Urban Maori as ‘New Citizens’: The Quest for Recognition and Resources

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“E kore au e ngaro. He kakano i ruia mai i Rangiatea”

Introduction

The cultural politics of the Maori community in recent times have been characterised by a marked contestation around the notion of urban Maori within the meaning and scope of that community. This ‘new’ category of Maori person has made claims on both fellow Maori and the New Zealand State. These claims have centred on both a politics of recognition and responsiveness and the redistribution of resources. The urban Maori social movement has expanded the stratification of Maori membership from questions of descent and hapu/iwi orientation, to issues of rural/urban domicile, Maori cultural association and socio-economic reality.

Elsewhere I (Meredith 1998) have argued for a Maori cultural studies project that serves as a critical consciousness for the ‘Maori subject’; that promotes the study and debate of cultural questions and issues and that offers a critical assessment of the performance of particular cultural practices at given historical moments. Obviously, no meaningful critical consciousness today can avoid considering the pressing question of urban Maori membership within the Maori collectivity. This issue has produced a harsh politics of resentment, fuelled in many cases by political and
economic agendas in addition to cultural factors. It has led to serious and divisive debate about the nature and substance of Maori identity, culture and organisational principles.

Re-mooring Maori in the Urban Milieu

With the migration, dislocation and resettlement of populations and identities traditions become dislodged from particular locales and re-embedded, re-enacted and ultimately re-negotiated in every day life practices in new ways. Pre-European Maori historical record speaks of the migration, dislocation and resettlement of Maori ancestors from the homeland of Hawaiki to New Zealand and within New Zealand as a result of conflict and population stress. (Sorrenson 1979; Stafford 1991; Jones, Biggs et al. 1995) It is also talks of the consequential reconstruction and reorientation of group identity and citizenship.

The arrival of the European, and the subsequent demand and conflict for land also produced a series of migrations, dislocations and resettlements. Prior to the arrival of the European Maori identity and citizenship was constructed around a multiplicity of tribal groupings, kinship bonds and geographic locale. Confronted by “colonisation, Christian conversion, an emerging sense of Maori nationalism, and immigration with a rapid reversal of population dominance” (Durie 1998, 54), tribal orientation was joined by ethnicity and common cultural traits as components of a growing identity and citizenship associated with a Maori ‘imagined community’. (Anderson 1983) Maori rapidly sought solidarity in political and religious movements such as Kingitanga, Ringatu and Kotahitanga, constructed around a notion of pan-Maori identity and collective Maori sovereignty. (Cox 1993)

The political ideology of a broader Maori politic was supported by the innovative construction of pan-tribal traditions and a reification of Maori culture. Much of this construction was carried out by Pakeha ethnographers such as Sir George Grey (1971), Elsdon Best (1974) and Percy Smith (1904) whose approach to the homogenisation of Maori tribal links was closely linked to the ‘unite and rule’ philosophy of the colonial project. The term, Maoritanga, was coined to express the creation of a universal Maori identity in the modern European world.

Prior to World War II, 90 per cent of the Maori citizenry were domiciled in rural and predominantly within their tribal domains. With the beginning of World War II Apirana Ngata urged Maori to
enlist for military service as the price of citizenship, a traditional association that linked citizenship with the participation in armed struggle for national defence. The mobilisation of those young Maori not eligible for military service into essential industries for the war effort was the beginning of the movement of Maori from rural to urban centers.

This demographic shift intensified following the end of World War II. New Zealand, like many other capitalist countries around the world, witnessed an economic boom, a significant expansion of the manufacturing sector, an increasing centralisation of industrial production in the larger cities, particularly the greater region of Auckland, and a growing demand for labour. (Spoonley, Pearson et al. 1996) The compulsion for Maori labour to meet that demand was favoured by complicit State policies that discouraged tribal association, provided relocation programmes, facilitated Maori land alienation and produced high rural unemployment. The attraction of “the Big Three”, work, money and pleasure served as the alluring factors for many Maori. (Metge 1964; Walker 1990) By 1951, 19 percent of the Maori population of 115740 was urban. Five years later some 24 per cent of the Maori had made the shift from their rural homelands to the towns and cities. By 1970 Maori urbanites constituted 80 percent of the Maori population. It has been described as the most accelerated moved experienced by any population. (Pool 1991) Durie (1998), commenting on the significance of the urbanisation phenomenon states:

“Whereas a century earlier, Maori identity had been moulded by the forces of colonisation as by Maori themselves, from 1945 urbanisation became the unmarshalled force which called for fresh understandings of what it meant to be Maori.” (55)

The initial housing policy of ‘pepper-pottering’, or dispersing Maori families throughout urban centers and among ‘Pakeha’ neighbours as a means of progressing the principle policy of ‘integration’ (Hunn 1961; New Zealand. Dept. of Maori Affairs., Booth et al. 1962), was superseded by an ever-increasing number of Maori urban migrants. To accommodate the influx, many Maori families were allocated state-built homes in large housing estates. These estates grew to a critical mass to become enclaves of Maori communities. A heightened political and social consciousness of Maori ethnicity quickly developed in an environment where these Maori migrants now shared a common urban social space with Pakeha.
The process of urbanisation not only continued but also intensified the threat of cultural losses that had begun with European contact and colonisation. This was particularly so for many of the offspring of Maori urban migrants distanced and disenfranchised from the tribal origins of their parents and grandparents:

Urban transformation has exacted a high price from the city-born offspring of the migrants. Without grandparents and elders the traditional teachers and minders of children in the extended family arrangement, the urban family unit is culturally cut off and disorganised … Without elders or grandparents to instruct them about things Maori, the city-born grow up in a world different from that of their migrant parents. They know they are stuck with minority of status as Maoris [sic], but they know little or nothing about Maori values and pride in their cultural heritage. (Walker 1979, 38)

The problem of cultural dislocation was compounded by difficulties with socio-economic adjustment. Maori who had migrated to the towns and cities were also confronted with the economic reality of adapting to a total cash economy and meeting financial commitments. In many cases, with no whanau to fall back on, social problems inevitably surfaced. In discussing the difficulties that the new urban setting presented, a Department of Maori Affairs employee in West Auckland states:

Many of [clients] were also very lonely, and often came as individuals to the city. They were isolated from their whanau support networks … During this time nearly two thirds of the housing mortgages administered by Maori Affairs were in arrears … These people were having serious problems with real life skills like budgeting. They would spend all their money on alcohol … By the time we were called upon to assist with arrears or other matters, the whole family was usually falling apart. (New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998, 35)

Gradually, an urban Maori sensibility materialised, a social and political discourse around the unique realities, including the cultural and social difficulties, of not only being Maori, but also being Maori in the city.

Re-presenting Maori in the Urban Milieu

Central among urban Maori concerns were the felt need to ensure cultural continuity (Walker 1990) and the survival of the growing community. As a response to the urbanisation of Maori and the challenges of cultural and social dislocation, ‘voluntary associations’ appeared in the form of Maori culture clubs, Maori sports clubs, religious and tribal associations, Maori executive committees and Maori councils, Maori wardens, and the Maori Women’s Welfare League. (Walker 1979)
The essence of these voluntary associations was group membership with the common agenda of promoting the *kaupapa* of perpetuating Maori identity, values and culture. (Walker 1979) Both Winiata and Tuoro relate their experiences with such associations:

At the local level, a whole range of groups were forming: most of the members were Maori or the group had a Maori flavour, such as sport clubs, church organisations or simply Maori clubs. These had nothing to tribe “tribe” and many people were finding they preferred these associations. They retained a Maori flavour or identity, however. The old maori ideal was kept whereby each group managed itself, looking after its own members and promoting their common welfare, working with other groups where that seemed necessary but keeping their independence. 8

What unified us in the early days in the Maori Women’s Welfare League, Maori Wardens and the Maori Committees was the desire to continue our culture and tradition in the cities. We wanted to recreate whanau, hapu, iwi structures for our people in the city.” (New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998, 37)

One such structure was the ‘traditional marae’, the so called ‘last bastion of Maoritanga’. The 1960s witnessed the beginnings of the widespread establishment of ‘urban marae’ to replace the suburban state house and the community hall as a ‘temporary marae’ for hui such as tangihanga and marriages. It was an attempt by urban Maori to create a space for the expression of Maori culture and to develop their identity as a group. Speaking of the origins of Hoani Waititi Marae in West Auckland, Tuoro comments:

“With so many Maori coming to live in West Auckland, and many of them increasingly out of touch with their families at home with their culture and traditions we sought to establish a place where they could learn from and which they could belong to and identify with. We wanted to continue our culture and traditions in the cities as well as at home … We recognised that the Marae had to be a place to help educate and motivate our people, a place we could bring manuhiri aboard and do things Maori, like having hui and tangihanga … We used house to have our tangi, before the Marae was built …” (New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998, 31)

Nathan added to Tuoro’s account:

For those Maori who did not belong in West Auckland, Waititi became a formal focal point for belonging … Waititi was about belonging and identities. It was a place we could continue our cultural ways. (New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998, 39)
The concepts of kinship and descent as the organisational principle for marae association were in some cases replaced by principles of secular, pan-tribal and choice. Again Tuoro, commenting on the unequivocal intention of Hoani Waititi marae to be multiracial, states:

[It] left no room for the tribal bit. You had to leave your tribalism at the door … What we were trying to create with this Marae was a sense of family and a sense of belonging when people were no longer able to readily access their whanau ties in the areas they were originally from. We seriously thought about these kinds of issues at the time. We wanted to recreate whanau ties in the city … “ (New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998, 38-39)

Tamihere, put it this way to the Waitangi Tribunal:

“… Maori of my generation born in the cities find comfort, solace, support and coverage as a Maori under the umbrella of our Matua marae Waititi and Te Whanau o Waipareira … there are now third generation babies that know no other marae than this pan-tribal marae … Our Matua marae which has been acknowledged nationally … is a symbol to pan-tribalism and multi-culturalism. It is a symbol to the progression of our people into the urban areas and a statement that we can continue to practice tikanga Maori in a new environment.” (New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998, 40).

Paradoxically then, the urban environment not only became a site of contestation and disorder but also one of cultural affirmation and production and a growing sense of community.

Anderson (1983) reminds us that communities derive not only from family, friendship and work, but also from a sense of shared social and political commitments. For many urban Maori theirs was a shared social and political commitment to actualise their perceived right as urban Maori to be recognised within the broader Maori politic, and as urban Maori to organise themselves in accordance with their own tikanga to address their own problems in their own way. It was this shared social and political commitment that constructed bodies with a specific urban Maori infusion. These urban Maori groups drew from the foundations that had been laid by the ‘voluntary associations’, the growing leadership and the networks created. They argued the legitimacy of the representativeness and the pragmatism of their associations based on their situated knowledge of urban Maori; they were run by urban Maori, they knew what the needs were, they identified with city-based aspirations of city-based Maori and they knew how to operate in the urban setting.
One such urban group was Te Whanau o Waipareira. It did not just grow out of a co-residential community of Maori in West Auckland, but also a shared spirit of whanau and a will to survive the challenges of West Auckland suburbia:

At Waipareira a sense of community grew out of the circumstance of some people meeting the needs of others. The needs were those of the ‘orphaned and the lost’, who had drifted into the city, looking for work and out of touch with home. In West Auckland, they found a core of people much like themselves, who, however, had survived the rigours of relocation and had turned to membership of welfare committees to help others. (New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998, 77)

The introduction of the Tu Tangata philosophy by the Department of Maori Affairs in 1978 of community empowerment and a range of community based programs under Matua Whangai, Mana Enterprises and Maori Access schemes had provided a new dynamic for Maori to (re)organise themselves, including urban Maori groups like Te Whanau o Waipareira. With no primary resources such as forest or land, urban Maori groups were able to assume the management of programmes for employment, welfare, and economic development. This occurred initially in an environment of devolution, and then contracting out, of government services to service providers. (Kelsey 1995)

These urban Maori groups also sort to bring those dislocated and disenfranchised urban Maori into a Maori cultural environment, teaching them the rudiments of Maori cultural practices and inculcating in them basic Maori values. For example Te Whanau o Waipareira Trust set up a roopu kaumatua initially to help young people trace their whakapapa back to their tribes. (New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998) Dr Pita Sharples also claimed the cultural productivity of Waipareira where “he knew of tribal spokes-people and kaikaranga who began to learn their skills through Waipareira and practice them on Hoani Waitaiti marae before returning to their tribal areas. (New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998, 219)

Urban Maori groups also adopted a ‘political representative’ character, advocating the rights of urban Maori as both citizens of the Maori community and New Zealand. They pursued a role as lobbyist, making frequent submissions to Task Groups and Commissions established by Government and on legislation before Parliament as well as establishing links with local bodies. They also played a prominent role in the litigation over the allocation of fisheries assets under the Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Settlement, popularly referred to as the ‘Sealord Deal’.

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These groups therefore actively sort to promote the political, social, economic and cultural concerns of urban Maori. However they were competing for recognition and resources from Governments and many tribal groupings who were increasingly re-positioning iwi as the appropriate vehicle for development.

Re-Positioning Iwi

Up until 1984 tribal orientation were regarded by the State as a problem. Such divisions and autonomous entities were seen as antithetical to a Maori homogeneity that would facilitate the policy of their eventual integration/assimilation into the wider New Zealand society. Under the Maori Community Development Act 1962, an earlier reference to ‘tribal’ committees was changed to ‘Maori’ committees.

However within a climate of the resurgence of Maori identity and the reindigenisation of ‘tradition’, some Maori were beginning to question the notion of a universal Maori identity and looking to their tribal roots. John Rangihau, in his seminal piece ‘Being Maori’ (King 1975), spoke of his preferred identification with his Tuhoe iwi and his Tuhoetanga rather than a newly constructed notion of Maoritanga.

The promotion of iwi in the cultural sphere extended to that of the political and economic. The Hui Taumata (Love 1984) or Maori Economic Summit convened at Parliament in 1984 advocated iwi development, as did Rangihau’s advisory report, Puao-o-te-atatu (New Zealand. Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Maori Perspective for the Department of Social Welfare. and Rangihau 1986), to the Department of Social Welfare in 1986. The concept of iwi development also found favour with the Labour Government in legislation and official policy. The Maori Affairs policy document Te Urupare Rangahau (New Zealand. and New Zealand. Office of the Minister of Maori Affairs. 1988) proposed the devolution of Government services to iwi and the Runanga Iwi Act 1989, attempted to provide ‘recognised iwi’ with the ability to create a representative runanga with a legal personality that could enter into contractual relationships. The Act saw a short life, being repealed in 1991 by the new National Government who favoured mainstreaming (New Zealand. Ministry of Maori Development. 1991) rather than devolution of services. Nonetheless, ‘types’ of runanga or councils were created among tribal groupings, often as incorporated societies or charitable trusts, to join the ‘traditional’ statutory tribal Trust Boards (New Zealand. Committee on
Maori Trust Boards. and Mason 1994) as the organisation bodies for development and representation.

Part of the impetus for these bodies was the framework for settling Treaty of Waitangi claims which also seemed to privilege iwi. (New Zealand. and New Zealand. Office of Treaty Settlements. 1994) Urban Maori were not the only group to question the choice of iwi as the development instrument for Maori. Hapu orientated Maori argued the historical evidence that suggested that it was hapu who were the primary group from which Maori socially, economically, and politically organised themselves. However, iwi proponents, with their own political and economic agendas, asserted their legitimacy around notions of simple logic and common sense. This fitted in with a Government line that was cautious of the sheer complexity of generally dealing with claims at a hapu level. (Graham 1997) In the 1998 annual report of The Treaty of Waitangi Fisheries Commission, Te Ohu Kaimoana, its chairman, Sir Tipene O'Regan, in advocating a model of distribution of settlement benefits to iwi rather than hapu, stated:

“It follows as a matter of simple logic that the return of wrongfully alienated fisheries assets should be to the original owners. Contrary to the claims made in several corners we know who are the closest contemporary expression of that ownership – Iwi … I can hear the counter-chorus, “No. They belong to hapu. It was hapu who signed the Treaty!” This strident cry chooses to ignore the fact that at least 1,000 hapu are probably in existence today and, knowing human nature, another 1,000 would soon be plucked from oblivion were we to allocate to hapu. Beyond the raw number, the intense intergenerational dynamic of hapu — creating, dividing, recreating and disappearing — makes it functionally impossible to allocate to those outside the group which contains it, the Iwi … Common sense dictates that to fractionate the asset into so many small units would be an administrative nightmare, let alone the strong arguments against vesting such economically non-viable packages.”

While one might question what simple logic and common sense have to say about addressing the demographic actualities of Maori, the fact remains that the dominant political cultural of both the State and tribal oriented Maori promoted iwi as the vehicle for the manifestation of rangatiratanga (self-determination) as articulated in article II of the Treaty of Waitangi. ‘Iwi’ became the master narrative for constructing the identities and citizenship of Maori in the present. The urban Maori social movement thus turned to challenging that narrative.
Wars of Interpretation

Jean Franco states that “discussions over the use of words often seem like nit-picking; language seems to be irrelevant to ‘real’ struggles. However the power of interpretation, and the active appropriation and invention of language, are crucial tools for emergent social movements seeking visibility and recognition for the views and actions.” Indeed as David Slater (Slater 1997) suggests such cultural contestations and social struggles, can be viewed as ‘wars of interpretation’ within which the orientation and substance of demands are constructed.

Metge has argued that in the course of last century, the basic concept of ‘whanau’ within the Maori social order had acquired a host of new meanings including “that for a group which is not based clearly on descent … who act and interact for common ends, identify themselves by a common name and model themselves on the whanau as extended family … “ (Metge 1995, 53) Nathan, commenting on the adoption of the word whanau in ‘Te Whanau o Waipareira’, states:

We acted like a whanau. It was our actions and feelings, our wairua, which knitted us together as a whanau. we made a conscious, unified effort to protect Maori values, and nurture them in the urban environment. (New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998, 42)

By the early 1990s many Maori urbanites, including members of Te Whanau o Waipareira, were no longer prepared to accept that ‘tribal’ approaches were sufficient to accommodate all Maori interests and development strategies. They were concerned that Maori who did not participate in tribal activities were being afforded lesser status as Maori, a second-class citizenship, if you like. Given that Government public policy was increasingly favouring an ‘iwi’ approach, urban Maori turned their attention to the definition of ‘iwi’ in the contemporary context.

A ‘war of interpretation’ manifested in the debate surrounding the application of iwi to so-called ‘non-kin’ based Maori associations and whether iwi mean’t only traditional Maori tribes? The situation came to a head after the signing of a fisheries settlement between Maori and the Crown in 1992. The proposed allocation of benefits solely to iwi and/or bodies representing iwi led to a series of legal proceedings that took participants all the way to the Privy Council only to be referred back to the High Court. Here each side produced affidavits of ‘experts’ who addressed the meaning of iwi:
“I have been asked to talk on what is an iwi and how it is represented. That is a problem because traditionally iwi meant just “the people”. It was regularly used as “te iwi Maori me te iwi Pakeha”, the Maori and the Pakeha people. “Iwi” could be used for the people of a hapu, the people of a district or the people of a country. It could be used for rich people, the poor people, the people of Auckland or whatever. When we talked of tribe we spoke of hapu. (John Winitana, 10)

“The meaning of iwi as I understand it is that it is a collection of sub-tribes who trace their descent to a common ancestor. Kinship links are an integral part of iwi organisation. In my view, without kinship links, no group can purport to call themselves an iwi. Some urban maori groups have attempted to model themselves as iwi (such as Ngati Poneke), but they lack long-term enduring ties associated with whanau, hapu and iwi kinship links. These links are the glue that keep a tribe together and are fundamental to the concept of iwi.” (Sir Robert Mahuta, 18).

To date the courts generally have endorsed allocation to iwi as constituting ‘traditional tribes’. This was recently endorsed in a 3:2 decision by the Court of Appeal in August of 1999 who deemed the conclusion of urban Maori associations as iwi too ‘radical a departure from custom’ given the following conclusion:

“It is fundamental, in our view, that the implementation of the settlement accords with Maori traditional values, although it will necessarily utilise modern-day mechanisms … The settlement was of the historical grievances of a tribal people. It ought to be implemented in a manner in a consistent with that fact. With all due respect to UMA, who are formed on the basis of kaupapa not whakapapa, they cannot fulfil such a role …” (CA 54)

Following similar lines of questioning what constituted an ‘iwi’, Te Whanau o Waipareira Trust in 1994 filed a claim with the Waitangi Tribunal that they were prejudiced by the policies and operations of the Community Funding Agency of the Department of Social Welfare. Initially Crown agencies resolved the potential conflict between statutory and policy references to iwi and urban authorities by taking a very liberal approach to what constituted iwi. However some agencies retreated from this view to a more traditional interpretation of iwi, including the Department of Social Welfare. The Department maintained an interpretation of rangatiratanga as guaranteed protection that only applied in respect of the control of properties by traditional groupings such as iwi and hapu. Urban Maori Authorities maintained that they exercised rangatiratanga with respect to a group of Maori who were not necessarily iwi in the tribal sense but in the literal sense meaning simply ‘the people’. Waipareira described itself ‘as a courageous attempt to recreate an ‘iwi’ environment for urban people who could not trace their links to their traditional iwi, or who sought the comfort and solace of that environment in the urban context where they live’. The Crown, on
the other hand, believed the community itself was so different from a traditional tribe, so radical
departure from custom that the rangatiratanga guarantee in the Treaty did not apply to it. (New
Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998)

The Tribunal, on the other hand, found that if a Māori community exercised *rangatiratanga*, then it
deserved special recognition in terms of the Treaty of Waitangi. The highly contested concept of rangatiratanga was, in this case, interpreted as “the reciprocal relationship between leaders and
members of a Māori community, tribal or otherwise.” The Waitangi Tribunal gave Te Whanau o
Waipareira a status of “no less than a tribe.” The Tribunal proffered that Māori are the Crown’s
Treaty partner, not iwi, hapu and whanau.

The Government’s policy position, developed since the release of *Te Urupare Rangapu* (Office of
the Minister of Maori Affairs. 1988) had been to focus on rangatiratanga, in the context of Treaty
relations, as being the sole preserve of ‘iwi’. The notion that Māori are the Crown’s Treaty partner,
and that Māori are not simply reduced to or represented by iwi, hapu and whanau, has not only wide
implications for Treaty analysis but also the fundamental orientation of the Māori citizenry.

The fact that the Courts and Tribunals have been forced to consider who today is or are Māori, and
what are their just rights, has been lamented by many. Be that as it may, the proceedings reflect
the broader political struggle of the urban Māori social movement to challenge the dominant culture
and hegemonic value system deemed normative by both fellow Māori and the State; the revision
and renegotiation of what it means to be a citizen, with a distinct urban Māori infusion, in the
defining fabric of the broader Māori politic.

**Re-membering Maori in the Politics of Citizenship**

I venture to argue then that this contestation and political struggle is partly one of who is a Māori
citizen and what constitutes Māori citizenship. I believe then that the notion of citizenship can offer
some useful conceptual vocabulary in trying to make sense of some of the major issues which are
involved in the complex debate.

In an essay on citizenship Held and Hall (Hall 1989, 1975) have argued that from “the ancient world
to the present day citizenship has entailed a discussion, and a struggle over, the meaning and scope
of membership of the community in which one lives.” Hall and Held are concerned with the position new social movements such as feminism, the black and ethnic movements, ecology and vulnerable minorities, like children that have sought to claim rights and space in the citizenship of the polity.

For Held and Hall then the politics of citizenship begins around membership - who does and who does not belong. What should happen to those members of the community who cannot or will not become full members of the hegemonic community? Throughout history one can identify successive attempts to restrict citizenship to certain groups and to exclude others. In different historical periods, different groups have formed a politics of citizenship around closure and profited from access to property, ownership, wealth and privilege to the exclusion of others. Then there are many other members of society who although they share the common origin of the community, do not in certain matters share the hegemonic values of the majority of the population.

Yuval-Davis (1997) asserts the diversity of arenas in which citizenship is being claimed and contested today is essential to any modern conception of it. Citizenship or membership of communities has therefore to come to terms with problems posed by ‘difference’ or what Young (Young 1990) has described as ‘differentiated citizenship’; the diverse communities to which we belong, the complex interplay of identity and identification in modern society, and the differentiated ways in which people now participate in social life.

Arguably then interrogation of the contemporary politics of citizenship of the Maori community must take into account the diverse realities of its members and the role Hall and Held (1989) such social movements play in expanding the claims to rights and entitlements to new areas.

New Citizens, New Rights, New Boundaries
Key components of Urban Maori’s struggle have been to claim the ‘right to have rights’ and the task of making their identity the ‘subject of rights’. (Alvarez, 1998) Such rights have not been limited to those legal rights already in existent. Citizens perceive rights that have not yet been recognised in the courts or legislation. The struggle to recognise those rights can reshape the law or force its reinterpretation. The outcome of the Waitangi tribunal recommendations in the Waipareira Waitangi Tribunal case has resulted in a bill amending the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act being introduced to Parliament. The amendment enables trusts such as Waipareira and
other Maori and non-Maori organisations to apply for more money to deliver social services on a larger scale. More significantly though, it represents a change in how the Government views ‘non-kin based Maori organisations’.

Urban Maori, by refusing accommodation within existing institutions and hegemonic arrangements, have sought to expand the boundaries of belonging and in effect have emerged as ‘new citizens’. They are not new in terms of length in society but instead in terms of new categories of persons and of new rights of identity and citizenship constructed around domicile, cultural association and socio-economic reality rather than only blood. By advocating and claiming rights, urban Maori have emerged as political subjects, in what Cornel West (1993) terms a process of “new self-perception, in which persons no longer view themselves as objects of history, but rather as subjects of history, willing to put their own selves and bodies to reconstruct a new nation” (134)

Urban Maori, like so many other social movements, have not only demanded the right to be included but rather the right to challenge or unsettle the hegemonic boundaries of cultural and political representation and daily life practice. Urban Maori have thus imagined and set out to shape their vision of Maori society, as they create space to live it, claim rights and entitlements for it, and through their own daily life practices construct and perform it.

Urban Maori have situated themselves as distinct communities with distinct social claims, not outside of, but within the broader Maori politic. At this particular historical moment, urban Maori have offered a potential for reordering, restructuring and renewal of the boundaries of who and what is to be Maori. Their claims are therefore inherently counter-hegemonic. Through their challenges and transgressions they are disrupting the hegemonic discourses and practices of Maoriness constructed by iwi, hapu and whakapapa. By contesting the cultural discourse of iwi, rangatiratanga, and tradition generally, they are creating new ways of thinking about, and new spaces for, the Maori subject and the Maori world.

*A Cultural Citizenship*

These cultural contestations around interpretation have not been mere by-products of the struggle but instead have been constitutive of the efforts of the urban Maori social movement to redefine the meaning and limits of the Maori community. (Alvarez, Dagnino et al. 1998) As Flores and Benmayor (1997) argue, in their discussion of Latino cultural citizenship, culture interprets and
constructs citizenship, just as citizenship, in the broad sense of claiming membership in the society, affects how we see ourselves.

When social movements seek to implement a strategy of social transformation by deploying alternative conceptions of community, identity, and citizenship that unsettle dominant cultural meanings that are constitutive of social and political power, they enact a cultural politics. (Alvarez, Dagnino et al. 1998) The urban Maori dynamic has been engaged in a cultural politics where sets of political actors shaped by, and embodying, different meanings of the same cultural resource, iwi, have come into conflict with each other in promoting opposite political and economic goals.

Culture or what Raymond Williams (Williams 1981) defines as ‘ideas, attitudes, languages, practices, institutions and structures of power as well as a whole range of cultural practices’, then plays an important part in the debate. In investigating culture we need to move beyond immutable and essentialist understandings of ‘Maori’, and other cultural constructs such as ‘iwi’ that would have us freeze Maori in time and (tribal) space. Clearly Maori communities and tradition have changed and will continue to change. Yet, one of the main claims of those opposed to the notion of an urban Maori collective is that such a shift in recognition and resources would render too much of a radical departure of custom. I, however, am not advocating a radical departure from custom. As people move from one region to another, they often carry with them the sets of values and beliefs that form part of their traditions. But as Thompson (Heelas, Lash et al. 1996) argues, the uprooting and re-mooring of traditions does not necessarily render them unauthentic, nor does it necessarily render their demise. They are forced to defend themselves in the face of new circumstances and in many cases in due course and through creative license are intermeshed and renegotiated in complex ways with other developmental characteristics of the new environment. What we are presented with is a synthesis, a hybrid of old and new tradition that is familiar but nevertheless anew. Maori tikanga has a history of this form of adaptability, practicality and creativity both in pre and post-colonial times. Indeed given, as described above, the infusion of European colour into Maori cultural traits and tradition or Maoritanga, we must be cautious of claims of authentic Maori culture.

A ‘Maori cultural studies project’ then must question dominant, narrow, reified and reductionists notions of culture presented as authentic tradition. Weber (Heelas, Lash et al. 1996) reminds us of the legitimation aspect of tradition in certain circumstances. Tradition can serve as a source of support for the exercise of power and authority – ‘a belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions.’
Weber’s account of traditional authority is helpful because it highlights the fact that, in certain contexts, tradition, particularly where it is presented as authentic, may have an overtly political and ideological character. It is not only utilised as a normative guide but also to establish and sustain a citizenship which is structured around subordinate/dominant power relations and inclusive/exclusive membership.

In the context of the urban Maori debate the tradition of whakapapa or biological descent has taken on an ideological character. Much opposition to urban Maori as a subject of citizenship within the Maori community has been premised on the unequivocal prerequisite for Maori cultural organisation to be constructed around whakapapa. For the chairman of Te Runanga o Ngati Porou, Apirana Mahuika, whakapapa:

is the heart and core of all Maori institutions, from Creation to what is now iwi. Whakapapa is the determinant of all mana rights to land, to marae, to membership of whanau, hapu and collectively the iwi whakapapa determines kinship roles and responsibilities to other kin, as well as one’s place and status within society. To deny whakapapa therefore as the key to both culture and iwi is a recipe for disaster, conflict and disharmony. (219)

On the other hand, one might argue that the promotion of whakapapa as the critical determinant of membership for groupings in the Maori community has been a recipe for disaster, conflict and disharmony if the amount of litigation is an indicator. For many, cultural association with communities is not merely one of descent but also one of assent generating possibilities of new communal forms. The Waitangi Tribunal reminds us that there is evidence that Maori were creative in adopting arrange of institutions to meet their needs that were not based on kinship per se, but were Maori none the less. For example the non tribal villages established at Parihaka and the church based community at Ratana established in the 1920s. (New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998, 218) Further, rather than a reified conceptual orientation of whakapapa, there has been in the past much creativity as groups reorganised and privileged genealogical lines to accommodate certain projects (such as political alliances and Native Land Court cases). If we were to employ some creative license we might argue that any Maori group can be whakapapa based given that their Maori members have a ‘whakapapa Maori’, where a common ancestor such as Maui or other historical figures can be identified. It would be impossible these days for any two Maori meeting by chance not to be able to find a common ancestor in recorded whakapapa within the last 20 or 25 generations and most would find one much further down the line.12 That is a reality!
Indeed the politics of citizenship of urban Maori has not merely arisen not from abstract theoretical reflection, but from the voices, visions and the material realities of those who have been marginalised in the construction of Maori citizenship.

*Pragmatic Citizenship*

"I'm proud of being an urban Maori. It made me what I am today…"

A notion of citizenship needs to anchor itself in the aspirations and perceptions of people who occupy subordinate social positions. There are many who even despite their awareness of kinship bonds, maintains an association and a sense of belonging to an urban group for what has been their reality for a significant part of his life:

In their struggle the urban Maori groups have adopted the ideology of pragmatism and reality as the ‘progressive element’ in the equation of Maori identity and citizenship:

“We noticed that Maori moving to the city were transferring their kinship relations to non-kin. No longer were they living in the hapu, so instead of borrowing a cousin’s car, they borrowed mine. But because mine broke down, they borrowed Tuck Nathan’s! … So steadily, those obligations and privileges which we enjoyed with our aunties and uncles and our cousins and our children back home, we were extending to our fellow Maori resident neighbours. So suddenly, Te Atatu became a Maori community, Henderson and so on, and with the building of this marae, west Auckland; and the development of the Trust reinforcing that in West Auckland here. So to me it is very clear that the time for recognition … of non tribal residents if you like, of maori people in urban areas, has got to be recognised.” (40).

Similarly Gardiner (1996) quotes the head of the Manukau Urban Authority in South Auckland, June Jackson, who in an appeal for the recognition of the plight of urban Maori told a gathering:

“when she visited Paremoremo prison or got calls from ‘hundreds of inmates’ she did not ask them ‘What is your tribe?’ Instead she always responded, ‘All right I’ll come’. She turned to the hui and asked them, ‘Why is it that I have to go in my car to visit your whanau’?” (171)

The demographics of the Maori citizenry reveal despite a net migration gain for rural areas, eight out of ten Maori now live in urban areas and most of those live in main urban centers. Approximately 34 percent live in Auckland. At least 70 per cent live outside their tribal rohe while
one-third live outside any tribal influence. At the 1996 census 112,566 Maori indicated that they
did not know the name of their iwi, while another 40,917 neither specified nor identified their iwi.
This represented 25 per cent of Maori as either not knowing their iwi or, for some reason, not
choosing to affiliate with it. (CA, 40) The socio-economic problems of unemployment, poverty,
alcohol and drug abuse, and crime are the harsh realities for many Maori despite geographical locale
and have been widely commented on. (New Zealand. Statistics New Zealand. 1998)

The urbanisation of Maori has transformed the common material and the meaningful framework in
which the contestations and the struggles of Maori citizenry are to be found. The demographic and
socio-economic realities of Maori call into question the pragmatism of an over-preoccupation with
iwi as the only appropriate vehicle for Maori development. McHugh argues that:

centering relations around sovereignty and claims against the Crown, changes within Aboriginal society itself –
urbanisation in particular – become masked by a focus on the historical structures of Maori political representation. The
concentration on the historical emasculation of customary forms of cultural organisation – such as the tribe – endows
that institution in its vestigial contemporary form with a presumptive legitimacy and representative capacity. Claims
against the Crown thus postpone – or even banish – the issue of demographic change from Aboriginal discourse. The
focus becomes primarily a historical one, with a goal that is rehabilitative. This approach is based on the speculative
assessment of what native society might have become had White settlement not displaced it. Claims talk, and the
construction of native history and discourse around it, thus insulates native discourse from its contemporary
demographic experience. It does not require native society to deal with urbanisation and the status of its peoples living
outside their tribal regions, where they have become disconnected from the historical political mechanisms. (Havemann
1999, 455)

This contestation has regrettably placed questions of identity and citizenship Maori, despite
arguably being all related by whakapapa, into a binary logic of either urban Maori or iwi Maori.

Strategic Relational Citizenship

In setting up this discussion of urban Maori, I do not mean to give the impression that there is a neat
separation between urban Maori or iwi Maori, nor that one form of association is the right way. The
issue is more perplexing and paradoxical than any sharp opposition. Urban Maori, like Maori
generally and other New Zealanders, are not an homogenous group. Instead, there is much
heterogeneity in backgrounds, lifestyles, affiliations and politics. It cannot be presumed that all
Maori domiciled in urban areas subscribe to similar views about the appropriateness of hapu and iwi
as the development vehicle. And of course, the same can be said for those who operate within their
tribal domains. The affidavits of the representatives of the Muriwhenua tribal confederation in the so-called ‘iwi case’ reflect a clear concern for urban Maori as illustrated by the following example:

Of concern is that third and fourth generations born into cities may no longer be aware of their roots and therefore knowledge of their ‘iwi’, their ‘hapu’, their kainga. On that basis a delivery and allocation system inclusive of their needs has to be addressed. They do however, come into another categorisation, a somewhat broader term for ‘iwi katoa’ meaning Maori people or individuals who are maori. (Warete Norman, 13)

Many Maori have been captured and polarised by antagonistic politicking that has centred around a conceptual orientation of an ‘either/or’ approach to appropriate association. Such adversarial posturing as the following quotes from members of ‘opposing sides’ that seeks to set each other in competition is not helpful:

The only difference between the tribal and urban groups is that while both are concerned to improve Maori performance in social responsibility, the position in the urban areas is more urgent. (Donna Hall, 5/4/98, Sunday Star-Times).

Apriana Mahuika of the Runanga o Ngati Porou held the conviction that it is “the iwi base that is the most effective social, politica, cultural, and commercial entity within all Maoridom.” (171)

We need an understanding of the debate that is more open ended and sophisticated, that emphasises the ambiguities of the relations, the uncertainty of tradition and the multiplicity of identities. This requires leadership with a broader vision that looks beyond the shadow of their own mountains and embraces the politics of potentiality, not polarity. The failure of Maori leadership and vision to move beyond the impasse has been lamented by the Waitangi Tribunal in the case of urban Maori:

it is unfortunate then that only one way was put up for achieving a common goal when all help is needed, and a diversity of strategies is required. It is more unfortunate still that a focus on defining communities in terms of descent tends to set Waipareira up as a competitor with the tribes when it it is not and when the two types of Maori community could collaborate in achieving a common objective. 219

Donna Hall is more correct in asserting that “the urban issue is not about the individual versus the tribe, or urbans versus the tribe. It is about how to build better communities for all Maori that are either tribal or pan-tribal according to the way Maori live today. (5/4/98, Sunday Star-Times).
With the Maori community iwi and hapu are more strongly established and more visible than they were a decade ago. (Durie 1998). But at the same time, urban Maori groups have emerged on the scene, ready to compete with tribes and take the State to task for their share of resources and their role in Maori decision making. (Durie 1998). What these groups have to come to terms with is a notion, in both theory and substance, of coexistence.

Once this concrete reality that is accepted then the way forward must be moving away from the conceptual orientation of ‘either-or’ and towards that of the relational ‘and’. Here urban Maori ‘and’ iwi Maori will need to engage in the negotiation and formation of relationships of citizenship, that are multi-dimensional, strategic, and that serve the needs of the present Maori citizenry. Its not a matter of ‘easier said than done’, but instead a matter of ‘it has to be done’!

**Formative Conclusion**

Mäori communities have experienced significant social and political change. The process of rebuilding communities to reflect their complexion has been dynamic and contested. In this paper I have briefly discussed the development of the urban Maori struggle for recognition and resources as the struggle for citizenship. Here urban Maori are positioned as new citizens who not only challenge dominant notions of Maori and existing power and social relationships of Maori association, but who also claim new rights, new space and new identity. In doing so, the claims of urban Maori have offered the potential to reimagine, reshape and renew the defining fabric of a contemporary and heterogeneous Maori citizenry that acknowledges the present realities of, and seeks a relationship between, urban and iwi Maori, among others.
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1 Online at http://www.lianz.waikato.ac.nz/
2 I shall never be lost. My seed was sown at Rangiatea, is a whakatauki or proverb that relates the common origin of Maori people.
3 Ngata argued that Maori had to demonstrate that they were as good as Pakeha, setting his ideas out in a pamphlet entitled The Price of Citizenship. (1940)
4 Estates such as Te Atatu, Otara and Mangere in Auckland and Porirua on the periphery of Wellington.
5 For a comprehensive review of the origins and development of Te Whanau o Waipareira Trust, see the Waitangi Tribunal Report (New Zealand. Waitangi Tribunal. 1998, 37), which I have drawn heavily from.
6 Critics, while acknowledging the pragmatic intentions, saw it as a further attempt of legislative and social engineering wherein “it did not merely identify and promote the tribe as the primary social formation for Maori; it also regulated the acceptable shape, form and mandate of an iwi.” (Maaka 1998, 201) Despite its deficiencies, its demise was lamented by some for the organisational void that it left given the confusion and problems of ‘mandating’ among groups pursuing Treaty claims. (Ward 1999, 161)
7 The Waitangi Tribunal claim that “following European colonisation the term ‘iwi’ came to signify the larger aggregation of hapu that more regularly came together for political purposes. European ethnologist saw these as tribes and hapu as sub-tribes, when in reality the hapu were the tribes while various combinations of hapu, combinations that constantly changed, could constitute an iwi or people.
9 Tribal groupings themselves had been involved in a ‘war of interpretation’ over not only relationships between hapu and iwi, but also mana whenua, mana moana.

10 In what must seem for many ‘flaxroots’ Maori, a futile, frustrating and disillusioning exercise in adversarial posturing, the appellant parties have been granted leave to have the preliminary issues be referred back to the Privy Council. There appears little prospect that the litigation will abate in the short term.

11 Article 2 of the Treaty of Waitangi.

13 Nick Pataka, member of the ‘urban iwi’ of the Te Whanau o Waipareira Trust, (New Zealand Herald …)

14 Those urban centers that have a population of 30000 or more such as Auckland and Hamilton.