

MĀRAKAI AS SITES OF AHI KAA AND RESISTANCE

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Abstract

Colonising processes, which led to the removal of many hapū and iwi from their whenua through conflict and dispossession, significantly altered Māori relationships with environments and associated tikanga. Mārakai, as a manifestation of ahi kaa, formed an important part of Māori resistance efforts to maintain occupation of their whenua. Large-scale disconnection of tangata whenua from whenua severely undermined their wellbeing and ability to maintain nature-culture relationships through continued practice of ahi kaa. Today mārakai provide pathways for recentring kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga and forming connections through the reoccupation of whenua. Through this, ahi kaa are being uncovered and reignited to demonstrate continued occupation of whenua in ways that revitalise culture-specific food practices. This article follows the development and implementation of Te Moeone mārakai, which was developed as a vehicle for Ngāti Tāwhirikura, a hapū in the Taranaki region, to pursue their aspirations.

Keywords

mārakai, ahi kaa, kaitiakitanga, resistance, whenua, occupation

Introduction

Following the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, Aotearoa New Zealand saw increased migrant flows from Britain. The coastal area of New Plymouth in the Taranaki region of the North Island was particularly desirable due to its coastal access and fertile lands for agricultural production, and as a result became the focus of Crown attention in its bid to acquire

land. Aggressive moves by the Crown in the 1860s led to ongoing conflicts up until the 1880s, as the British ruthlessly attempted to take control of and extinguish ahi kaa of tangata whenua in the region (O'Malley, 2016). Subsequent land confiscations by the Crown in 1865 as punishment for Māori, regardless of their involvement in resistance efforts, left little doubt as to its intentions (Allen, 2009; O'Malley, 2019; Te Kupenga

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Mātauranga o Taranaki, 2011; Waitangi Tribunal, 1996). In Taranaki and further afield, widespread loss of whenua disrupted Māori relationships and tikanga associated with occupation of whenua.

Despite the renowned peaceful traditions of Parihaka, Taranaki also has a long history of conflict among iwi and between iwi and the Crown (Te Kotahitanga o Te Atiawa, n.d.; Te Kupenga Mātauranga o Taranaki, 2011). Inter-iwi conflict in the Taranaki region from the 1820s onwards combined with the effects of settlement to significantly change Māori relationships with whenua. Musket raids by Ngāti Whātua, Ngāpuhi and Ngāti Maniapoto led to a mass exodus of hapū and iwi south to areas such as Papaioea, Pōneke and Te Tau Ihu in search of safety (Taranaki Iwi, n.d.; Te Ātiawa o te Waka a Māui, n.d.). Depopulation took its toll on many hapū and iwi, resulting in diminished numbers of people on the ground. For Ngāti Tāwhirikura, one of eight hapū that collectively make up Te Atiawa iwi and who maintain mana whenua on the northern boundary of New Plymouth, this meant many of those who stayed behind were absorbed into other hapū affiliations. Their identity became that of other hapū at the expense of their own (R. Hond, personal communication, January 18, 2020). This lack of visibility saw disruptions to taunahanaha, naming practices that enable people and events to be remembered in landscapes. The names, histories and stories of Ngāti Tāwhirikura were supplanted by those from the wider community and tūpuna names were erased from the whenua; their papakāinga became commonly known as Waiwhakaiho Hill.

While not unique to Ngāti Tāwhirikura, these changes, along with the introduction of a Western socioeconomic system underpinned by the notion of individual property rights, means the ability for hapū and iwi to assert ahi kaa over whenua is increasingly challenging. One avenue is the Treaty claims settlement system, which offers a mechanism for hapū and iwi to seek redress for historical injustices. For some, this provides an opportunity to reassert and reignite ahi kaa on the whenua, with multiple approaches being undertaken to uplift wellbeing and assert mana whenua. For Ngāti Tāwhirikura, however, this system and its adversarial nature further challenged Ngāti Tāwhirikura identity with whenua (Taiapa et al., 2021).

In this article we first present a discussion of ahi kaa, which is followed by an overview of conflict and resistance in the Taranaki region as a background to the story of Te Moeone mārakai, a papakāinga-based community garden in New

Plymouth. Following the development of the Ngāti Tāwhirikura aspirations framework in 2012 (Ngāti Tāwhirikura Hapū A Trust, 2013), Te Moeone mārakai was developed as a vehicle to pursue the aspirations articulated in the framework. In this context the mārakai was an act of resistance to the conflict of Treaty claims settlement negotiations and a statement of ongoing occupation of the whenua. Here we present the voices of participants in the mārakai initiative, following their stories from development to implementation and beyond.

This article is based on the first author's doctoral research. Although of Ngāti Porou and Rongowhakaata whakapapa, he is also a tama whāngai to the Watene Taungātara whānau of Te Atiawa. His doctoral study emerged from the relationship he and his whānau have with the hapū, and partly through being a kaimahi in the mārakai. The second author is Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu and director of Te Rōpū Whāriki, a Māori-led research group at Massey University, where the first author's doctoral study is based. As the first author's primary supervisor, she met with Ngāti Tāwhirikura hapū over several years. The third author is acting as the first author's secondary supervisor and is a long-standing Pākehā member of Te Rōpū Whāriki. Ngāti Tāwhirikura is now a partner in a research project with Te Rōpū Whāriki.

Ahi kaa and resistance

Ahi kaa refers to both home fires and those who keep them alive. Literally, "ahi" means "fire" and "kaa" means "to burn", and ahi kaa keep places warm through human presence. Burning fires provides literal and symbolic warmth and maintains claims to whenua for those who are not physically present. When people left their whenua for a period of time, a large log was burnt in a pit then buried so that it would smoulder for up to a couple of months. If a challenge was made that the whenua was unoccupied, the smouldering log would be unearthed to demonstrate occupation. Therefore, ahi kaa encompasses the idea of uncovering a fire and reigniting the flame (R. Hond, personal communication, October 22, 2020). Today it commonly refers to tangata whenua who live in close association with their whenua. For hapū and iwi, ahi kaa is the platform on which mana whenua is affirmed and the growing of food on whenua is validated (Te One, 2018). This practice was highly evident in Māori settlements from 1500 AD onwards, with the building of pā oriented to conditions that optimised food practices. Typically this included north-facing sites, fertile soil conditions and mild winter

temperatures (Allen, 2016; Envirohistory NZ, 2010). In this context, Māori geographies and food practices were predominantly shaped by the need for survival and were heavily imbued with cultural values, expressions of identity and collectivity (Panelli & Tipa, 2009). At the heart of these relationships is an intimate understanding of the intersections between culture, nature and human health (Hutchings, 2020; Panelli & Tipa, 2009), also articulated as “ki uta ki tai”, meaning an interconnected “whole of landscape” approach (Harmsworth & Roskrige, 2014, p. 115). This philosophy is grounded in place-based relations, the observation of tikanga, and the generation and application of mātauranga that positions Māori as “co-producers of nature” (Hutchings, 2020, p. 47). Through nature-culture relations (Panelli & Tipa, 2009), values such as kaitiakitanga ensure human interactions with whenua and food systems are respectful (Hutchings, 2020). To do so honours the value and identity connections that Māori and other Indigenous peoples form with whenua, which provide spaces and places of wellbeing. For Māori these are recited in forms such as pūrākau, waiata and pepehā (Panelli & Tipa, 2009).

Ownership and occupation of whenua

The whakataukī “He pukenga to tū, he pukenga to rongō” (“That which is produced through conflict and asserting yourself, and that which is produced when you stay home and focus on hospitality”) reverberates for many hapū and iwi across Aotearoa New Zealand. The country’s colonial history is replete with examples of Māori resistance to land confiscations and conflict perpetuated by the Crown against Māori to facilitate settlement (see, e.g., Belich, 1996; Kawharu, 2000; Salmond, 2017). Although history tends to focus on the more aggressive actions Māori undertook in response, Māori have an enduring history of multiple forms of resistance, including hikoi, petitions and other political fora (O’Malley, 2019).

Peaceful resistance rose to prominence in the 19th century at Parihaka, a settlement in the Taranaki region. It was here in the 1870s that the prophets Te Whiti o Rongomai and Tohu Kākahi resisted Crown actions by remaining on their whenua and immersing themselves in the domain of Rongō (Hond et al., 2019). Central to this movement was the role of manaakitanga, which ensured manuhiri who came in support or who sought refuge were welcomed into a social and cultural system of cooperation and collective resistance. As people transitioned from manuhiri to tangata whenua they were afforded rights—and

the obligation of maintaining the kotahitanga that was necessary for working together on peaceful resistance to land alienation and other colonising aggressions. The planting and maintenance of mārakai was essential to survival and assertion of ahi kaa at Parihaka.

Mārakai are an important aspect of mahinga kai, a broad and inclusive term related to all aspects of “food work”. Mahinga kai is central to identity and survival (Hutchings, 2020; Panelli & Tipa, 2009) and has become a key focus of claims to the Waitangi Tribunal and to approaches taken to reassert ahi kaa. In summarising associations between people and food, Panelli and Tipa (2009) situate ahi kaa within embedded relationships and responsibilities, reflecting deep associations between people and place that mahinga kai practices are able to reignite and maintain.

Mārakai

The creation of mārakai symbolises the ability of hapū and iwi to enact their tikanga and be more self-determining in relationships with the environment and natural resources in order to ensure the wellbeing of ecosystems and communities. Mārakai on marae such as Matikotare (Watson, 2014), Waipatu (Lawrence, 2015), Ruapotaka (Tamaki Regeneration, 2015), Takahanga (Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, 2013), Pehiaweri (Fenton-Coyne, 2015) and others provide important opportunities for the expression of ahi kaa, which also entails reclamation of knowledge and tikanga to reassert occupation and connections to whenua. Mārakai enable a practical platform where “indigenous community gardening represents an ordinary and everyday activity that can fulfil both cultural and collective wellbeing requirements to foster holistic family and community health” (Raerino, 2017, p. 66).

Literature on food and health often takes a relatively narrow approach, focusing, for example, on health and wellbeing related to physical activity, access to kai, and social functions (Raerino, 2017). Panelli and Tipa (2009) argue Indigenous geographies can contribute to conceptual shifts by exploring intersections between social structures, contexts and interactions. These geographies “established the significant ties that involve Indigenous people in mutually constituting relations with their environments such that divisions between people and non-human life, or culture and nature are foreign aberrations” (p. 457). Exploring examples of food practices is embedded in identity and wellbeing and, in some cases, resistance.

As mentioned earlier, resistance is evident in

the story of Parihaka; however, there are many more recent examples. The most significant of these is the occupation by ahi kaa and supporters of Ihumātāo in South Auckland, which began in 2016. Mārakai formed one part of the resistance to proposed land development by corporate interests (McCreanor et al., 2018).

Similarly, in 2012 Ngāti Tāwhirikura established mārakai at Katere-ki-te Moana in New Plymouth as an act of resistance to the Treaty claims settlement process and as a statement of ahi kaa.* This article reports on findings from two haerenga kitea conducted with hapū and non-hapū participants at Te Moeone mārakai. The findings tell a story of revitalisation of hapū identity and tikanga through the mārakai, which continues to support the reassertion of Ngāti Tāwhirikuratanga on the whenua.

Methods

The research reported here was conducted as part of the first author's larger doctoral project looking at the role and contribution of mārakai towards environmental restoration. Both the research and the doctoral project were developed through existing relationships with Ngāti Tāwhirikura, who offered their support and were part of planning and ongoing discussions. Qualitative methodologies guided by a Kaupapa Māori approach (Smith, 1999) were used to tell the story of Te Moeone mārakai, a papakāinga-based mārakai open to the wider community. Data were drawn from haerenga kitea to provide scope and context on participant responses and insights. Haerenga kitea are a form of "go along" interviewing and Photovoice (McCreanor et al., 2006) developed as part of a project on wairua and affect (see, e.g., Moewaka Barnes et al., 2017). Purposive sampling was used to recruit a group of hapū participants with whakapapa connections to the whenua. Although the initiative was hapū led, it attracted other community members with non-whakapapa connections to the whenua. For this reason, we recruited a group of non-hapū participants who grew food in the mārakai. Ethics approval was granted by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (NOR 18/06), however we ensured these guidelines were consistent with hapū tikanga and the research aspirations (Moewaka Barnes et al., 2009).

Data collection for the haerenga kitea involved the first author "walking alongside" (Moewaka

Barnes et al., 2017) each group, talking and filming as they made their way around Te Moeone mārakai. Visiting different areas of the mārakai allowed participants to engage in kōrero and share memories and experiences of being in and working in the mārakai. Participants in both groups gathered and ate food and pulled weeds from the mārakai while talking. This setting meant that pauses and side conversations were more natural and comfortable than they would have been if the participants were sitting in a room being interviewed. This led to multiple conversations between participants as they related to and built on each other's experiences.

One hapū aspiration was for their story to be told through the research. To address this, a pūrākau methodology was used to group participant meanings and experiences of their involvement in Te Moeone mārakai. Pūrākau is a conceptual and methodological approach enabling stories to be told within a Māori worldview (Lee, 2009). Data analysis began with reviewing transcripts from each haerenga kitea and gathering excerpts that spoke to what happened in the mārakai and why. Excerpts were put on separate pieces of paper and roughly grouped into a chronological order of pūrākau. Narrative links were inserted between verbatim quotes to clarify and expand on the story of the mārakai.

Pūrākau—telling the story of the mārakai

We present the data in sections that are structured to tell a story, beginning with "Starting the Journey", which describes how and why the mārakai came to be. Following this, people began the mahi, coming together to grow knowledge and kai. As time went by the mārakai grew and, as the hapū reached out, associated activities and networks increased in scale and reach. The pūrākau concludes with reflections on what has been achieved and hopes for the future. Through the pūrākau we gain insights into how the interwoven concepts of mārakai, manaakitanga and ahi kaa reassert occupation of whenua.

Starting the journey

Hapū participants knew parts of the stories of their hapū and reflected on the impacts of colonisation and settlement. Memories of these times were held in physical markers of conflict. The stories speak to loss as a hapū and reflect connections throughout the rohe, including the story of Parihaka. Many of the hapū left, and although some returned, there were "only a few families left just to carry the torch":

* The agency of the hapū was not recognised by the Te Atiawa Iwi Authority, and another hapū was given the mandate to speak on behalf of Ngāti Tāwhirikura throughout the negotiation processes.

We lost our political face and capacity in the times the land league was happening. So, if you go down to the bottom of Smart Road you'll see the pou tūtaki and when all that stuff was happening with Te Kekeu and those other tūpuna who were trying to manage their way through the conflict and pressure of the Crown and the new influx of Pākehā coming to live in this area and with the subsequent ransacking of Parihaka and with all of the confiscational activity. . . . Most of our people moved away. They moved down to Wellington, Papaioia and Te Tau Ihu o te Waka o Māui. So, there were only a few families left just to carry the torch; I mean even our family went down and then they came back, and we had lands down there and they came back. It's a long story, and I only hold part of it. (Eruera, male, 54)

In a desire to reassert occupation and reunite the hapū, various strategies were explored. The establishment of a mārakai was settled on as a way of (re)connecting people and whenua. Hapū members identified what was needed and put out the call.

Hākoakoa, tū mana motuhake, knowing self and being strong in identity, feeling confident to tohe this one and that one for the things that we need and things that need to come back. That's a āhuatanga in itself, and I reckon Tāwhirikura has got that, pērā te mahi tuakana mo ngā iwi o Taranaki. (Ripeka, female, 34)

Initially, Te Moeone was a paddock overgrown with kikuyu, dock and fennel, and it required a collective effort to transform it into a mārakai. As others responded, Ngāti Tāwhirikura gained greater confidence in enacting their tuakana role. As well as local support, tautoko came from wider organisations such as Massey University and Tāhuri Whenua.

[I]n terms of those taonga and the things that have been passed down, you know that mahi that was done at Massey, the tautoko Tamati [a former member of the hapū leadership responsible for developing the mārakai initiative] and others received from Tāhuri Whenua and some of those organisations too i whakamana ana tēnei mea i te mahi whenua. . . . Just really good timing that those things were around to tautoko what the aspirations were for this piece of whenua. (Ripeka, female 34)

Resources, both people and material, not only supported the establishment of the mārakai, but also boosted the hapū in its journey.

[It's] just nice knowing there were people supporting Tamati and that's not just through āwhina a kōrero but through pūtea as well because you know he utu . . . and just the relationships that Tamati was able to connect with in this area for our tipu. Colson Road [a local nursery] would give us all their leftover kānga . . . the matua was bringing compost and we were able to get some machinery and pull these fellas in to shuffle things around. That was the beginning of this kaupapa. (Ripeka, female, 34)

Beginning the mahi

Although Tamati was a driving force, in the mārakai people needed to come together and take on various roles.

I like the idea of gardening together to share the jobs, and I'm sure Tamati will appreciate that—someone digging, someone taking the rubbish, someone taking the good produce. It's more efficient and hapū-style living, you know you have your job, you do that one good. And the binding with your peers, and whoever's working with the children. It's finding time. Whether [it is] “Yeah I've had a bad day” or gossiping about Aunty so and so or whatever it might be, it's all binding and real and raw. (Vivian, female, 34)

This comment underlines the mārakai as a hapū undertaking, with collective and complementary effort needed to build momentum.

Simone (female, 29) stated, “I like that this shows what people can do when they come together. And again, in that diversity, the unity in diversity just as in the garden shows us as well. Working together.” Michael (male, 54) echoed these sentiments:

It probably makes it more traditional as far as the māra goes because it wouldn't have been everyone side by side doing this, it would've been roles for everyone, and it all ends up done. . . . It does operate best like that—everyone takes on their own task and at the end of the day all these things are done.

Being present on the whenua was celebrated. As people gathered and worked in the mārakai, they came to learn hapū stories and regional connections.

I was thinking about the stories Tamati tells sometimes when you're working in the garden. Like when you're planting and you get talking or something doing the kūmara plots, you know and talking about the histories and stuff. That for me is

. . . massive for me. And he pointed out down there the track that the carts used to go on past here to collect the food to go out to Parihaka. You know all of those and stories, and you just think, “Far out, I’m here.” (Hēni, female, 41)

Tamariki were an important part of the journey. They learnt through experience and alongside adults who valued the physical mahi and having “hands in the ground”:

[T]e hari o ngā tamariki, even just exposing our tamariki to those real traditions of ours; pono, tika, aroha, but then there’s mahi. And there’s actually getting your hands in the ground and for our tamariki to see that and be a part of that, he tino taonga tērā. (Ripeka, female, 34)

The mārakai became a place where people connected, built relationships and learnt. Knowledge sharing and learning did not focus solely on “gardening” but was embedded in a broader system of mātauranga. For Eruera (male, 54), “It’s about capacity building, it’s about building relationships, building a knowledge system, where you’re sharing knowledge, where you’re sharing kai together and that’s really valuable too.”

Building and maintaining the mārakai was a labour-intensive process. Due to the demands of working 40-hour weeks, raising whānau and other commitments it was sometimes hard for whānau to participate. Although there were times when people came together, a lot of the work fell to a single person at times.

I think people bring different experiences with them and different knowledge systems with them. You know what I think is valuable is creating a network, the problem is that when you’ve just got one person growing the garden invariably it becomes labour-intensive; it becomes really problematic. But with teams of people, you know when a harvest presents itself of whatever kai that’s been planted you know you’re not just working your own garden. You might be putting stuff in there one time and other people come and help you, and then when it comes times to harvest like last year there was like tomatoes for Africa, everyone just took what they needed and there was still just tomatoes rotting. (Eruera, male, 54)

Growing and expanding the mārakai

As the mārakai became established, connections and learnings were strengthened. Harvesting saw

the realisation of effort as well as satisfaction at what was produced.

I think it’s definitely a great way to connect people to land because when you’re here you get to learn about how each plant grows and you get to feel that feeling of accomplishment once it’s on your plate and you can say, “Oh I know where that vegetable came from, and I watched it grow.” . . . I like learning off of other people. Like if I’m there trying to grow broccoli and I do it the same way I always do it, there’s nothing really exciting about that, well its exciting but not as exciting as if someone else says, “Well if you do it this way, you’ll get a better yield” or “I do this”, and actually having the space to try different varieties is really cool as well. (Simone, female, 29)

The mārakai became a learning space for different generations, where knowledge and lifelong practices went hand in hand.

Just to watch the kids so that right through life now they can take something to any table as far as knowledge goes and not need to rely on people to survive. They’re always going to have one tool, if someone else is good at something else, they’ve got their tool to take to the crop swap. No reason to go without. (Simone, female, 29)

Growing kai as a hapū demonstrated “a whole worldview” for tamariki on how to work, learn, teach and share in a collective setting.

And you’re socialising our tamariki into the same expectations in that they know where food comes from. It’s kind of a whole worldview. And where do you see people working collectively together for a common goal? You don’t see it anymore; it doesn’t happen anymore. It’s hard to put words around that but it’s actually a really strange . . . fulfilment. (Eruera, male, 54)

It’s nice to be just normal for the kids too, that’s a big thing for me that its normal and natural to grow your own food and that you’re doing it for other people; you’re not just doing it for yourself—you’re giving. That’s a big thing for me, the reconnecting of people, in terms of . . . reconnecting with my kids, the skills and the whenua and those values of giving. (Heni, female, 42)

As the above comment shows, the mārakai recaptured and reasserted Māori values and knowledge by normalising practices associated with mārakai.

The hapū reaches out

With the development of the mārakai, spaces were made for whānau to grow their own vegetables and for a bigger communal mārakai. The relatively large-scale mārakai had the potential to produce large amounts of kai for whānau, and the communal space grew kūmara for supply to Parihaka. According to Aaron (male, 44), “At this scale, like, this is a lot of food so it can’t help but be for many mouths.” The scale of the māra created opportunities and successes as well as challenges, particularly in workloads that included

bonding and job-sharing, because it’s quite intimidating and daunting gardening even just at home but at this scale it’s just like “Woah!” You need an army to help you here. Tamati does do a good job, but more people [are needed to] share the load and kick back afterwards. (Vivian, female, 34)

Alongside working bees, other strategies to address workloads included outreach through networks and linking into common kaupapa. Networks provided knowledge and resources to help with the mārakai and enabled others to connect into Te Moeone. Kūmara growing workshops held at the mārakai generated high community interest and attendance from people wanting to learn how to translate learnings into their own mārakai. Ripeka (female, 32) recalled, “So many manuhiri through the māra, you know we’ve had. Tamati’s done kūmara workshops, we had the māra trail, the sustainable backyards.”

Ka mua ka muri—looking back in order to move forward

Reconnecting with whenua through growing kai resonated with the whakataukī “Ka mua ka muri”. This whakatauki honours the role of ancestral wisdom as a guiding beacon for how we as Māori plan our futures. Doing so enabled hapū members to uncover the smouldering log and practise what it means to be tangata of their whenua. The mārakai activities were clearly seen as part of a broader purpose and experience.

I think it’s an opportunity to think back and think about them and really honour them and honour their taonga and really just get involved in being who we are as tangata whenua and you know you can’t get that at all marae. . . . Koira te painga o tenei whenua, and I think that’s what’s driven me to stay connected, it feels good, he ngākau aroha o roto. . . . That’s resisting and being here hei āpōpō. He tino taonga. (Ripeka, female, 34)

For Eruera (male, 54), “It’s actually about rediscovering ourselves again and coming from a space, it’s about flourishing.”

Hapū members saw pathways that followed the footsteps of their tūpuna, not only at Te Moeone but also through connecting their whānau and hapū to Parihaka and the rohe in general.

It connects people, way back when this māra used to connect people to Parihaka and today it connects our whānau to Kātere and back to the land and connects us back to our tūpuna, the kai connects us at present. (Tory, female 38)

[T]he stories that I’ve been told about this whenua is that that was very much a part of the mahi on this whenua, was a place where our whānau from Mutunga and those moving to Parihaka, was a place to stop and gather and come together and he āhua nei mā te katoa. So, it’s important that we maintain that tikanga and continue to invite people because you’re right it’s potentially the model of āpōpō because there are tokoiti o tātou. (Ripeka, female, 34)

Participating in the mārakai gave a sense of inclusion in a journey. It was not a singular activity or purpose; it honoured the past and connected to a more hopeful future. For tamariki, it was part of a life journey that supported tamariki to continue paddling the waka.

It is a privilege and safe both from knowing that there’s food out there and to also knowing that like you say that you’ve been invited and you’re on this waka and you’re doing the māra together. It’s important to me and it gives me hope too Simone and it makes me feel hopeful for the future. (Henī, female, 42)

Dean (male, 37) participated in the mārakai so “we can do what we want for our kids, and it carries on like the circle of life.”

As increased hapū presence was established on the whenua, it became a grounding point to celebrate connections between people, whenua and the past, present and future. For Tui (female, 41), the mārakai is about “our resilience as a people—we were here a long time ago and we’re still here. This place is our past and it’s our future as well.”

Discussion and conclusion

The journey of recovery for Ngāti Tāwhirikura from the Treaty settlement process was sparked by a reawakening of whānau and a desire to uncover

the smouldering fire and reassert occupation of whenua. Participants in this research spoke of ways the interrelated concepts of manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga and ahi kaa were enacted to reconnect with tūpuna practices. Te Moeone mārakai provides a platform for working collectively in ways that nurture people and is a vehicle for hapū aspirations of reconnection and the invigoration of hapū identity. Participants spoke of the mārakai as enabling significant positive shifts, from responding to the conflict of Crown-imposed processes to self-determination and community outreach.

Feeling invalidated by a long trail of historical events sparked a reawakening that resulted in reoccupation of whenua as a statement of resistance and continued ahi kaa through mārakai practices and values. For Ngāti Tāwhirikura this was about reoccupation of spaces that promoted self-determination and identity, with the mārakai providing ways of asserting ahi kaa through being present on the whenua. The connections and collaborations activated through the mārakai are part of the hapū story of revitalisation, beginning with uncovering the embers of ahi kaa and reoccupying whenua. While reoccupation of whenua is a tangible outcome, the reoccupation of mind, spirit and tikanga is a significant domain of transformation for the hapū, evident in participants' kōrero.

Like the tangata whenua of Parihaka, Ngāti Tāwhirikura created at Kātere-ki-te-Moana a sense of community based on the principles and actions of Rongo, which enabled them to activate hospitality as a manifestation of resistance and ahi kaa. As an act of resistance to Crown-imposed processes, developing the mārakai through collective actions enabled them to continue rebuilding their identity based on their terms and aspirations. Te Moeone mārakai provides an important context where culture-nature relations are nurtured through connections to community, kaupapa and whenua. Community action enabled through the manaakitanga of hapū supports connections to whenua in ways that affirm identity, reclaim and utilise whenua-based practices, and enable them to be a part of the story.

Ahi kaa and mārakai are interwoven both conceptually and practically with acts of reassertion and resistance. Mārakai are becoming an increasingly common way for Māori to reoccupy whenua and bring people together. They provide kai, and often this is a key focus (Raerino, 2017), but they do much more than that. The stories told here reinforce Panelli and Tipa's (2009) argument about the ability of Indigenous geographies to shift conceptual thinking about foodscapes. The

supposedly simple act of producing food through collective gardening is about more than learning and harvesting. The pūrākau here speaks to honouring tūpuna, identity and occupation of whenua in the context of kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga and kotahitanga. As a counter to Western approaches, it is one way to assert ahi kaa and revitalise mātauranga and tikanga through relationships with whenua.

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Glossary

ahi kaa	fires signalling continuous occupation of whenua; those who keep home fires alive
āhuatanga	characteristic/s, attribute/s
āpōpō	tomorrow
āwhina korero	supportive conversations
haerenga kitea	data collection using cameras to follow and record verbal and non-verbal communication of participants
hākoakoa tū mana motuhake	using authority and identity to be resilient
hapū	sub-tribe
he āhua nei mā te katoa	this is an attribute for us all (here)
he ngākau aroha o roto	a loving heart inside
he tino taonga tērā	that was a real treasure
he utu	a cost
hīkoi	march, walk
Ihumātao	site of an ancient Māori settlement near the Auckland suburb of Māngere
iwi	tribe
kai	food
Kaikoura	town on the northeast coast of the South Island
kaimahi	worker
kaitiakitanga	guardianship

kānga	corn	Pehiaweri	marae in the city of Whangarei, Northland
Kātere ki te Moana/ Kātere	name of a papakāinga building	pepehā	introduction that locates and identifies linkages with people and place
kaupapa	themes		
Kaupapa Māori	research methodology grounded in Māori worldviews	pērā te mahi tuakana mō ngā iwi o Taranaki	that's the important work for Taranaki people
ki uta ki tai	from mountains to sea		
koirā te painga o tēnei whenua	that is the good thing about this land	Pōneke	Wellington region, southern part of the North Island
kōrero	to say; discussion, narrative	pono, tika, aroha	truth, doing things correctly, love
kotahitanga	unity	pou tūtaki	pole erected in Weewaikei Valley by supporters of the Māori land league; marks the extent that settlement was allowed to encroach
kūmara	sweet potato		
mahi	work		
mahinga kai	inclusive term related to all aspects of “food work”		
manaakitanga	hospitality	pūrākau	narratives containing knowledge; a conceptual and methodological approach to research
mana whenua	territorial rights, power from land		
Māngere	suburb of Auckland		
manuhiri	guest/s	pūtea	money
marae	open area in front of the whareniui (meeting house), where formal greetings and discussions take place; often includes the complex of buildings around the marae	rangatira rangatiratanga Rongo	chief self-determination; authority Rongo-mā-Tāne, Māori deity associated with cooperation and peaceful activities
mārakai	community garden	Rongowhakaata	iwi of Te Tairāwhiti/the East Coast region, North
mātauranga	Māori knowledge and knowledge systems	Ruapotaka	marae in Glen Innes, suburb of Auckland
Matikotare	marae in the city of Rotorua, central North Island	Tāhuri Whenua	National Māori Vegetable Growers Collective
matua	respectful form of address for father, parent	Takahanga	marae in Kaikoura
Mutunga	abbreviation of Ngāti Mutunga, a Taranaki iwi	tangata Tiriti	lit., “treaty people”; refers to non-Māori with a right to live in Aotearoa under Te Tiriti o Waitangi
Ngāi Tahu	iwi based in South Island		
Ngāpuhi-nui-tonu/ Ngāpuhi	confederation of iwi and hapū of Northland	tangata whenua	“people of the land”—a term used to describe Māori relationships with land
Ngāti Maniapoto	iwi of Waikato, Waitomo region, North Island		
Ngāti Porou	iwi of Te Tairāwhiti region	taonga Taranaki	treasure, possession central region on the west coast of the North Island
Ngāti Tāwhirikura	hapū of Te Atiawa iwi		
Ngāti Whātua	iwi located in the lower Northland region	taunahanaha	Māori practice of naming places
pā	fortified village	tautoko	support
Papaioea	Palmerston North, city in the Manawatu region	Tāwhirikuratanga	the distinct identity of Ngāti Tāwhirikura hapū on the whenua
papakāinga	Māori kinship settlement on collectively owned land		
Parihaka	Māori settlement 45 km south of New Plymouth, in the Taranaki region	Te Atiawa Te Kekeu	iwi of the Taranaki region Hone Ropihā Te Kekeu, rangatira of Ngāti Tāwhirikura descent

te hari o ngā tamariki	the happiness of the children
Te Kapotai	hapū of the Ngāpuhi iwi
te reo	the Māori language
Te Tau Ihu o te Waka o Māui	prow of canoe belonging to demi-god Māui; reference to the Marlborough region, northern end of South Island
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	te reo version of treaty of Waitangi
tikanga	understandings, values and principles that guide practice
tipu	growth
tohe	persevere
tokoiti o tātou	so few of us
tuakana	elder brother (of a male), elder sister (of a female); someone with senior status
tūpuna	ancestors
waiata	song/s
Waipatu	marae in Hastings, a city in Te Tairāwhiti/the East Coast region of the North Island
wairua	spirit
Waitangi Tribunal	permanent commission of inquiry into alleged breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi
waka	canoe
Watene Taungātara	whānau of Te Atiawa descent
whakapapa	genealogy
whānau	family
Whangarei	city in the Northland region
whakatauki	proverbial saying
whenua	land or domain; placenta

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