capitalism is not an all-encompassing economy and can exist alongside other non-capitalist economies. The idea of multiple sites of power—state power, economic power, social power, and tino rangatiratanga (power)—

satisfies the Marxist requirement that the power of settler capitalism must be addressed. Wright's concepts can be used to map the sites of power that determine Māori economies, and the ASC can be used to direct us toward the pathways of social empowerment and rangatiratanga. There are many possible pathways, and we need to pursue them all if we are to pose any threat to settler capitalism.

Before articulating some of the pathways that can be pursued within Māori economies, a brief reminder of Wright's concepts and the ASC are necessary. Wright defines power as "the capacity of actors to accomplish things in the world" (Wright 2010, 111). Therefore, state power refers to the capacity to make and enforce rules over a territory; economic power is the capacity to control economic resources (for example, labour and capital) and determine production and distribution; social power refers to the capacity to mobilise collective action. In constructing the ASC, I added tino rangatiratanga (power) as a compass point. Tino rangatiratanga power refers to the capacity for iwi, hapū, and other Māori organisations (such as urban Māori authorities) to accomplish things in the world. The Matike Mai report made provisions for a rangatiratanga sphere which includes iwi, hapū, and urban Māori authorities. Taking iwi as an example, it seems likely that the rangatiratanga sphere (the site of power attached to one point of the compass) contains elements of state power (iwi amass and redistribute collective wealth and assert authority or over territory, including determining tikanga), economic power (iwi are owners and controllers of capital), and social power (mana whenua organise in society and hold iwi to account). The ASC helps articulate the sites of power that shape Māori economies. Similarly to Wright, I will articulate possible pathways that could lead to both social empowerment and rangatiratanga. Both are needed to build the rangatiratanga sphere.

In constructing the Socialist Compass, Wright identifies three primary pathways to socialism that can be combined in any number of ways to create more pathways:

- Social empowerment over the way state power affects economic activity;
- Social empowerment over the way economic power shapes economic activity; and
- Social empowerment directly over economic activity.

The ASC needs a further three:

- Rangatiratanga over the way state power affects economic activity;
- Rangatiratanga over the way economic power shapes economic activity; and
- Rangatiratanga directly over economic activity.

Using the concepts described above, the ASC, and examples from the interviews, I can now sketch out some existing pathways within Māori economies. I will give three examples, but many others are possible.

#### *Whenua Warrior*

Whenua Warrior assert rangatiratanga and social empowerment directly over their economic activity. While Whenua Warrior receives funding from various supporters, the work that Kelly and other kaimahi do is entirely determined by themselves. Their mahi depends, for a large part, on their ability to organise people to do the work on a voluntary or paid basis.

#### *The Kai Ika Project*

Similarly to Whenua Warrior, the Kai Ika project assert rangatiratanga and social empowerment directly over their economic activity. However, in their case, rangatiratanga (power) is partly determined by the iwi Tainui who take on the state-like quality of determining the tikanga of Papatūānuku Kōkiri marae, where the Kai Ika Project is based.

#### *Matakohe*

Some of the economic pathways pursued at Matakohe assert rangatiratanga over the way economic power *and* state power shape economic activity. In terms of economic power, Jade talked about how they preferred accepting jobs where they had whakapapa connections. This ensures that rangatiratanga over the mahi remains with those who have whakapapa to the kāinga and housing projects they work on. This is similar to Wright's idea of stakeholder boards as opposed to shareholder boards, in which all interested parties have a say over how the company conducts its business. In terms of state power, Nicki talked about how she made efforts to ensure her mahi gave effect to the rangatiratanga of the tribes of Whangārei. Nicki and Jade both have the time and skill it takes to access the government funding that makes their work possible and have thus far been able to use it without the state determining their mahi.

Wright's concepts of economic hybrids and sites of power, along with the ASC, can be used within Māori economies to help build the rangatiratanga sphere. I have argued that these conceptual tools go some way towards resolving the tension between Indigenous Marxist concepts of power and diverse economies concepts of diverse economic transformation. With this in mind, I conclude that Indigenous Marxism, diverse economies, and the ASC all have important theoretical contributions to make towards the project of building the rangatiratanga sphere.

In this chapter, I have answered the thesis question: "can the rangatiratanga sphere be built within settler capitalism?" I argue that building the rangatiratanga sphere will require both constitutional and economic transformation; and restoration of both the sovereignty and wellbeing aspects of rangatiratanga. Currently, both aspects of rangatiratanga have to be negotiated with the state and in the capitalist market, making it difficult to progress rangatiratanga to the degree necessary for a meaningful rangatiratanga sphere. However, drawing on the arguments in chapters one and two, alongside the findings from chapter three, I have demonstrated that we are at least moving in the right direction.

In discussing these arguments in conjunction with the findings, I have drawn four conclusions about the research presented in this thesis. First, Marxist capitalocentrism does not recognise the non-capitalist transformative potential of iwi economies. Second, the concept of the rangatiratanga paradox emphasises the agency and self-awareness of Māori who negotiate rangatiratanga with the state and in the market, and this is sometimes overlooked in Marxist arguments about the politics of recognition. Third, diverse economies arguments, which focus on alternatives to capitalism, do not sufficiently address the power of settler capitalism to limit or block efforts towards the radical transformation of capitalism. Finally, Indigenous Marxism, diverse economies, and the ASC all offer important theoretical contributions towards building the rangatiratanga sphere.

In terms of the role of Māori economies, the *extent* to which rangatiratanga can be asserted by the groups that make up the rangatiratanga sphere will depend on the *capacity* for rangatira, leaders, and 'the people' to subordinate state power and economic power, to tino rangatiratanga (power) and social power. Using the ASC, this chapter has outlined three pathways currently existing in Māori economies and provided the conceptual framework to determine others. The political and economic work to build the rangatiratanga sphere has already begun. This thesis has contributed to a theoretical framework that can help inform strategies to transform capitalism, an essential requirement to a rangatiratanga sphere that ensures the wellbeing of all Māori.

## Ideas for further research and concluding remarks

The ideas explored in this thesis can be used as a point of departure for further research. Specifically, I would be interested in using the ASC to conduct in-depth case studies that explore existing pathways within Māori economies. A comprehensive overview of existing pathways would expose where the 'gaps' are and thus indicate where new pathways need to be built to pose a real threat to capitalist economies. The idea of returning land to Māori was a salient feature of the interview data and provides a potential point of departure for further research. It would be interesting to explore projects



relating to land reclamation and protection—including blockades and occupations—as economic pathways towards the rangatiratanga sphere. The campaign to protect Ihumātao provides insight into how rangatiratanga (power) combined with social power can subordinate state power (central government) and marginalise economic power (Fletcher Building Ltd). Another case study could examine pre- and post-settlement iwi entities. In the interview, Matthew Scobie indicated that people often conflate 'Ngāi Tahu, the iwi' with 'Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, the organisation'. His PhD research explores the relationship between the two. It would be interesting to look further into this concept to explore the nuances of the rangatiratanga (power). As mentioned in chapter one of this thesis, iwi embody elements of state power, economic power, and social power. How might this affect the orientation of Māori economies and the pathways towards the rangatiratanga sphere?

At the beginning of this thesis, I highlighted that little academic work had been done to address the economic implications and possibilities of constitutional transformation. To address this, I have conducted a research project guided by the question, 'can the rangatiratanga sphere be built under settler capitalism?' I have argued that the assertion of rangatiratanga must challenge both the power of the state and capitalism. Thus, constitutional transformation and building a rangatiratanga sphere must be accompanied by the radical economic transformation of capitalism.

In chapter one, I discussed various Marxist and political-economic approaches to addressing the constraints of settler capitalism on rangatiratanga. I emphasised the importance of grounded normativity as an approach to Indigenous research and outlined the dynamics of settler capitalism through an Indigenous Marxist lens. I then turned my attention to theories of economic transformation. Drawing on the diverse economies framework and Wright's concepts of power and hybrid economy, I explained my theoretical approach to defining the economy and theorising economic transformation. Finally, I presented 'the Aotearoa Socialist Compass' as a tool for navigating pathways to economic transformation.

In the second chapter, I closely examined Māori economies, past, present, and emerging. First, I provided a historical overview of settler capitalism, drawing attention to the combined power of the state and capital and how they have been enforced through primitive accumulation, the doctrine of discovery, and the politics of recognition. I then provided a brief overview of the literature on the contemporary Māori economy/economies, with a particular focus on critiques of settler capitalism and the exploration of the transformative potential of the current and emerging Māori economies.

In the third chapter, I presented my original research with a thematic analysis of the interviews I conducted during this project. Using the methodological approach of thematic analysis, I discussed the themes constructed from the interview data. Two overarching themes organised seven themes

into two groups. The overarching theme 'mana whenua is paramount' included the following themes: 'iwi dominance', 'mana whenua consciousness' and 'mana whenua in the urban context'. These themes related to the assertion of rangatiratanga and identity by smaller mana whenua groups (such as hapū, marae, and whānau). The overarching theme 'the rangatiratanga paradox' included the following themes: 'rangatiratanga mahi', 'it's not about the money, but money is important', 'negotiating rangatiratanga with the state', and 'negotiating rangatiratanga in the market'. These themes conveyed the various ways participants asserted rangatiratanga through their mahi and the paradox of negotiating rangatiratanga with the state and in the capitalist market. At the end of the chapter, I briefly touched on a 'salient feature of the data' relating to the importance of returning land to Māori.

In the fourth and final chapter, I drew together the theories and ideas outlined in chapter one, the historical analysis and contemporary literature from chapter two, and the key findings from chapter three to answer the thesis question: can the rangatiratanga sphere be built within settler-capitalism? I argued that it is possible, provided we are guided by theories and strategies that challenge the power of settler capitalism and pursue multiple economic pathways. I argued that a rangatiratanga sphere that ensures the wellbeing of all Māori must challenge the power of capitalism as well as the sovereignty of the state. I concluded that while the political and economic project of building the rangatiratanga sphere can begin within settler capitalism, ultimately, it will require both constitutional transformation and radical economic transformation.

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